



**Waidner-Spahr Library  
Dickinson College**

**Self Study  
2009-2010**

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# Waidner-Spahr Library Self Study

## Table of Contents

1.	Introduction.....	1
a.	Mission and Culture.....	1
b.	Brief History .....	1
c.	Library Unit Overviews .....	3
i.	Overall.....	3
ii.	Access Services.....	3
iii.	Acquisitions and Cataloging.....	4
iv.	Archives and Special Collections .....	5
v.	Collection and Research Services.....	5
d.	Planning and Executing Change .....	6
2.	Personnel.....	7
a.	Librarians .....	7
b.	Staff.....	8
c.	Students.....	8
d.	Mentoring.....	10
3.	Collection Building.....	11
a.	Collection Development .....	11
b.	Budget .....	13
c.	Acquisitions .....	14
d.	Collection Analysis.....	15
i.	General Collections.....	15
ii.	Reference Collection.....	15
iii.	Storage .....	16
iv.	Archives & Special Collections.....	16
e.	Retention.....	16
i.	Retention Policy.....	16
ii.	Archiving Electronic Materials.....	17
4.	Information Literacy .....	17
a.	First Year Seminar Program .....	18
b.	Curricular Integration.....	18
c.	Academic Integrity.....	21
d.	Instructional Outreach.....	21
e.	Self-Service Research Tools.....	22
f.	Instructional Support for Faculty.....	22
5.	Resource Discovery .....	23
a.	Website & Portals .....	24
b.	Catalog.....	24
c.	Improving E-Access.....	25
d.	Access to Unique Holdings.....	26

6.	Service.....	28
a.	Liaison Services.....	28
b.	Research/Reference Services.....	28
c.	Circulation/Reserve Services.....	29
d.	Interlibrary Loan & Document Delivery.....	30
e.	Services for Patrons with Disabilities.....	30
f.	Global Education and International Programs Support.....	31
7.	Public Face.....	31
a.	Physical Spaces.....	32
b.	Programs and Events.....	33
c.	Exhibits/Displays.....	34
8.	Knowledge Creation.....	35
a.	Presentation.....	35
b.	Publication.....	36
c.	Digitization.....	36
9.	Conclusion.....	37

## 1. Introduction

Almost every aspect of the academic library has altered dramatically in the decade since our last review. Technological, economic and social phenomena have transformed the way information is sought, accessed, used, created, and communicated. Library collections, staffing, services, and spaces both reflect and shape the changing expectations and behaviors of twenty-first century teachers, learners, and scholars. Libraries such as ours have been challenged to embrace the new while maintaining relevant traditional resources, formats, programs, and services. This self-study narrative documents the Waidner-Spahr Library's transformation during this ten-year period of change, and highlights our core values of service excellence, information access, evidence-based decision making, and continuous improvement.

### a. Mission and Culture

The Division of Library and Information Services' strategic plan reflects the library's sense of purpose, particularly in its articulation of commitments to information fluency and seamless access to information. Each functional section of the library has a traditional guiding statement of purpose. In 2008, library managers took a different approach and captured the library staff's sense of mission, using a "crowd sourcing" approach, and articulated this as a word cloud. Concepts like "service," "access," "excellence," "data," "research," and "collaboration" emerged as commonly shared values; the word cloud captured each individual's voice, so staff who felt that "guidance," "relevance," and "committed" were part of their vision are also acknowledged. We also held a contest for students, who were asked to submit their sense of the library's value in limerick form. These approaches, while nontraditional, included our stakeholders in articulating our purpose, demonstrated our enthusiasm for creativity, and provided us with eye catching and thought provoking ways to reflect these ideas to our campus constituencies.

### b. Brief History

Since the last external review of the library in the spring of 1999, there has been an almost complete turnover in the library staff, with one librarian, one manager, and three staff members remaining from among the 24 employees of the library present in 1999. The administrative structure of the Waidner-Spahr Library and the professional status of the librarians have also changed significantly in the past decade, with the first five years representing a period of continuous transformation in response to the external evaluation and the college's long-term planning, and the most recent five years representing a period of relative stability following the establishment of the merged Library and Information Services Division (LIS).

Following the last external review the librarians adopted a new configuration for the library which involved creating the position of director and redistributing the management of the library among the other librarians. Decisions, however, were still made in a collegial manner. In 2001, a permanent library director was hired, bringing to an end the decades-long system of rotation of library department chair, which was noted by the previous external review as problematic to the campus in many ways, particularly in areas such as leadership, decision-making, personnel, and

strategic planning. In the spring of 2002 a new administrative model was adopted that recognized four functional areas of the library, each with an assistant director reporting to the director.

