

November 17, 1998

MEMORANDUM

TO: ULC
FROM: Sheila Gray
SUBJECT: Graduate Carrels

Library Administration met today to discuss the question of carrels and their use by graduate students. After reviewing the conversation that took place in the last ULC meeting, they suggest that the Library take the following approach with respect to the study carrels. They would like the ULC to discuss/revise these suggestions in the next meeting, and then a formal policy can be drafted.

- Begin a new process for allocating student carrels fall term 1999. Prior to fall term, all carrels will be vacated. Twenty carrels will be allocated for graduate student use, and the rest will be set aside for faculty.
- The same general principles should be used to assign carrels to faculty and to graduate students, i.e. studies are assigned to those engaged in extensive library research. In the case of graduate students, priority should be given to students writing his/her thesis/dissertation.
- Students will be asked to fill out the same form and sign the agreement indicating that they have read and agreed to the guidelines. At this point, we do not suggest any more complicated process of screening applicants. In the past, most (if not all) of the graduate students who have come to ask us about carrel space would meet these suggested guidelines.
- Based on the inquiries we have received in the past couple of years, there is no shortage of graduate students who could benefit from having assigned library space to use research materials for their theses/dissertations. At this point, we recommend that this be the sole purpose for assigning carrels. There are other options for quiet study space in Knight Library including unreserved study rooms, alcoves, individual seating around the perimeter of the stacks, etc.
- Graduate students could receive a carrel assignment for one term with the possibility of one renewal. Up to three students would be assigned the carrel. Many of the students we have talked to in the past would have been satisfied with this arrangement.
- Our impression is that graduate students objected to a policy that prevented them from using a resource that seemed underutilized. We do not think that graduate students expect the library to satisfy all or even most of their needs for study/research/office space. A small, easy to administer change in the current policy would go a long way toward correcting the situation.
- We suggest adopting these changes for a minimum of two years. If student feedback indicates continued dissatisfaction with the allocation of carrel space, then the Library/ULC can consider setting aside space for other users/reasons.

cc: Library Administration