

most public service departments and periodicals published from 1965 to present. Older, less used, and more scholarly materials are located in the John T. Wahlquist Library. University Librarian

Maureen Pastine devised the high use/low use plan for dividing the collections. The plan was approved by the SJSU Academic Senate before it was implemented. ■■

Research Release Time at the University of New Mexico Library

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In April 1979 the Ad Hoc Committee to Prepare a Final Report on Faculty Requirements (appointed by the dean of the library) at the University of New Mexico Library issued a document stating that UNM library faculty members have a strong commitment to scholarship and are most valued when they combine outstanding job performance with distinguished contributions in the areas of scholarship and service. This document was accepted by the dean and the library faculty.

In September 1979 another library committee, the Research and Publications Committee, raised the issue of granting release time for research, creative works, and publication. This committee is composed of five to seven librarians appointed by the dean and representatives of the library faculty from individuals who have expressed an interest in serving on it. Members are chosen from all areas of the library and all administrative levels.

By interviewing faculty members the committee soon learned how faculty handled their research responsibilities. Some people ignored the issue and resigned themselves to a tenure denial in the future. Others worked on their research nights and weekends. Some asked the dean for administrative leave for projects, while others took time off without asking anyone's permission. The committee found that the faculty preferred a formal, administratively sanctioned avenue for research release time.

Two possible options were available: 1) Individuals could fill out a leave form similar to one submitted when taking professional leave for a conference; the form could be signed by an immediate supervisor and the assistant dean of the division. Or 2), the committee could monitor a program for release time based on written guidelines accepted by the dean and university faculty.

The committee-monitored program had the advantage of creating support and encouragement to the faculty through contact made between committee members and individuals engaged in research. It also eliminated the objection that people

might not use their time productively. Although this approach eliminated the supervisor's input, the committee reasoned that since anyone who could not meet a publication requirement might face unemployment, then a supervisor's inconvenience during an employee's absence for release time was less of a problem than that person's permanent loss.

A leave form provided the easiest way to grant release time. It called less attention to the issue than the committee-monitored approach. The supervisor and assistant dean who sign the form could serve as a source of support and encouragement to the faculty member doing research. On the other hand, they also have the right to refuse leave in cases where they believe time might be wasted or could not be spared.

Committee members and the library administration favored the committee-monitored alternative.

The committee then drafted a plan for a pilot project and sent written guidelines to all faculty. It then accepted applications from individuals desiring professional leave for creative work, research and/or publication. It was felt that only non-tenured faculty should be eligible because their professional obligations were more pressing and they lacked the benefit of sabbatical leave.

The length of the project covered twelve months. Applications were limited to proposals which could be completed within six months and another six months were allowed for the submission/review process. All applications contained an outline of the work including the final objective desired (publication, prize, etc.), request for a specific range of release time, and evidence of commitment to the work from the faculty member or an outside agency. Evidence consisted of a literature search, a preliminary draft, preparation of a data collection instrument, collected data, a grant, a letter of interest from a publisher or other source, and a statement of intent to complete the work.

All applications were reviewed using the following criteria: the potential value of the work to the individual and to the target audience; its likelihood of success as measured by a positive review from

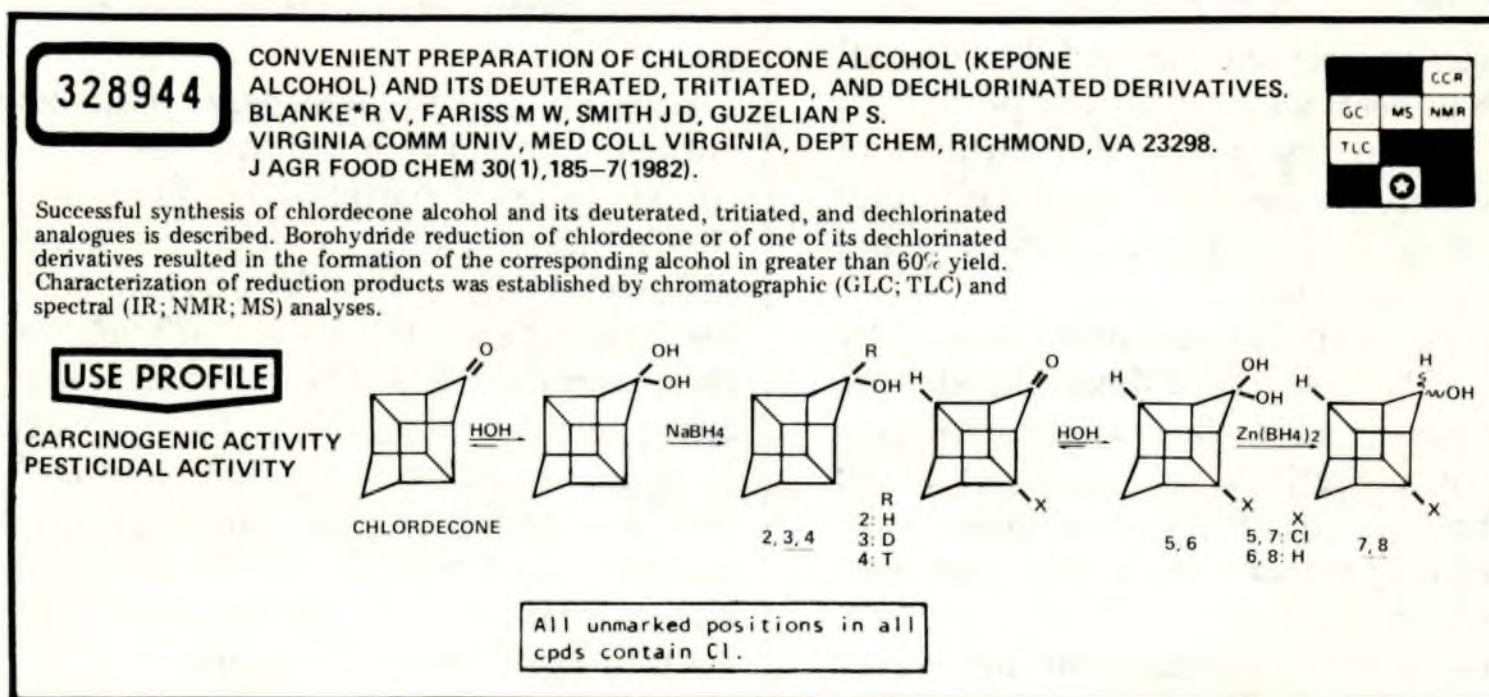
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outside the library, its acceptance for publication, or a commendation; the likelihood of completion within six months, including any personal time required; and its appropriateness for the pilot project.