In December 2002, the Dickinson College faculty voted to replace the status of academic professional with that of professional librarian. With this, the librarians were no longer required to have additional advanced degrees. As anticipated, this has given the library the flexibility to build a staff of professionals with diverse skill sets necessary to meet technological and other challenges of this changing library world. With these changes in status, too, librarians began to work twelve-month appointments. This has been essential to making significant progress on a host of programs and projects too complex or time consuming to accomplish during a busy academic year, such as the conversion of our collection from the Dewey Decimal Classification System to the Library of Congress Classification System. There is also less disruption and more momentum. The collaboration and teamwork which have become hallmarks of this library were inhibited when almost half the library staff was absent during the summer months.

In 2003, the library was internally restructured in a move that consolidated formerly distributed administration under a single associate director of the library, who reported to the library director. Then in the spring of 2004, the library was merged, administratively, with the information technology functions of the campus to form a new division, Library and Information Services, under the direction of Robert Renaud (formerly library director), who became Vice President and Chief Information Officer for the college. The former associate director became director, but within a few months the new director resigned and a national search was conducted to hire a replacement.

In the summer of 2005 when the current director arrived, there were four vacancies among the professional librarian staff; two were earmarked for a special collections librarian and a science liaison librarian. With a very full and ambitious agenda for library change, rather than center all decision-making authority in a duo of director and associate director, the existing four functional sections of the library organization were each organized with an operational manager. Two new associate director positions, one for research and instructional services and one for library collections, were established to provide strong leadership, and to partner in optimizing the liaison structure. They also serve, along with assistant director for building and access services and the college archivist, on the library's management team as participants in strategic planning and setting a coherent course for the library. The stability of this model and the relative continuity of the staff and librarians over the past four years have made possible achieving the ambitious goals and objectives we have set for ourselves.

## c. Library Unit Overviews

### i. Overall

The library is one of five departments within the Library and Information Services Division of the College, reporting to Vice President and CIO (formerly, the library director) Robert Renaud. The director of library services sits with four colleagues on the Management Group of the Division, and participates in campus-wide activities of the Dickinson Directors group; the director is an ex officio member of the Academic Programs and Standards Committee.

The library is organized into four functional areas, within which staff interact as team members and across which they collaborate on projects and programs. The library managers from each area meet weekly with the director for planning, collaboration, and communication purposes. Staff members meet regularly within their sections, and all together as a department at least once a year for a retreat or other planning or development activity. Brief monthly meetings of all staff, beginning in January 2010, will serve both communication and social functions.

### ii. Access Services

The Access Services Team at Waidner-Spahr emerged from reorganizations of the library from 2001 through 2005, and responded to the need for overarching and coordinating leadership among increasingly complex and interrelated functions and services. What were once three separate departments (circulation, reserves, and Interlibrary Loan (ILL)/document delivery, each with a rotating supervisor), became a single merged unit responsible for an ever-expanding array of vital functions: ILL, reserves, circulation, stack management, document delivery to students abroad, oversight of patron accounts and services, building space management, and reference referral services. This change improved services by collocating patron services in one central point in the library, with consistent administrative leadership. Patrons now benefit from a “one-stop shop” where they can not only check out a variety of print materials, media and essential equipment such as laptops and mini hubs, but can also be referred to a reference librarian. Service consistency has improved through cross-training of staff members; workflows have been streamlined and efficiencies implemented as a result of consolidated supervision. The single point of access model has also become the springboard for other improvements in building spaces, staff spaces, personnel and staff organization.

Organizationally, procedurally, and technologically, formerly discrete functional areas are now inextricably connected. Access Services staff are now cross-trained to perform a multitude of tasks across the access services spectrum; having been experts in a narrow area, they are now called upon to be competent in many. While this produces a more seamless experience for library users, and enhances our ability to view our activities systematically, it creates some stress and challenges for staff. With ongoing training and support for professional development, we have mitigated staff members’ anxiety, and motivated them to expand their skill set and to approach tasks as a team.

### iii. Acquisitions and Cataloging

The library's collections, which build upon the original core of 1900 volumes donated in 1783, support the teaching and learning missions of Dickinson College. In selecting research materials, discovery tools, and delivery methods, we balance the particular needs of even the smallest departments with the general requirements of an undergraduate student population. We regularly assess use of our collections; use data to inform our decisions about the acquisition, format, retention, and withdrawal of library materials; and analyze the associated costs. Since 2006, we have instituted more detailed approaches to fund management, eliminated redundancies in format and content, and thus identified resources to support new areas of the curriculum. In consultation with faculty, we have crafted and applied clear collections policies, both general and discipline-specific, which reflect institutional priorities. We have streamlined and improved processing operations and are able to maintain high levels of service and productivity with fewer staff members. We communicate regularly and consistently with administration, faculty, and students, and we use a variety of methods to inform the campus of our policies, challenges, changes, and successes. Finally, we set challenging but achievable goals and regularly assess our progress, in order to ensure that our work provides maximum benefit to research needs of the campus community.

