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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WAIDNER-SPAHR LIBRARY, DICKINSON COLLEGE

SUMMER 2007

THE INTERNET & "INFORMATION LITERACY"



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Library and Information Services



The exponential growth of the Internet during this decade has transformed how faculty members conduct research and teach and how students learn. Students now have instant access to vast bodies of digitized materials, including scientific research and statistical data, geographic information, images of works of art, and video and film. Even back runs of scholarly journals, some of them published decades ago, have been digitized and made available over the Internet.

The availability of scholarly information in electronic form accelerates the pace of research and learning and minimizes much of the drudgery of the process of inquiry. For example, instead of searching through bound paper volumes of indexes, online indexes can be searched in a matter of seconds. Similarly, when a quote is found in an online article, it can simply be cut and pasted into a word-processing document. This pattern is reinforced by efforts, such as Google Scholar, that adapt commercial search tools for scholarly use.

While the ease of use offered by electronic access is

welcome, the Internet also presents challenges to faculty members as they educate our students. Students who have not been exposed to the research process may falsely assume that a Google search will identify all relevant information on a topic. Moreover, they may assume that everything that they find on the Internet is of equal value.

On the Internet, the longstanding distinctions between commercial and scholarly publications, for example, which were relatively easy to perceive with print publications, are blurred. And the ease with which text may be cut and pasted into documents may lead some students to plagiarize inadvertently when they have not been educated about the need to cite sources.

These challenges have led to efforts to promote "information literacy," that is, the ability to discern the value of a source of information. In fact, Dickinson's Strategic Plan has the development of an information-literacy strategy as one of its goals, which supports the college's ambition to become, again in the words of the Strategic Plan, a Community of Inquiry

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Promoting Academic Integrity

This year, in order to promote academic honesty on campus in an engaging way, the library staff is using "clicker" technology to teach first-year students about the subtle nuances of plagiarism.

The interactive presentation, called The Seven Deadly Sins of Plagiarism, allows students to consider various on-screen writing examples and vote anonymously via a remote-control device on whether they think the author has committed an act of plagiarism. This voting technology, like the kind often

seen on reality-TV shows, tests student knowledge in a nonthreatening manner and gives the instructor immediate feedback on students' comprehension of the material.

The program has so far been well-received by the students, who have made comments such as, "The clicker thingies ROCK!" Based on constructive feedback from first-year students, the library staff plans to continue the program and improve the academic-honesty program for the 2007-2008 academic year.

*"I like how it was interactive.
Cool technology."*

—Dickinson student



INTERNET *Continued from page 1*

characterized by engaged, active learners. Clearly, scholarly inquiry is not possible if students are not able to discern the validity of information and exercise judgment when using different sources of information.

The Division of Library and Information Services (LIS) supports these goals by collaborating with the faculty. This fall, for example, LIS librarians taught 163 sessions on the proper use of scholarly information, including 65 sessions in first-year seminars. Under the leadership of information-literacy librarian Chris Bombaro, librarians also taught interactive sessions on academic integrity and the proper citing of sources to all first-year students.

The teamwork between Dickinson College faculty members and LIS librarians results in a wide range of imaginative collaborations, including working with professors on specific academic projects like guiding students as they research historical references, helping students evaluate publications with scholarly and non-scholarly sources, developing small-group research activities and teaching the use of specialized databases.

The ongoing investment in staff time and resources reflected by these collaborations is substantial. Because of this, LIS librarians continuously assess the value of their efforts in order to identify best practices and effective techniques. They plan in the future to leverage their merged library and information technology organization by extending the concept of information literacy to include computing skills and the use of emerging technologies.

Just as educated citizens in the print era did not believe everything that they read in the newspaper, our students will be ready to discern information of value in digital form as they conduct their personal, professional and civic lives.

Adapted from a report to the Dickinson College trustees

Newly Acquired Databases and Electronic Reference Resources

- American National Biography (ANB)
- Ancestry Library Edition
- Chicago Manual of Style
- CQ Researcher
- CQ Weekly
- Encyclopedia Judaica
- Encyclopedia of Philosophy
- Grove Art Online
- Marketline Business Information Center
- Naxos Music Library
- PsycARTICLES



Reaching Out: Library Reception for International Scholars and Students

This fall, Dickinson was home to 57 international scholars and students, representing 37 different countries. Each participant brought unique life experiences and a fresh global perspective, greatly enriching cultural diversity for all Dickinson community members.

However, adjusting to a new cultural and educational system can be difficult. Many of these scholars and students were in the United States for the first time and, in most cases, they were alone with little support from families and friends.

Dickinson's librarians and library-support staff members recognize these distinctive challenges, and to ease the transition for international scholars and students, the library created a new outreach program this year. The program included a welcome reception and a series of library and information-technology workshops.

