

SAUS Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

January 6, 2025 | Location: Teams

Present: Dr. Lin (Libby) Yi, April Felan-Butler, Mary Washington, Doug Wells, Dr. Chris Ward, Sana Zeidan, John Rodriguez, Debra Ross, Jaime Richeson, Lee Hilyer, Dr. Soma Datta, Leigh Ann Shelfer, Elbby Antony, Jason Makepeace, Tyler Hall, Kristi Randolph Simon, Lea Black, Lori Lopez

Guest Speakers: Lee Hilyer – Executive Director of the UHCL Neumann Library

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 pm.

Dr. Libby Yi introduced Mr. Lee Hilyer, who spoke about Space Allocation and Usage in the Neumann Library. Before the meeting, the Library Space Guidelines document for Spring 2025 was shared with the SAUS subcommittee. Lee met with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee in early December about this. Although Lee has since made tweaks to the Library Space Guidelines document, he did not get to present about this at the Faculty Senate meeting due to time constraints and several agenda items that were discussed. The only change negotiated with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee was to make the Hawks Overlook available for events after 5 pm on Mondays-Thursdays.

In fall 2024, Lee determined that since Library traffic has returned to and often exceeds pre-pandemic levels, they would no longer allow events in the Hawks Overlook for the rest of the 2024-2025 school year. The study space in the Hawks Overlook is highly utilized by students during weekdays, and Lee feels it is important to preserve this as a guaranteed and reliable study space on M-F.

Due to this, there have been updates to the guidelines for those who request events in the library. Lee also screen-shared the <https://uhcl.libguides.com/spaces> website where requestors can reserve library spaces, including the Hawk's Nest, the Library Meeting Room, and the Library classroom.

After a brief discussion, Lee opened the floor to any questions from the committee members. Doug Wells mentioned that he did not have a chance to provide his feedback to Lee yet, but he recommended that there should be clear policies/procedures wording on the Library meeting rooms requesting site that the use of these rooms does not in any way involve FMC (no furniture set-ups or the use of supplemental custodial support). Requestors must contact FMC if clean-up or trash pick-up is needed after an event. Lee later confirmed that in the guidelines, there is a line stating that event planners are responsible for cleaning up. Lee stated the Library site will add language to inform planners to either let the Library staff know and they can take it out, or it is up to event planners to

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contact FMC if additional Custodial support is needed following an event (ex. disposing empty box lunches or etc.).

Next, Dr. Libby Yi asked if other spaces offered in the library were large enough for bigger groups. Lee answered that the Hawks Overlook is the largest space, but the Hawks Nest and other library meeting rooms could also be utilized, depending on group numbers. The Overlook has always been a popular study space among UHCL students and has returned to pre-pandemic traffic levels. It is important to preserve this study space for students and encourage event planners to use other campus venues to accommodate large groups of guests for events.

Lee felt that booting students out of the highly utilized study space to set up for an event did not send the right message and leaving it as a student study space would be the right approach. Initially, the Library only paused the use of the Overlook for events last semester to help figure out the best solution, but this resulted in a misunderstanding that all events could no longer be held in the library. This was not the case. However, the Library later negotiated with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and agreed to host events after 5 pm, since the traffic of students studying in the library tends to decrease around that time.

In some past instances, event organizers booked the Overlook where their group could have fit in the classroom (which fits 45 people comfortably). The Hawks Nest is another alternative, and despite the awkward shape, events can be hosted there. The library team observed that several students utilized the Overlook heavily and taking it away from them did not do much for student success.

Lea Black pointed out that she noticed that on the Library Space Guidelines document, there was an incomplete sentence in the middle of page 2, which Lee will be revising. (“The special collections room is available at any time of the.....” and then it just fades off.). Lee added that the Special Collections room is available at any time and there are no restrictions on it unless it is already booked by another group. It is a good option for 12 or less guests, it is a nice space, and it contains the President’s old conference table and comfy leather chairs.

Lee felt that this was administrative and included updates to operational guidelines, but he would not expect to push it through FSSC and eventually University Council for voting. But FSSC could always decide how to handle this.

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Doug suggested reporting to FSSC that SAUS reviewed this, and Lee is still working on these updates. But it will not be a policy in the strictest university sense.

Debra Ross asked if the discussed information was a change to the current meeting scheduling process through Ad Astra. Mary Washington confirmed that the library has always done their own scheduling for their rooms (and so does the Rec Center) and it does not have to do with the event scheduling that the Scheduling Dept uses other campus spaces.

Debra Ross asked about noise control in the Hawks Overlook and Hawks Nest areas, and what is being done in the event of noise issues. Lee answered that the library staff ordered noise-proof accordion panels to help alleviate this with most events. Mary reminded the group that any discussion items brought up in SAUS meetings are for internal changes and anything internal is for informational purposes for the SAUS Committee. Lee will put together his final revisions, send them over to Libby, who will then send it to FSSC for further review and discussion. Libby asked Lee to include Doug's remarks from earlier regarding FMC, as well as Dr. Becky Huss-Keeler's suggestions for addressing responsibility for post-events clean-up. Once these 2 updates are made and Lee sends it to Libby, it will go to FSSC for further review.

Debra also asked if there were any costs involved with renting spaces and Lee confirmed that they are available at no cost.

There were no additional questions or comments, so the next topic of discussion was updating the date and time for spring 2025 SAUS meetings. Libby asked for suggestions and agreed to send out a Doodle poll to help the group select a new meeting date and time.

The meeting concluded at approximately 2:25 pm.