Prior to the changes that stabilized the library administrative structure in 2003, the Technical Services team suffered from inconsistent leadership and supervisory flux, which limited their managers' ability to gain sufficient functional expertise. Advances in technology and improvements in process were not systematically adopted to enhance productivity and service. Staff members were trained on a restrictive, need-to-know basis determined by the librarians. They worked in relative isolation rather than as a team, and they reported a distinct feeling of division between the staff and librarians. Processing work was taking needlessly long. Costs were incurred, but value not analyzed. The staff felt beleaguered, and did not respond well to patron needs.

Following the resignation of the staff supervisor for Technical Services in 2008, the team was restructured and that position eliminated. Staff members were cross-trained in order to expand their skill sets, better identify process improvements, and provide coverage for service continuation even when absences occur; all continue to be encouraged to vary their work day by including a mix of activities. In 2009 all Technical Services team members learned Yankee Book Peddler's Gobi acquisitions software, PromptCat, Sirsi Symphony, and Connexion Client, thus leveraging the interconnectedness of the acquisitions and cataloging activities. The staff learned not only to work together as a team, but also gained the confidence to interact more meaningfully with the librarians and their colleagues within the library and the division. We have better communication and proactive problem-solving, and all benefit from sharing knowledge and expertise. Some of the specific skills in which the team has been cross-trained include: maintaining periodical holdings, processing orders, staffing the circulation desks, book repair, LC conversion, and collection reviews. Team members also participate on task forces and project teams, along with colleagues from across the department, a change from past practice when librarians were the primary project team members.

#### iv. Archives and Special Collections

Over the past decade, Archives and Special Collections (hereafter, the Archives) has been in a state of transformation. We added an additional professional librarian position to the unit. We moved from having no digital presence to having a robust and substantial digital presence. We advanced from having little information about our holdings to having inventories and finding aids for the majority of our holdings. We established policies and procedures to guide our processes and decision-making. We developed more interactive approaches to teach about primary sources. We have become a more visible part of college operations, and are more heavily used by offices throughout the campus. We have helped prepare a new generation of information professionals through our work/study and internship opportunities. We have developed more detailed and refined tools and models for tracking usage data. By organizing, preserving, and making available the unique resources of the Archives, we support the teaching and learning goals of faculty and students across the curriculum. About 20% of the student body of each class year find themselves using some resource from the Archives during the course of their undergraduate experience at Dickinson. Further, we strive to create an open and comfortable learning environment and place as few barriers between the researcher and the materials as possible, within the constraints necessitated by college policies and concerns for preservation. In short, we promote the Archives as a “hands-on” learning laboratory, encouraging direct handling of materials for personal exploration and discovery.

We have sought and secured outside funding to share more of our resources with a global audience. We have used available technologies in innovative ways. We have partnered with colleagues across the campus and beyond. We have instituted a process to deaccession duplicate and out-of-scope materials, and established an endowment fund with the proceeds. We have, through all of these activities, demonstrated our overarching commitment to patrons of all types by setting, as our first priority, the facilitating of responsible access to our materials. While our vision and ambition will always exceed our available resources, we believe that we have nonetheless accomplished a great deal and have presented ourselves as a model for how a liberal arts college archives and special collections should operate in the twenty-first century.

#### v. Collection and Research Services

All of the librarians (except the director and the archivist) have liaison assignments, and collectively refer to themselves as the “CRIS” team (collections, research, and information services). The group conducts an open meeting weekly to which others are welcome. The assistant director for access services typically attends; library staff members sometimes attend for specific agenda items. Notes from each meeting are posted on the LIS blog. These meetings serve as the venue for discussion and decision/action on a wide range of projects related to library public and digital services, as well as collection development issues. While the actual work may be conducted by smaller task forces or project teams, it is often in the CRIS group that a problem or issue is raised or an idea for a service innovation presented to the group for feedback. This group provides a venue for participation in decision making and problem-solving by all librarians, including those who are not technically in “management” positions.



We have liaison librarians assigned to each academic department to provide collection, research, and instructional services. In addition, we have liaisons assigned to a few other key administrative departments (e.g., Clarke Forum, Global Education). The liaisons are proactive in facilitating two-way communication with faculty to develop strong collections appropriate to the curriculum. They meet information needs for faculty research, provide reference and consultation services, and develop curriculum integrated information literacy instruction. We have strengthened liaison services by encouraging and supporting both librarians' individual subject expertise and a team approach encouraging internal collaboration to support the increasing number of interdisciplinary programs (e.g., health studies, Africana studies, Middle East studies).