The library reception took place September 14 in the Blumberg Reading Area. Each of the 17

attending international students received a copy of Library Survival Guide for International Students, a library-resource guide customized for the needs of non-U.S. students. In addition, many of them joined the optional library tour and learned in detail about all the key library resources and services.

Best of all, the reception provided a valuable opportunity for these students to socialize with each other and with librarians. Through casual interaction, accompanied by delicious food and drink, the students had their first exposure to the Waidner-Spahr Library, not only as a place of learning, but also as a friendly, welcoming place where librarians will reach beyond their professional duties to anyone who might need help.



RARE AND INTERESTING BOOKS ON DISPLAY



What is the oldest book owned by Dickinson College? Printed in 1474, *Sermones Discipuli* is a large tome bound in hand-detailed pigskin that covers its wooden end boards. Along with the black printed text, red-inked letters added later by hand offer a striking contrast on each folio sheet. This volume is part of the new exhibit in the May Morris Room, the public reading room of the Archives and Special Collections.

For those who may not have ventured into this climate-controlled space on the lower level of the Waidner-Spahr Library, the Archives is home to countless interesting college treasures.

Last spring, student workers Lisa Wainwright '08 and Margaret Browndorf '08 spent their afternoons researching these treasures and designing displays for the 10 cases that line the back of the May Morris Room. The resulting exhibit highlights the college's collection of rare books.

These volumes generally go unnoticed and unused, except by the few researchers who request them, although they are as

varied in nature and discipline as the range of subjects taught at the college.

The exhibit includes examples on illustration, how books are made, the history of printing and ex libris (bookplates that denote ownership). In addition, one case is devoted to children's literature, while another looks at the world of travel. Classic works illustrated by the famed 19th-century engraver Gustave Doré offer examples of book artistry, while the importance of the word and expression is the focus of cases displaying volumes of poetry and novels. Finally, one case offers up some curiosities, displaying texts that expound on various scientific (and some less-than-scientific) notions.

This exhibit will be open to the public during the Archives' regular hours of operation through June 2007. And since the rare-book exhibit provides just a glimpse at the many interesting volumes amassed at Dickinson College through more than two centuries, we hope you all will be encouraged to spend some additional time exploring the library's unique holdings.



Your Library

Have you ever wanted to browse the library's DVD collection? Read a newspaper or magazine in the comfort of the Stafford Room? These are two suggestions made by our patrons last year, and we've heard your requests.

Several people recommended that it would be nice to be able to browse the DVD collection, much like you would at Blockbuster. We liked this idea and, after careful consideration, we found a perfect spot to highlight our fantastic offerings. All you need to do is come through the main entrance and look to the left. The film cases are on the shelves organized alphabetically by title.

We also moved the newspapers and popular magazines from their hidden location on the lower level to a more prominent area of the newly renovated Stafford Room. Pick out one of our local or international papers and sit back in the comfort of a soft leather chair. While you're at it, go ahead and put your feet up on a matching ottoman.

The library receives hundreds of new titles each month. Our new "This Just In" display showcases these circulating books. Look to the right just beyond our beloved mermaid as you come in the main entrance of the library to check out this dynamic collection.

"My day doesn't start until I've read

The New York

Times in the

Stafford Room."

A friend of the library





Award-winning Art

The library, in partnership with the Goodyear Gallery, will display paintings created by Weiss Prize-winning artists. Each year a select group of senior students receives this prestigious award.

Established in 1986 through the financial support of Emil R. and Tamar Weiss, the Weiss Prize is a grant of \$1,000 awarded to Dickinson seniors based on demonstrated excellence in drama, English, fine arts or music. The prize can be awarded to one person or a group of people.

The library is privileged to showcase paintings by some of Dickinson's most innovative and talented student artists.



Meghan Lantzy '01

RefWorks

The library has recently added RefWorks to its growing array of tools designed to help students and faculty with the research and writing processes. This software can be easily accessed online and allows the user to retrieve and organize reference information from the library's many databases. A bibliography can then be automatically generated in any style, and the software will even automatically format the user's citations or footnotes.

For students, the usefulness of this software will be obvious, since it simplifies one of the

more confusing aspects of writing a research paper, but it should appeal to faculty as well. Using RefWorks, an article written in a particular citation style can be reformatted to conform to another. Researchers who are collaborating can even use it to compile a single bibliography.

RefWorks can be found on the library's home page under the heading Doing Research.



Noteworthy News

- Chris Bombaro, librarian and information literacy coordinator, will teach the first-year seminar, Tell Me Why: The Role of Information in Society, this fall semester.
- Coming soon to our airwaves: Amelia Brunskill, science liaison librarian, will host a new radio show, Controlled Vocabulary.
- A donation by Michael Pennington '07 will be used to purchase a leather chair for the library's study room #7.
- Subscribe to the library's new RSS feeds and get the latest information and updates on the library's newest acquisitions, news and events, faculty publications and Dickinson Reads book collection.