Committee for the 21st Century Welch Library

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Committee for the 21st Century Welch Library?

The Committee for the 21st Century Welch Library was created in January 2012 and will meet regularly through April 2012. Its charge is to assess the current status of the Welch Library service and the Welch Library building, and examine how we can provide for the highest quality information services and the optimal use of the Welch Library building to serve the academic and patient care needs of faculty, students, and staff. The Committee’s conclusion will be used to advise the deans of the three East Baltimore schools and the president of Johns Hopkins Hospital.

The Committee is chaired by Dr. Martha Hill, Dean of the School of Nursing, and co-chaired by Dr. David Nichols, Vice Dean for Education, School of Medicine. Membership includes representatives of student and faculty leadership from the Schools on Nursing, Medicine, and Public Health, and the Johns Hopkins Hospital and Health System.

I have heard that the Welch Library Building is going to be torn down? Is this true?

Absolutely not! The Welch Library Building is an important part of Johns Hopkins and “tearing it down” has never been considered and is NOT an option.

What will happen to library services while the Committee deliberates?

All library services, both on site and online, will continue as they were previously. This includes office delivery of materials and the availability of course reserve materials in classroom buildings. The review and identification of books and journals for removal from the library has been halted until the Committee for the 21st Century Welch Library has completed its charge.

The Welch Medical Library has an extensive collection of historical journals and books that are not available digitally. What is going to happen to these historical collections?

It has always been the Library’s intent to retain such materials. There will be no change to the Institute of the History of Medicine and its collection. The plan for reviewing journals from the Welch collection had anticipated removing only items available online and with a paper backup in the region. The plan for reviewing books from the Welch collection had anticipated removing mainly duplicates and items available in other local libraries. The above plans are on hold until the Committee completes its charge.
What are the plans for the building’s use in the future?

The Committee for the 21st Century Welch Library is charged with considering how the building could best be used to serve the academic and patient care needs of faculty, students and staff. Several ideas have been generated, and the Committee will examine this issue and make recommendations.

How can I get a copy of books and old journals that aren’t available digitally?

To obtain books from the Welch collection that are not available digitally, you can locate the item in the library catalog and ask that it be delivered to your office (for faculty and staff) or to the reserve/pick up/drop off areas in the five classroom buildings (for students). Additional information on circulation services and the locations of the classroom buildings may be found at http://www.welch.jhu.edu/services/circ.html

To obtain journal articles from the Welch collection or from other libraries that are not available digitally, use the free Weldoc service available from PubMed or directly. For more information on Weldoc see http://www.welch.jhu.edu/services/ill.html. Weldoc can also be used to obtain books that are not available digitally from other libraries.

Is it possible for students, faculty or staff to take ownership of books or journals that are being taken out of the physical collection because they are either available digitally or because there are duplicate copies in the region?

The Library has suspended all recycling or donations of books and journals until the Committee has completed its work. Should books and journals be slated for recycling or donations in the future, the Library is committed to making these available to students, faculty and staff.

I have heard many conflicting pieces of information….how can I find out what the Committee is really working on?

We want this process to be transparent. Meeting notes, materials, and background information will be posted on the Welch Library website: http://www.welch.jhu.edu/newlibrary/welch_library_transition.cfm
Email “blasts” will let those on the East Baltimore campus know about the link – please help us spread the word!

I’d like to make my voice heard. How can I communicate with the Committee?
We want to hear from you! Please send your comments, suggestions, or concerns to Joyce Hoebing (jhoebin1@jhmi.edu), or communicate with another member of the Committee. A membership list can be found at http://www.welch.jhu.edu/newlibrary/welch_library_transition.cfm).