Over the years, the number of liaisons has varied, reaching a nadir in 2005 when there were only four librarians available to shoulder all liaison responsibilities. As of August 2009 there are eight librarians who share liaison responsibilities (at levels adjusted to take into account their other administrative responsibilities). Our most recent hire, for a social sciences liaison, was conducted with a deliberate eye toward filling a gap in the collective knowledge base of our existing team. We do, however, continue to be challenged by the constantly growing number of academic programs and majors at the college, which must be supported with fewer librarians than many of our peer institutions have.

#### d. Planning and Executing Change

The library participates in the annual strategic planning process of the LIS Division, which culminates in a retreat at which progress on the previous year's goals, initiatives for the current year, and plans for the following year are presented. Library goals and initiatives are, when appropriate, derived from or related to campus goals, and align with the directions of the division and the college. Library staff work within their sections to develop goals for the coming year; library managers work together to articulate these goals and develop priorities. Individual evaluations and goal setting for all library staff take place in the spring of each year; individual goals are thus crafted to support and further the initiatives for the coming year.

The library values the involvement of staff from all areas in assessing effectiveness, and identifying and implementing efficiencies, economies, and improvements. In teams and task forces, staff from across the department and the division come together to focus on special initiatives or complex problems, while maintaining high standards for productivity and service in our core programs. Examples of projects accomplished through teams and task forces include the web site redesign and usability testing; the redesign, assessment, and marketing of reference services; and the journal review.

The "Dangerous Ideas" program was introduced at the library staff retreat in 2008 as a way to improve library services while encouraging creativity and teamwork among library staff across the department. We are stretching our imaginations (and moving out of our comfort zones) to develop creative ways to recast what we do and how we do it. This is presented in the form of "what if" questions: What if we eliminate the reference desk? What if we give faculty members a credit card to buy the articles they want? What if we move the DVDs out from behind the

circulation desk? As a follow-up to the 2008 retreat, at the first “dangerous lunch,” staff members were asked to work on the problem of improving user self-sufficiency at finding things in the building. Following the meeting, suggestions were implemented when possible and appropriate, or “parked” for future consideration. We also launched a section on the LIS blog for an ongoing discussion of “dangerous ideas.”

Library staff and librarians at Waidner-Spahr have embraced the culture of assessment. For activities relating to major programs (such as reference, information literacy, interlibrary loan, web based services and resources) and discrete projects (assessing electronic kiosk usage, monitoring the success of DVD access) staff members look first for ways to gather data to determine a baseline, and later to measure the effect of change. Before new ideas are launched, those initiating them consider what criteria will demonstrate success. Once the assessments have been concluded, the information is fed back into operations and planning. Existing data – both qualitative and quantitative – are continuously collected, monitored, and analyzed by library managers to look for trends or indications of the need for changes or improvements. Increases or decreases in use of services, qualitative feedback from our users, and observations by library staff are examined critically on an ongoing basis and fed back into decision making.

## 2. Personnel

Library staff are either administrative personnel (librarians and the assistant director for building and access services) or support staff. For administrative personnel, there is neither a campus wide nor a departmental grade or step scale. Support staff are classified within a campus wide system, as library assistants or library specialists. All library employees participate in an annual performance appraisal process each March.

Staff professional development is critically important both to build and strengthen specific functional skills, and to develop work and personal habits that engender job and life satisfaction. The staff and librarians at Waidner-Spahr are expected and encouraged to participate in appropriate activities that enhance their growth and enable them to contribute to the professional discourse; they are supported in their activities with financial resources from the college and with mentoring and advice from more senior and seasoned colleagues. Within the library, opportunities for staff to learn about new technologies and approaches are presented frequently. In our most recent library staff retreat, we focused on assessment; after brief presentations from managers about types of assessment, staff worked collaboratively to apply these basic principles as they identified measures of effectiveness and efficiency for their sections’ work. Outside the library, staff participate in campus-sponsored development programs such as the Support Staff Forum and the Leadership Development Program.

### a. Librarians

The professional staff is comprised of ten librarians, including the director, and one additional professional staff member; all but three have been hired within the past five years. Of these ten, eight serve as liaisons to one or more academic departments and each has different functional, disciplinary, or administrative specialties. The library liaison arrangement is the primary vehicle

for communication with and service delivery to students and faculty; liaisons are responsible for both services and collections. The professional library staff includes four early career librarians (fewer than five years in the profession), one of whom was formerly a library assistant whose professional education was supported by LIS; three mid-career librarians (fewer than fifteen years in the profession); and three librarians with fifteen years or more in the profession. This mix brings exuberance and experience to our planning and programming. According to comparative data from the Oberlin Group, Dickinson is just below the average in number of professional librarians.

With the changes in organizational structure and status, librarians lack an internal advancement path to articulate expectations and guide professional development. Our intention is to look to the models adopted by other Oberlin Group libraries to help formulate a plan for Waidner-Spahr professionals.

