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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WAIDNER-SPAHR LIBRARY, DICKINSON COLLEGE

SPRING 2009

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION

In March, the Archives & Special Collections and the college's Feminist Collective co-sponsored a Hands-on History program in recognition of Women's History Month. Dickinson community members were invited to visit the archives and browse through photographs, scrapbooks, letters and other memorabilia depicting the academic, social and professional lives of the college's alumnae. This interactive exhibit featured items such as dress-code regulations, athletics trophies, literary publications and founding documents from Dickinson's Women's Center.

The Archives & Special Collections preserves the college's history with a rich collection of documents, images and artifacts, including materials from student organizations, campus events and administrative departments. The department's staff members welcome visits from alumni, students, faculty and community members to pursue research, prepare for class reunions or anniversary events or simply share memories. For more information, e-mail archives@dickinson.edu or visit <http://lis.dickinson.edu/library/archives>.



MANAGING A LIBRARY COLLECTION IN DIFFICULT ECONOMIC TIMES

by Christine Bombaro '93, Associate Director for Library Collections

Like other sectors of the world economy, libraries are affected dramatically by financial downturns. Funding for public libraries is often cut from city budgets during hard economic times, as was demonstrated in Philadelphia in December 2008.

The Waidner-Spahr Library is not immune to economic fluctuations. The library will have to significantly reduce spending in future fiscal cycles, and library staff members must be good stewards of the funds entrusted to us and ensure that our library collection is relevant to our faculty members' and students' research and teaching needs.

We have been taking steps to reduce library spending and make sure our funds are spent wisely. For example, we recently com-

pleted a study of any book series purchased on standing order (which means new volumes are received automatically) and cancelled sets that are no longer relevant to the curriculum. We also created a ranking system for book requests that require "rush" delivery, realizing significant savings from postage costs associated with rapid shipping arrangements.

The three largest components of the library budget—books, research databases and journal subscriptions—are the most critical sources of academic information. With thousands of titles available, journal subscriptions are particularly difficult to manage. The library subscribes to many journals that publishers supply in "bundles." We pay a single fixed price for a set, many of which we want, but some of which we do not need.

Different packages frequently duplicate coverage, and we receive some online titles that we already receive in print.

The library is conducting studies to reduce such duplication. In fall 2008, we completed a small statistical analysis of seldom-used, online journals and canceled some of them, and we are looking to cancel many titles that are received both in print and online or come from multiple vendors. We also have begun to gather and analyze usage statistics for all online journals and databases to make sure that we keep the most relevant materials.

One creative idea that resulted from our collaboration with faculty members was to offer physics department faculty a "pay-per-view" model of article retrieval. This plan

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The Value of Work-Study in the Archives

By Jim Gerencser '93, College Archivist



During the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists in August, I attended a session on educating professional archivists. Reflecting on my experiences with students, I made a list of former work-study employees now working as information professionals or attending graduate school for library, archives or museum studies.

My list quickly grew to more than a dozen names. Most of my colleagues from larger institutions, however, could only think of one or two. Wondering what made our work-study program at Dickinson unique, I developed a survey to learn from our former student employees what they found useful about their experience.

With the assistance of Friends of the Library Intern Jessica Howard '01, Special Collections Librarian Malinda Triller and I sent the survey to 49 former work-study students from the last 10 graduating classes. Thirty have responded.

Of those 30, 13 indicated that they work in libraries, museums and archives. When asked why they sought undergraduate employment in the archives, 40 percent reported a general interest in history, 23 percent became interested following a class assignment, 17 percent expressed an interest in rare books and 10 percent had developed an interest beforehand. History was the most popular major, with 23 respondents earning their B.A. in that field, while only 12 students had actually intended to study history.

Only 17 percent answered that they had worked in the field prior to Dickinson, and 63 percent indicated that they had done so since graduating. Fifty-seven percent said their career plans were influenced by working in the archives. One person commented, "After the positive experience I had working in the college archives, I knew that I wanted to work in an archival institution. I enjoyed the responsibility, the connection with history and the interaction with researchers."

All of the survey respondents said that they would recommend such work to

others. When asked what they found most useful, respondents cited the research skills they developed, the value of organizing and analyzing unique resources and the richness of working with a variety of materials.

