The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Tim Byrne for the Faculty Evaluation Task Force. He explained that the special meeting was requested by the task force because of concern raised by the discussion and the written ballot vote taken at the regular October faculty meeting regarding the direction the task force was moving in its work.

The vote was taken on a question which had been presented to faculty earlier for a straw vote by hand. A great difference in the number of dissenting votes indicated to the task force that there apparently had been a strong intimidation factor influencing the previous public vote.

Discussion of the task force's work at the October meeting included expressed concerns about the inherent difficulties for tenure-track faculty in being evaluated for compensation purposes according to one method and according to a different method for tenure decisions. Some supervisors of tenure-track faculty also expressed concerns about the dual evaluation in connection with proposed evaluation process streamlining. The task force's charge includes simplification of the faculty evaluation process and clarification of its relation to personnel actions such as reappointments, promotions, and tenure. Task force members had been regarding a single, unified annual evaluation system for all Libraries faculty members as a requirement for simplifying the process. During the October faculty meeting they began to feel that that approach might not provide fairly for the needs of all librarians.

Members present at the task force meeting held Oct. 12 found that the Dean supported their bringing a question to the faculty which would result in a full and open discussion of the variations in status of librarians employed as faculty in the system. At this meeting the decision was made to request a special meeting of the faculty and the question was formulated with the participation of all those present, to wit: "Should we abolish the current practice of hiring new faculty on the tenure track and, instead, give new faculty, as well as existing tenure track faculty, a choice between being on tenure track or not?"

The task force was not anticipating that a vote on the question would be taken at this special meeting, but hoped for the beginning of a thorough discussion of the matter which would assist both the task force in determining a recommended annual evaluation procedure and the full faculty in judging the acceptability of that procedure.

The ensuing faculty exchange brought out numerous comments, considerations and viewpoints which are summarized here:

Maintaining faculty status for UCB librarians and having tenure-track faculty are not one and the same. It would be important to retain faculty status even if non-tenure-track appointments were made routinely.

Because tenure is an increasingly scrutinized issue across the UC system, it would be a mistake to totally divorce tenure and faculty status in our considerations.

The faculty at the time did not have input in the late 1980's decision to begin hiring librarians on the tenure-track.

It's important that Libraries faculty have shared feelings of where we're going. All librarians, especially those on tenure-track, should speak out without fear of intimidation.
As a result of a recent vote in the Colorado Legislature, non-tenure-track faculty (instructors and senior instructors) are "employees at will" of the University. Tenured librarians have the same privileges and are as secure in their jobs as any other tenured faculty of the University. Job security for tenure-track librarians is dependent on the tenure process. Non-tenure-track librarians are no longer eligible for the extended research equivalent to sabbatical leave for tenured librarians.

We are a service organization. The tenure evaluation being based 40% on research sends an inappropriate message to our faculty members. The Dean has reported that chancellor Loh appears receptive to the idea of more emphasis on service for all Boulder Campus faculty. Then-Chancellor Corbridge is reported to have asked if having tenure-track faculty would improve the Librarians' service and to have given his approval when told it would. That the Chancellor asked about improvement in library service and not about improvement in library research highlights the differences between librarians and teaching faculty.

The demands on librarians, particularly when it comes to time and supervisory commitments, are very different from the demands on faculty in other departments. Librarians do not have the freedom to manage their time that other faculty have. Many other universities have a separate tenure track for librarians with requirements which fit better the everyday demands of the profession and its strong service emphasis. We need our own separate track to tenure for librarians.

There is great danger in having a separate track. In 1993, four UCB librarians who had fully met requirements of such a specialized librarian track—and who had been recommended by the department and by the Vice Chancellor's advisory committee—were denied tenure (along with some candidates on other specialty tracks) by the then president of the University who believed the varying tracks were not legitimate. Establishing a separate tenure-track for librarians would require a decision by the regents and could not be accomplished in time to affect librarians now approaching comprehensive review and tenure review.

There are campus grants available only to tenure-track or tenured faculty members. At least two tenure-track librarians have made successful proposals in these programs. Librarians who accepted tenure-track positions knew (or should have known) what they were getting into and should not expect to be able to opt off the track. The regents' rules as expressed in section vii. p. 10, of the University Faculty Handbook state that appointment as assistant professor means that a faculty member is on the track. Therefore there is no possibility of individual choice in the matter, even if future hiring were to be done on a different basis.

There could probably be a one-time choice, as there was in the early 80s, to opt off for those currently on the track if there were a change in practice for future recruiting. Some tenure-track librarians have found that they did not fully understand the stringency of UCB tenure requirements and the time demands of their job responsibilities when they accepted their positions. Some also feel an added lack of support for their required research and service activities as reflected in the resentment of departmental support staff when they spend time on those activities.

Current non-tenure-track faculty may elect to go on tenure-track. It would not work for librarians to be able to jump off and on the track at will.

Beginning tenure-track faculty in other departments are often permitted a reduced teaching load in their early years at the University. They also have usually established research agendas and have at least begun to establish research routines and habits because they have spent extensive periods working on doctoral dissertations. Librarians who are appointed at assistant professor rank generally must work at establishing their research focuses and lives at the same time they are training to be effective in their jobs. Tenure-track Librarians faculty should demand more "faculty-like" arrangements if they need them in order to meet the current tenure requirements.
It’s unfair to hire librarians on the tenure-track, and it would be a difficult situation for non-tenure-track faculty to vote on an issue that affects other librarians so much more than it does themselves.

Faculty members are entitled to a set number of hours per year of research leave. Time-report calendars submitted indicate that they are not taking the research leave available to them.

The faculty support time made available to tenure-track faculty by way of funding for an assistant is often used to accomplish job-related tasks rather than research-related ones, and the faculty members involved are usually also spending those hours in job-related activities. Hiring “support” librarians is creating a librarian underclass which is unfair to those in it and erodes our commitment to the profession. Only staff and graduate students should be hired in these positions.

There would be various ways to configure a tenure-track system. One would be for most librarians to come into the system, particularly into entry-level positions, as instructors with a period of time (two years or perhaps three) to learn their jobs and decide if they want to be appointed assistant professors and pursue tenure.

The opportunity to negotiate yearly a differentiated workload is available for tenure-track faculty who want to have research count more in their annual evaluations. The differentiated workload is regarded only as the basis for the annual evaluation, not for a faculty member’s expected use of time. The use and ramifications of this provision have not previously been clear to some tenure-track faculty.

An argument could be made that the Libraries do not have enough funding to support tenure-track faculty.

Discussing these issues can pose a danger to current Libraries faculty on the tenure track. How their tenure dossiers are regarded outside the Libraries could be influenced by knowledge that tenure-track is being questioned within the department.

Other campus faculty members often do not realize that we are faculty and, even if they do know, regard us as lower than themselves in status.

Non-tenure-track librarians have been able to make significant contributions to faculty governance and other activities, serving on influential campus and system committees with one even serving as elected chair of the Boulder Faculty Assembly.

The Library Advisory Board is currently accepting questions from all Libraries employees regarding tenure which the Dean is planning to answer. The effort is directed toward gathering information and shedding light.

Any consideration of tenure and/or faculty status is the right and responsibility of the faculty.

There not being a quorum present, the assembled faculty members decided informally that the issues presented were important enough to be placed on the regular November faculty meeting agenda as new business, with the possibility of a task force being appointed to provide for further discussion. Minutes of this special meeting would be distributed to all faculty to serve as background.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Whelan