### b. Staff

Twelve staff members work in Access Services, Technical Services, and Archives and Special Collections. The library's commitment to providing an interesting and rewarding work experience for staff is evidenced in our focus on cross-training and varied work assignments. We encourage staff, particularly those in technical services who may tend to be desk-bound, to integrate tasks that involve movement and alternate locations during their work days. Because we are a service oriented organization, many staff members spend some time each week working at a public service desk. The library continues to benefit from having staff members enrolled in MLS programs. We provide workshop environments for their projects, and enjoy their fresh perspectives and energetic application of newly found expertise to library programs.

Our challenge is to support our staff as they encounter continuous change in their work. Without the appropriate skills and attitudes, we will not be able to keep up with developments and innovations that offer advantage to researchers and students. It is a goal for the coming period to identify for each staff member a personalized plan for professional growth.

### c. Students

The library could not function without the many undergraduate staff members who perform a multitude of tasks, from staffing the building until 2 a.m. to scanning materials for interlibrary loan, from transcribing historical documents to serving as focus group members on the student perspective. Students are involved in nearly every area of library operations, and their importance for maintaining services cannot be overstated. Of the 114 hours the library is open per week, 33 are staffed entirely by students.

For many of our student employees, the library represents the first employment situation where expectations and opportunities are equally high. Students may choose to pursue more routine employment roles within the library, or they may strive for the leadership role of supervisor, which has served as a retention tool. As supervisors they are responsible not only for the content

of their assignments, but for the quality of performance of other students working under them. Most rise to the occasion, overcoming a natural reluctance to direct their peers. In 2008 a student supervisor developed a training/coaching program for the library circulation desk attendants, which resulted in improved service quality and enhanced productivity. This student was selected Dickinson College's Student Employee of the Year as well as the State of Pennsylvania Student Employee of the Year.

The environment of the Archives provides a different kind of employment opportunity for students, where the myriad of materials and tasks provide the opportunity for a wide variety of experiences. The approach taken in the Archives is to allow students, whenever possible, to choose their own areas of interest for their work, whether processing manuscript collections, transcribing documents, preparing exhibits, performing original research, organizing photographs, digitizing materials, or cataloging artifacts. Latitude is given to allow students to explore their own creativity through their work. They are often permitted to explore their own ideas for how to handle a problem, and are then asked to evaluate their work and draw their own conclusions about the appropriateness of their method. This approach to undergraduate supervision and self-assessment has proven to be especially successful as evidenced by the many Archives students who go on to pursue careers in archives and related information fields.

In 2000 all student employment for the library was centralized under Library Access Services. In 2005, following the creation of the LIS division, oversight of student employment and their wage budget for the entire LIS division was consolidated under Library Access Services. Over the years, we have introduced an electronic application, a standard interview and evaluation process, and centralized training when appropriate. The common application, training, and evaluation process was recognized in 2003 by consultants from Johns Hopkins and the University of Maryland. They evaluated Dickinson College's student employment program, and found the library's approach to supervising students to be a model of best practices. In 2006, we developed a Blackboard course to aid in student staff communication, training, and evaluation, and this has reduced the absentee and error rate. In 2008 a series of videos was created using screen capture software to train students and staff in key Access Services functions. Access Services staff presented these training methods at the SirsiDynix national conference in 2008.

It continues to be a challenge to provide patrons and library staff with consistent support from the undergraduate employees throughout the 114 hours that the library is open per week. By college policy, students are generally not permitted to work in the library until their second year, and many leave campus (and their library jobs) for a junior year abroad. When they return as seniors, there is a need for retraining in library processes and procedures. That common "here, gone, and back again" rhythm of many of the undergraduates at Dickinson makes it difficult to maintain consistency of service and requires more time of permanent staff for training and supervision.

#### d. Mentoring

As mentioned, we have been successful in training and encouraging a new generation of information professionals. Many students who once worked as supervisors or in other library roles have also opted for careers in librarianship. One former student employee recently wrote, “You can't imagine how grateful I am to you to have spent months poring over LC classifications, and hours helping students conduct queries on the catalog, instructing them on the microfiche, and learning what ISBN is! I wanted to thank you again for helping me gain the skills I needed to really succeed at my job.”

Within the Archives, nearly 25% of the undergraduate employees have gone on to pursue graduate study and careers in archives, libraries, and related fields. In a recent survey of students employed over the past decade (30 responses from 49 former employees), 57% of respondents indicated that work in the Archives influenced their career decision. Only 17% indicated having worked in an archives prior to Dickinson, and 63% did so after Dickinson.

A number of former student employees have been able to continue their work in the library after graduation through temporary grant-funded positions in the Archives. Ten former undergraduate employees and graduate interns have returned to the Archives for full-time employment to work on special projects and pursue further skill development. Helping to make these work experiences possible were two processing grants and five digitization grants, totaling more than \$200,000, awarded to the Archives since 2002. Additional funding for these temporary employment opportunities have come from college sources, including the Friends of the Library, the Willoughby Endowment, and the Dean's Innovation Fund.