To the question, "Did your work in the college archives teach you something that you have found useful in your current career?" 87 percent answered yes. One respondent who did not pursue an information career commented, "I found my work in the college archives to be just as rewarding of an experience as any of my classes at Dickinson. To call it 'work' is, in my opinion, a misnomer, as it was an opportunity to build and develop skills that have had a lasting influence on my career and life after Dickinson."

Our respondents also shared a number of excellent ideas for improving the program. Some would have liked to visit other archival settings to compare different types of repositories. Many indicated that they would have liked to work with a wider variety of materials, and several respondents commented that they would have liked more chances to work collaboratively with fellow students and with researchers. We plan to address all of these suggestions as we work to provide a valuable undergraduate work-study experience.

REFLECTIONS ON THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY INTERNSHIP

by Jessica Howard '01

As a Dickinson alumna with a degree in environmental studies, I am often asked how I became a librarian. It has been a bit of a winding path. But ultimately my unexpected temporary-turned-permanent position with the Brookings Institution Press fostered my interest in information as a career. This position not only made me think about the creation and dissemination of scholarly research—an important element of the organization's mission—but it also exposed me to the nuts and bolts of how data is stored and transmitted and the new ways that the Web is being used for information.

With this newfound interest, I began pursuing an M.S. in library and information science with the School of Information Studies at Syracuse University. A year later, when I

found that Dickinson was offering an internship to alumni interested in working in the library or information fields, I enthusiastically applied and was fortunate to be offered the position.

The Friends of the Library Internship has given me valuable experience. I have been involved in information-literacy instruction by assisting librarians with the college's Academic Integrity Program and First-Year Seminar instruction. This experience dovetailed nicely with a course I took on teaching, allowing me to observe different teaching methods while applying what I learned. I've also worked on collection development, reference projects and outreach activities including a library-tour brochure. I have put my Web and electronic promotion experience to use by customizing the interlibrary-loan interface.

I have also collaborated with Dickinson librarians to create an online instruction module, develop a survey of past archives work-study students and evaluate the library's event-outreach activities.

I graduate from Syracuse in May, and this internship ends shortly thereafter, so I'll soon be looking for an academic library job. With current economic conditions, I will likely be entering a difficult job market, but I know that I am better positioned to find a job and do it well thanks to internship. I am grateful to the Friends of the Library for funding this valuable experience and to the librarians and staff at the Waidner-Spahr Library for offering their wit, wisdom and guidance throughout the year.

Women's History on the Web



In 2009, Dickinson College will celebrate the 125th anniversary of the matriculation of the first women at the college in September 1884. In recognition of this landmark event, Archives & Special Collections staff members have collaborated with a team of student interns and volunteers to launch the Women's Experiences at Dickinson blog, at <http://itech.dickinson.edu/coeducation>.

This blog contains stories and images from yearbooks, oral histories, student-organization records and college publications from the late 19th century to the present. From small acts of dress-code defiance during World War II to the establishment of a Black Alumni Association in 1979, this resource depicts the everyday challenges and accomplishments of Dickinson's female students.

Updates to this blog will continue as additional resources are identified. Members of the Dickinson community are

encouraged to contribute their stories and knowledge to the blog by contacting Archives & Special Collections at archives@dickinson.edu or by submitting information using the "comments" feature offered on the site.

Funding for this project has been provided in part by the Dickinson College Research and Development Committee, and technical assistance has been provided by the Instructional and Media Services Department. Student contributors to this project include:

Jennifer Chmielewski '10
Natalie Cortez '09
Eleanor Etheredge '09
Caitlin Garlow '09
Delia Gutierrez '10
Michelle Hadley '09
Jeyla Mammadova '11
Leslie Mendoza '11
Caroline Radesky '09
Allison Schell '11
Flosha Tejada '11
Yazmin Watkins '09

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helped the library save money and improve service to faculty. We are setting up a similar model for the math & computer science department. (For more information, see "Updates on Two Alternative Access Models.")

The library is grateful for

gifts from our alumni and friends who most generously help offset our costs. Those wishing to do so should review the library's gift policy on our Web site before contacting a representative in the development office.