Next, the committee prepared a memo to the dean in which each proposal was evaluated according to these criteria. The committee recommended an amount of time for each proposal which could be taken in a block or could vary from two to eight hours per week for one to six months, not to exceed a total of one month (170 hours). Co-authored works were allotted a number of hours within this limit to be divided among those participating. The dean reviewed the recommendations and approved the use of professional leave for no more than six proposals.

Each participant submitted a brief, oral report monthly on their progress and problems, and at the end of the leave period submitted a copy of their work to the committee. Upon final disposition of the work or one year after leave had been granted (whichever occurred first), each applicant reported on their success.

Five faculty members sent in applications for release time during the pilot project. Three people were working on a joint project, so there were a total of three proposals which the committee finally recommended. One applicant already had a commitment to write a chapter for a book. The other two projects involved writing articles to be submitted to journals.

The 1979 pilot project was successful in that all of the research projects were eventually published. However, all the applicants found it difficult to take off all the time granted because of their other workloads, and all had to do some research and writing on their own time.

The policy was then permanently adopted by the University of New Mexico Library. Under the present guidelines the committee can approve up to six proposals concurrently. Since there have never been more than six simultaneous requests, the guideline specifying preference to untenured faculty has never been put into practice.

Works considered for release time are either short works which the applicant completes within a six-month period or sections of larger works when the applicant has demonstrated evidence of previous publishing activity. A second or subsequent leave request will only be considered if the applicant used the prior leave constructively.

This policy has been in effect for three years. Each year new committee members are appointed with some overlap from the previous year.

The committee has only rejected one proposal. The individual had requested release time to prepare for a summer course to be taught at another institution. The committee felt that such an activity did not fall within the guidelines and recommended formal permission from the dean. In several cases the committee has recommended less

release time than was requested. In each case this was based on the committee's belief that the project could be completed in less time than the applicant requested.

Research activity, especially among the newer faculty at UNM, has increased since the implementation of this policy. People under evaluation for midway and tenure reviews are examined for their use of this option. Faculty can no longer claim that they were not given time to pursue research.

By officially designating a portion of the 40-hour week for research, librarians' workloads are made comparable to those of the teaching faculty. ■■



Credit for CE Courses

Fifty ACRL members and 50 past participants to ACRL continuing education courses were recently surveyed to determine their reaction to the idea of offering Continuing Education Units (CEU's) for participation in ACRL continuing education courses. Although other library associations such as SLA and MLA provide CEU's, ACRL currently does not offer the CEU as part of its continuing education program.

A cover letter to the survey, which was sent out in October, explained that one CEU is "ten contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction and qualified instruction." (*Criteria and Guidelines for the Use of the CEU*, The Council on the CEU, Silver Springs, Md.) The CEU is designed to provide a standard of measurement and a system of recordkeeping for noncredit continuing education and provision of the CEU would in no way change the nature or costs of the ACRL continuing education program.

The survey asked the following three questions: 1) Would you be more likely to obtain permission to attend a continuing education course if CEU's were offered for that course? 2) Do you foresee advantages for yourself if CEU's are offered? And 3) would you prefer that the ACRL continuing education program offer CEU's?

Responses to the idea of providing CEU's to ACRL continuing education participants are welcomed. If you have a concern or would like to respond to the survey questions, please send your responses to: Barbara Macikas, ACRL/ALA, 50 E. Huron, Chicago, Illinois 60611; (312) 944-6780.



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