Former student employees have also returned to Waidner-Spahr to occupy permanent positions in all areas of library operations. (In fact, two of the current professional librarians are themselves Dickinson alumni.) In 2008 the library instituted a twelve-month, full-time Friends of the Library Internship, available to any alumni with an interest in a library career. Selected through a competitive hiring process, the first Friends of the Library intern is now employed at nearby Gettysburg College. Though the current financial climate may force a postponement of that program for the near future, we remain committed to programs like these that provide opportunities for professional exploration and growth.

Besides those who advance their library skills and interest through paid employment, there are others, both undergraduate and graduate students alike, who develop independent research topics or seek internships. Over the past decade, seven students have worked with us from four different institutions: Shippensburg University, the University of Pittsburgh, Clarion University, and the University of Maryland. We have also welcomed three volunteers who wished to enhance their own library skills and pursue personal research interests.

### 3. Collection Building

The research material held at the Waidner-Spahr Library is an ever-changing and growing collection, historic and modern, physical and electronic. Our robust collection contains more than half a million physical items, including books, print journals, and music and film recordings. We also maintain access to more than 150 scholarly databases, thousands of online journal subscriptions, numerous primary source databases, and a large collection of e-books.

Although most of the library's physical collection is shelved in the Waidner-Spahr Library, we do maintain several small satellite libraries around campus. Most notable are the map library in Kaufman Hall, which contains a variety of maps relevant to the study of geology, including many produced by the U.S. Geological Survey. Another popular satellite study space is the Tome Library, which houses books and recent journals in astronomy, physics, chemistry, computer science, and mathematics. We also have an off-campus storage facility with approximately 40,000 volumes.

#### a. Collection Development

The library's collections support the teaching and learning missions of Dickinson College in accordance with our Collection Development Policy. Collection building at Dickinson College is a collaborative effort between librarians and faculty members. Collection development policies for each academic department are created and implemented by the library liaisons. New materials are usually purchased at the request of faculty; however, the liaison is responsible for making the final purchasing decision based on cost and appropriateness to the curriculum. Major decisions for products costing more than \$500, or products requiring a start-up fee and multi-year commitments, are made by consensus of librarians, with approval from the associate director for library collections. Liaison librarians continually monitor approval plan offerings, assess collection strengths and weaknesses, remove materials deemed no longer useful to the curriculum, evaluate gifts, provide advocacy for individual departments, monitor collection use, and endeavor to understand community needs to the greatest extent possible.

Prior to 2003, each academic department was allocated a portion of the library acquisitions budget with which to select both journals and monographs. Allocations were based roughly upon a formula incorporating number of faculty and student enrollment. When the LIS Division was formed in 2004, and the library's budget was merged and centrally administered, a more fluid approach to budgeting across the division was employed; the academic departmental allocations were no longer followed. The library continued to track acquisitions by academic department through our Sirsi module, but the data was not used for purposes of controlling, monitoring, or shaping the collection.

After 2006, following the return of library budget management to the director of library services, it took two years for the library to untangle the separate budget strands. In particular, the budgeting for journals had become increasingly complicated with the advent of multi-disciplinary aggregators such as JSTOR and ProQuest, and with the growing interdisciplinary nature of our curriculum. In 2008 acquisitions money was reorganized into more meaningful



and clearly defined lines, thus making the analysis of past expenditures easier and the prediction of future expenses more accurate. The monograph budget was clustered into spending ranges for academic departments, ranges that serve as internal guidelines, which the liaison librarians are responsible for monitoring. Approaches to better analysis of journal and electronic resource funds are being explored. Finally, we are engaging in regular communication with the Financial Operations office to make sure all charges and payments are correct and paid in a timely fashion.

In 2006 and 2007, we conducted a journal review for curricular relevancy and performed a duplication analysis. With the economic downturn looming, additional cost-saving measures were put into place in 2008-2009, under the guidance of a subcommittee of the Academic Program and Standards Committee, which included one faculty member from each academic division and one student senate representative. As a result of this subcommittee, the following actions were taken.

- Re-allocate monograph money to accounts such as periodicals for which price increases would be more significant.
- Set spending guidelines for each department, with library liaisons to monitor.
- Cancel duplicate subscriptions for all non-bundled, individually available journals that are received in multiple formats.
- Refrain from purchasing reference books when the same or similar information is freely available via the Internet.
- Discontinue newspaper subscriptions when current issues are freely available via the Internet.
- Cancel standing orders when possible and appropriate, and seek opportunities to stop automatic ordering of series for which we do not need every volume.
- Gather usage statistics on databases and e-journals to make retention decisions.
- Cease binding paper journals.
- Reduce outsourced binding of books.
- Reduce use of rush shipping to overnight rushes only.

