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Annual Report 2008

Henry Whittemore Library, Framingham State University

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Henry Whittamore Library
Annual Report
Academic Year 2008-2009

Submitted by Bonnie Mitchell, Director of Library Services – May 2009

Activities

This past year, Librarians were engaged in a variety of activities to upgrade services for faculty and students and to improve awareness of available resources in the Library and online. Additions were made to the Library web page, including book reviews, event announcements, and an informational BLOG and improvements were made to streamline database access for off campus users. Members of the I.T. department and Academic Technology staff worked closely with Electronic Resources librarian, Millie Gonzalez to upgrade the campus proxy server and the user authentication process in order to provide remote access to all the Library's electronic resources. Libguide software was purchased to improve the existing static electronic resource subject guides and to update them in a more dynamic format.

In preparation for the Fall 2008 semester, I asked part-time Reference librarian Barbara Slavin to assist with the design of a professional development activity that was called "Library 2.0 – Five Things". Staff members participated by learning about 5 new technologies (wikis, blogs, flicker, del.icio.us, and library thing) via online tutorials and at their own pace. After completion of all 5 activities, staff members attained greater technological proficiency, were recognized for their efforts, and were ready to apply what they learned in the upcoming semester.

On the Fall semester Entering Students Day, Library staff introduced themselves to Freshmen and welcomed those entering the building with cake and students met librarians Millie Gonzalez and Peg Snyder who participated in the Foundations program as facilitators.

During the semester, Millie Gonzalez and I applied for and received the First-Year Advisory Board \$750 grant for the promotion of civic engagement and related programming on campus. In collaboration with the Office of Student Involvement and Career Services, the Library used some of the funds to host a reception and talk on civic engagement with Senator Karen Spilka and promote voter registration in advance of the upcoming election. Archivist Colleen Previte and part-time Reference librarian Barbara Slavin created the "Politics Comes To Framingham" slide show that was used during the SGA sponsored political debate. A follow up State House tour with Senator Spilka for approximately 25 students was arranged in April 2009.

The team of librarians focused on expanding the instruction program by creating standardized teaching models for Freshmen, developing lesson plans, and creating a basic online tutorial. In order to keep faculty and staff informed about new resources, Electronic Resources librarian, Millie Gonzalez developed monthly "lunchable" sessions and instructed on topics such as Refworks citation management tool, the use of new technologies, and using RSS feed to keep informed.

Requests for Librarians to be "embedded" in Blackboard courses continue to increase and this past year, librarians assisted both day and online students in courses using Blackboard. Over the past 5 years, requests for this service have grown from 3 classes using embedded librarians to a current total of 18 classes being served. I expect this trend will continue.

Blackboard is also used by library staff to keep a common calendar for instruction classes, share planning documents, and mount photographs of events. In addition, the Circulation department staff (Peg Snyder and Lori Wolfe) created a Blackboard site for student assistants that includes

an employee manual, work schedules, tasks to be completed and other relevant information. This is an effective way for staff to communicate with the Library's student assistants as a group, confirm schedules, and track the completion of tasks. It also enables the students to communicate with each other for scheduling changes and work assignments.

During the year, Library staff worked with college administrators, facilities staff, and others to address the need for building improvements. A committee was formed to work with an architect and a Library renovation plan was developed that will upgrade the building's infrastructure and make the public spaces more user-friendly. The plans for Phase One of the project, which is to rebuild a more streamlined and ADA compliant Circulation Desk and upgrade the first floor study spaces was on hold, but will now move forward in the summer 2009. These improvements will be immediately seen as students enter the building in the Fall 2009 and will go a long way in making a positive impression and in creating a welcoming environment for both individuals and those studying in groups.

Over the Spring 2009 semester, Security Monitor, Ben Ramsey, recorded the amount of students in the Library during the last hour of operation. On the evenings that the Library closed at 11pm there were as few as 4 people or as many as 17, but usually averaged 11 students who remained until closing. In the last month of the semester, during extended exam hours, there were as few as 2 and as many as 14 students remaining in the building until 1pm (see attached calendar). Although these figures may not seem to reflect the need to have the Library open until 1pm during exam "month", I would recommend continuing this practice as a service to those who do prefer quiet study space and for those who may choose late night studying in the Library once we advertise the extended hours more widely.

Other staff activities for the 2008-2009 academic year include:

* Archivist Colleen Previte mounted displays during Banned Books Week and Women's History Month. During both semesters, she requested and received Simmons College interns in the Masters in Library and Information Science program to assist her in the Special Collections department.

* During the holidays, Electronic Resources librarian, Millie Gonzalez arranged for the collection of gifts for the Toys for Tots program, Debbie Hogan, Periodicals Supervisor, organized a canned food drive in the Library, and Curriculum Librarian, Mary Pat Craig donated unwanted publisher's copies of children's books to the local Food For Thought program.

* Curriculum Librarian Mary Pat Craig and I worked with Professor Evelyn Perry and the Children's Literature Festival Committee to plan and implement the college's Fall program with author Barbara Lehman.

* Millie Gonzalez collaborated with Prof. L. Holloway, David Baldwin, and Maya Weilundemo on a campus program to mentor high school students.