Library Hosts Camp CALM for English Majors

Information literacy instruction beyond the First-Year Seminar is meant to familiarize students with the key academic resources in their fields and to introduce higher-order concepts in research. Along with the English department, we faced an interesting challenge in meeting this goal. Most research-oriented projects for English majors take place in 300-level classes; English majors are required to take a minimum of six 300-level classes to complete their degrees. To simply require the liaison librarian to visit each 300-level class offered every semester would create scheduling challenges, limit individualized attention and force many students to sit through the same instruction session up to six times.

The creative solution, Camp CALM (Critical Approaches to Literary Methods), resulted from a meeting between the English department and their librarian, Christine Bombaro '93. According to the pilot project plan, each semester the English department will identify all English majors taking a 300-level class for the first time. Those students then meet twice with the librarian outside of regular class time.

Prior to the first meeting with the librarian, students submit a brief research plan so that the librarian can determine the students' experience with research resources and properly focus the instruction sessions. Topics for Camp CALM may include finding literary criticism, MLA citation style, finding primary sources and using RefWorks, the library's bibliographic management program. During Camp CALM, students begin to build a bibliography that will feed their final research paper while developing information-finding skills that will help them complete their major and build their lifelong information-seeking habits.

Camp CALM made its debut this spring, with Associate Professor of English Wendy Moffat's James Joyce's *Ulysses* class and Professor of English Ash Nichols' Thoreau, Wilderness and American Writing class. The initial positive feedback from students indicates that the program is valuable. Camp CALM will continue through the 2009-10 academic year following an assessment to identify areas for improvement. There is no longer any reason for English majors to be apprehensive about research—instead they can be "CALM."

Waidner-Spahr Library, Dickinson College

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Updates on Two Alternative-Access Models

The library has been exploring different approaches for article delivery. One is a “pay-per-article” system for physics-department faculty, which provides access to articles from journals outside of our subscriptions. The other is a service called RapidILL, which provides fast access to journal articles through interlibrary loan (ILL). Below are updates on how these two services are faring:

Pay-Per-Article

Physics faculty members wanted greater flexibility and immediacy when accessing articles from journals to which we do not subscribe. They often needed these articles late at night when ILL staff members are unavailable, and they sometimes required access to full-color images. After the cancellation of some physics journal subscriptions, the library created a fund to support the direct purchase of articles from publisher Web sites or other services.

The implementation was not complicated. We enabled the “pay-per-article” system in ScienceDirect (one of the major scientific databases) and set up an account in Scitation (a commercial document-delivery service) for the department. We arranged for faculty to charge article purchases to a department credit card, and then we associated these charges with a fund code for the library.

This was initially designed as a one-year trial, starting in August 2007. During that

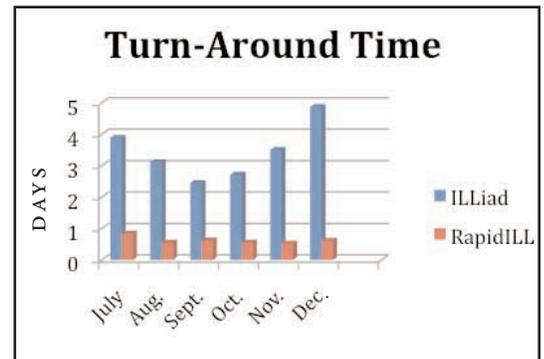
time, we spent approximately \$500 on article purchases, saving thousands of dollars. We have since evaluated the pilot program and determined that it is worth continuing.

Physics faculty members are pleased with the program. One noted, “Overall, I have found this system to be very well suited for my needs, and I would recommend it to the other departments as well.” Another commented, “I have been very happy with the trial. It is great to receive the articles I need immediately, and they come from a variety of journals. ... Almost everything I needed has been available online through either the library subscription, free online content or single article purchase.”

RapidILL

To further expedite the ILL process, we asked our consortia for startup funds to implement RapidILL, a document-delivery system that encompasses 120 member libraries, provides speedy access to journal articles and eliminates the time-intensive mediation by staff.

In June, we installed the RapidILL software on staff computers, upgraded scanners to accommodate the new demand for electronic delivery, sent holdings to the RapidILL administrator and attended



training. By July 1, we had incorporated RapidILL into the daily workflow in the ILL office. Article requests are programmed to be submitted to RapidILL first; if none of the participating libraries can fulfill them, they are then processed through ILLiad, our traditional interlibrary-loan system.

Now more than 50 percent of our patrons’ article requests are filled through RapidILL and delivered to our patrons within 24 hours.

