The University Library Board met twice during AY 17-18, once each during the Fall 2017 and Spring 2018 academic terms. During both meetings, the Board served as a sounding board for the Dean of Libraries, with respect both to decisions already made and actions taken and those to be taken in the future. In addition, there is an ongoing focus within the Board to encourage the Dean with respect to marketing of Library services and opportunities and innovation in Library offerings.

At both meetings, on November 17, 2017, and on April 9, 2018, the Board received an overview of the FY 2018 Collections Budget and received a briefly from Scott Mandernack, Associate Dean for Scholarly Resources and Collections, on the continuing efforts to rebalance the Library budget to facilitate the licensing of electronic books and serials. This effort not only makes Library resources more readily searchable and available but reduces the need for physical materials to be housed and stored. This is an ongoing issue within the Board as well, as the Library lacks sufficient permanent space to store all such materials. Previous efforts by the Board, as described in last year’s report, helped facilitate the capitalization of electronic material purchases and reducing somewhat the pressure on the Library’s annual operation budget.

Marketing efforts were described by the Dean. Requests by the Board for additional data concerning trends in library use year-over-year have been requested and are in the process of being fulfilled. The Board received a detailed briefing concerning the Digital Scholarship Lab and the ongoing effort of the Library to touch as many different students in as many ways as possible.

From an operational perspective, the Dean explained the decision to eliminate e-reserves, and, at the Board’s suggestion, the Dean agreed to discuss with the Center for Teaching and Learning how best to provide information to faculty that would facilitate the proper use of resources from the Library in D2L and other teaching initiatives.
For next year, the Board hopes to build on two initiatives previously identified:

1. The University’s Office of Marketing and Communication will be enlisted to help in identifying and communicating more deeply relational and personal stories that emphasize the many ways in which student academic life is enriched by their interaction with Library resources and staff. In an era where many students seem to be believe that everything worth knowing is just a Google search away, being able to tell new students how the Library fills a need that they might not be aware that they have is a key to making the Library central to the academic life of students.

2. Outreach efforts, consistent with the University’s West Side Initiative, can be one way in which the Library makes contacts with students and faculty looking to make a difference while highlighting both the resources and expertise of the Library. The Board can assist the Library in developing specific proposals in this regard.