* Part-time Reference librarian Barbara Slavin organized the Library's Brown Bag Book Discussion group and facilitated the discussion of "Samurai's Garden" by Gail Tsukiyama. This event was attended by approximately 20 staff, administrators, and faculty and will be repeated annually.

* In the Spring 2009, Laura Wilson, a Simmons College intern completing her degree in the Masters of Science in Library Science, requested an internship in the Library and was assigned to the Reference department. Laura is an FSC graduate and has a background in Modern Languages (M.A. French Literature from Boston College). She completed her internship and her degree in Library and Information Science and has been hired as a part-time Reference librarian replacing Elizabeth Bolton. She brings skills in teaching and in the use of various technologies to this position.

*The Curriculum Library staff (Mary Pat Craig, Kim Carney, Megan Lenzi) sponsored an event with author/illustrator Nancy Poydar. This was held in the Library's Archives Room and was well attended by Education majors in the field study III classes and by children from the college's Child Development Lab.

*I collaborated with Professor Emilce Cordeiro to sponsor an event for Modern Language students and arranged for guest speaker Rebecca Center to give a presentation, in Spanish, on Guatemalan culture.

*Millie Gonzalez and I networked with staff from the Framingham Public Library to discuss possible joint programming for the 2009 National Library Week celebration based on receiving an American Library Association National Library Week Grant. Although we did not receive the grant funding, our efforts laid the groundwork for future collaborative programming with the town library and Mass Bay Community College.

* The Library did have its own National Library Week celebration and the main event was a Book Discussion on "Three Cups of Tea" by author Greg Mortensen facilitated by Professor Lisa Eck and attended by approximately 10 staff and faculty.

*Reference librarians Marion Slack and Laura Wilson and I participated in the college's Green Festival by creating a display of newly acquired environmental books and demonstrating a newly developed Environmental Sciences online Libguide.

* Acquisitions Librarian, Shin Freedman presented her research on Mentoring to library staff.

*A presentation on the effectiveness of using historic materials in the classroom was given by Archivist Colleen Previte, and Professors Kelly Kolodny and Juli Zoinio Jeanetti at the New England Archivist Conference in Spring 2009.

Grants

This year, two librarians were awarded grants from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). The Library Incentive Grant for \$5000 was received by Millie Gonzalez and the funds have been used to update the Business Reference print and online collection that supports the college's MBA program. A section of the Library's main floor near the Reference Room has been designated as the Business area and includes Business related newspapers and career resources. Bringing these resources together and providing additional PC and a printer, combined with comfortable seating, has attracted more students to this area. A \$1000 donation to the Library was used to purchase a subscription to an online Dictionary of Business and Economics.

The MBLC's Preservation Survey Grant for \$2500 was received by Archivist, Colleen Previte. The funds have been used to hire a consultant to review the college's archival collection and provide a report on the recommended preservation methods for these materials. This assessment was completed in Spring 2009 and is the required first step in applying for grants to fund any future digitizing projects the Archivist plans. Ms. Previte will follow through with digitizing portions of the collection which will provide online access to a broad range of researchers and protect the Library's historic and fragile materials.

Completed and still under consideration is a MBLC Green Library grant for \$7500 that I submitted in March. If awarded, grant funding will be used to purchase and promote the use of library resources in the field of environmental science, to support green initiatives on campus, and to develop environmental programming.

The Collection

The weeding process of materials in the main book collection and Reference room was completed at the end of this academic year. New books were purchased based on requests by faculty and selections made by the Acquisitions librarian. Updated editions of Reference materials were added, including "Credo Reference", a collection of 100 Reference titles in electronic format. During the academic year, this resource was searched 3191 times. The high usage reflects the convenience of accessing Reference sources online and this trend will impact collection development decisions moving forward. Over the summer, databases and journals usage statistics will be reviewed and subscription renewals will be discussed among the librarians. Meetings will be planned with academic departments to keep faculty informed about the use of materials in their discipline and decisions will be made as to whether existing materials should be kept and promoted or substituted for other resources. The graphic included in this packet shows that this past year, the Library spent 80% of the acquisitions budget on electronic databases and periodical subscriptions. Given the college's increasing online course offerings and student and faculty preference for 24/7 remote access to library resources, I expect this trend to continue. At the same time, it's important for us to ensure that expensive materials are being used. The process of demonstrating and promoting electronic resources and review of their usefulness with faculty is ongoing.

Other additions to this year's collection include Environmental Science books, electronic journals to support the Masters in Nursing program, the online version of Palgrave's Dictionary of Business and Economics, and databases that include the Historical New York Times, Historical Abstracts, Communication and Mass Media Complete, and LexisNexis Statistical Datasets.

Statistics (see attached sheet)

Activity indicators of note are those that reflect the following trends: increasing amounts of electronic reserve items mounted on Blackboard course sites; increasing amounts of electronic Reference transactions (email and I.M.); and the increasing number of classes served by "embedded" librarians. Libguide usage statistics are also included in this packet and show that since this software was applied and electronic subject guides were either reformatted or newly created, guides were accessed 5249 times. Currently, there are 16 published Libguides on the Library web page and they are heavily used, particularly by students in Nursing, Psychology, Fashion, and History. Because of its popularity, efforts will be made to encourage faculty to partner with librarians to create a "Libguide" for each of the remaining academic subject areas.