Besides acquiring material, the major critical function of the Collection and Technical Services Team is to make the material we purchase easy to find, and therefore most useful to the campus community. Although we maintain high standards to ensure error-free cataloging, our interfaces can sometimes be confusing to new users of library systems, and to those who are not familiar with advanced search techniques. Collections and Technical Services and Access Services collaborate constantly on discovery issues, and more about this topic can be found in the “Resource Discovery” section of this study.

## b. Budget

When the LIS division was formed in 2004, the library's budget was merged with those of the other departments in the division, and was managed centrally in the CIO's office; categories of expenditure critical to managing the library's materials acquisition were undifferentiated, and expenses and budgets across and within all LIS departments were fungible.

In 2006 most of the division's operational budget was divided into separate budgets for each LIS department. This enabled the library to institute more traditional library budget management and oversight such as tracking spending by subject areas, anticipating recurring charges and their timing, and closely monitoring costs associated with changing formats and different vendors. Changes in pricing structures and spending patterns for library materials became more evident when called out from a very large combined budget. It has taken several years of working with the library's budget to successfully reallocate funds among budget lines for areas such as electronic resources, contracts and services, and journals. While we recognize that some of these distinctions are arbitrary, the analysis that led to the definitions of these categories has been valuable. We now know where and when our funds are being spent, can plan effectively and take advantage of opportunities for savings when they arise, and are able to adhere to campus accounting policy about fiscal year vs. calendar year spending. Having more control and information has enabled us to keep within our allocation in the most recent fiscal year.

In 2006 the library director presented a proposal to the campus Planning and Budget Committee noting that with the 1% budget increase annually, which was the general increase allocated across the division, the library had not kept pace with increasing costs of journals (particularly in the sciences, where the price increase from 2002-2006 was 32.99%), nor accounted for the proliferation of new journal titles and other resources. As new faculty members with different research and teaching interests have joined Dickinson, and new courses and majors in areas such as sustainability, Middle East Studies, Africana Studies, and health sciences, have been approved, the library's ability to appropriately support the teaching, learning, and scholarship at the college was challenged. In light of these facts, and in an effort to bring Dickinson library's per-student spending more in line with our peers, the Planning and Budget Committee allocated an additional \$100,000 to the library's permanent collections budget for FY 2008, with the suggestion that this amount would likely be added again each year for two more years. However, the recent economic issues have kept the current year budget at the FY 2009 level while the factors noted above still prevail.

The budgetary challenges of the past year have compelled us to identify the lowest of the hanging fruit from which to reap savings. We established principles for cuts, working collaboratively with faculty to assure that our approach is in alignment with their needs, and we exceeded our goals for savings without impinging upon access to content. Should the library's allocation remain at the current level, or face reduction, support for new and existing academic programs will be compromised.

As a result of the library liaisons being more vigilant about funds and, in addition, communicating more regularly about the budget with the faculty, the library has been able to balance the acquisitions budget, as shown in Table 1.



**Table 1 - Four Year Budget Summary**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Acquisitions Budget</b>	<b>Amount Spent</b>	<b>Balance</b>
2006	<b>\$1,135,000.00</b>	<b>\$1,435,318.61</b>	<b>\$(300,318.61)</b>
2007	<b>\$1,219,050.00</b>	<b>\$1,385,235.83</b>	<b>\$(166,185.83)</b>
2008	<b>\$1,325,000.00</b>	<b>\$1,427,057.97</b>	<b>\$(102,057.97)</b>
2009	<b>\$1,445,702.00</b>	<b>\$1,439,695.11</b>	<b>\$6,006.89</b>

c. Acquisitions

The last few years have also seen major changes in our purchasing procedures. Our book vendor from 2003 to 2008 was Blackwell. In the past year, we felt that Blackwell's customer service had declined, the software was cumbersome and prone to error, and our profile and notification slips, once set up, were difficult to adjust. More seriously, the Blackwell selection process, which relied on email communication, did not provide a seamless way for faculty members and their library liaisons to interact through the system, nor did it provide us a convenient way to analyze our purchasing habits by the most obvious measure, Library of Congress classification. In 2009 we contracted with Yankee Book Peddlers who not only rectified these issues, but provided us with many more analysis tools that we will be able to use to study our book collection. In addition, Yankee provides similar bulk discounts, shelf ready books at a reasonable cost, and two-day rush orders at no extra charge.

In a continued effort to save money and improve the researcher's experience, we have been exploring and implementing new models for access. Our first such trial took place in the spring of 2007, when the science liaison and the Physics Department engaged in a focused analysis of the library's physics subscriptions. They found that we subscribed to expensive journals that are too specialized to be appropriate for student use without being particularly relevant to faculty research interests. In order to save money and increase access to niche publications, we implemented a "pay-per-article" system by which Physics faculty members are able to purchase articles directly that are unavailable in the library collection. The cancellation of various subscriptions saved the library more than \$17,000 annually, and in FY 2008, we spent only \$502.61 for on-demand purchases. Positive feedback from the Physics Department subsequently encouraged the Mathematics & Computer Science, Chemistry, and Biology Departments to sign on to the model, resulting in anticipated additional savings of approximately \$70,000 for FY 2011. In FY 2009, we spent only \$468.91 for on-demand purchases, and as of this writing, only about \$100 worth of material has been purchased for FY 2010. Due to the significant cost saving of this model, and the greater satisfaction of faculty with the flexibility it offers, we are currently investigating other models as alternatives to some of our traditional subscription packages. Specifically we are switching to Wiley's ArticleSelect "token" system and are negotiating a less expensive contract with Elsevier for their ScienceDirect package.

#### d. Collection Analysis

##### i. General Collections

The library staff recognizes the need to assess our collections formally, particularly in light of the fact that this process has not been undertaken in recent memory. To that end, the library staff has begun to investigate the best ways to examine our holdings for each discipline. For example, a literature assessment pilot has recently begun, under which we will analyze a portion of our monographic literature collection (Library of Congress ranges PR and PS) in order to make better book-buying and retention decisions. Once this pilot is completed, we will identify on a rolling basis best collection analysis practices for each discipline, incorporating pertinent knowledge gained from the pilot literature analysis.

##### ii. Reference Collection

Over the years the library had been gradually acquiring an increasing number of online reference sources, but had not taken a serious look at the sizeable print reference collection. In the summer of 2008 the librarians reviewed the entire print reference collection for currency, utility to current research needs, and appropriateness for non-circulating reference location. Because of the interdisciplinary nature of many of the sources, we developed a formal plan of review for all the reference titles being considered for removal from reference. As a result of the review, roughly 30% of the reference collection was moved to the circulating stacks, replaced with electronic or newer print sources, or withdrawn due to being out-of-date. This process drew much interest from colleagues at peer institutions. Librarians presented a poster on our process at two national library conferences the following year.

In the coming year we plan to undertake a critical examination of the place of the print reference collection in an increasingly electronic world, and more formally articulate collection guidelines for both print and electronic reference formats.

### iii. Storage

In the summer of 2009, we began a review of the library's storage facility, which contains approximately 40,000 volumes. This warehouse-style facility unfortunately has long functioned as a "junk drawer" for the library, a place to put questionable materials rather than make decisions about what to do with them. It has not been reviewed systematically for many years. Our primary impetus for the examination was to identify valuable and/or useful materials that should be removed from that space and recataloged for inclusion in the Waidner-Spahr Library stacks or Special Collections. Librarians began examining individual volumes in the storage facility, but due to the immense scope of the project, it was suspended at the beginning of fall 2009. Librarians instead are now drawing lists of items to keep and reclassify, as best as is possible via the library catalog. The project will be revisited in the summer of 2010.

### iv. Archives & Special Collections

Appraisal is perhaps the most important activity undertaken in any archives. Determining what materials are truly appropriate and useful for the audience we serve is an ongoing function. While developing a collection development policy in 2001, we made sure to address the issue of deaccessioning materials that were better housed elsewhere. We have an ongoing systematic approach for reevaluating rare books and manuscript material within our collections, as well as evaluating thousands of older books from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century library that were never fully cataloged and incorporated into the library collections. Through this evaluation process some items of artistic value have been passed along to the Trout Gallery, some items have been moved out among the circulating collection in the Waidner-Spahr Library, some items have been donated to more appropriate archives and special collections facilities, and many items have been sold, with the proceeds being added to an endowed fund designed to support the Archives. After seven years, this fund now has a book value of over \$80,000, and the annual proceeds from this endowment go to support new acquisitions, preservation of existing resources, and wages for hiring short-term employees for special projects.

### e. Retention

#### i. Retention Policy

As established journals publish new issues at a steady rate, and as new journal subscriptions are requested for each academic discipline, the Waidner-Spahr Library must consider the extra costs and space constraints imposed by the storage, maintenance, and preservation of materials. Previously at Dickinson College, we have not been forced to address such issues because our budget has been generally robust, and for many years we have had the advantage of a relatively spacious library building with access to an off-site storage facility. As our buying power has been reduced, and some of our shelf space reallocated, we recognize the need for a formal policy on retention of materials, in particular print journals being replaced with online versions through collections such as JSTOR and Project Muse. At the time of this writing, a retention policy is

being drafted as a cooperative effort between Access Services and Collections & Technical Services.

ii. Archiving Electronic Materials

In order to ensure perpetual access to electronic materials that the library has paid for and owns outright, we are currently investigating the LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keeps Stuff Safe) Program. LOCKSS is freely downloadable software from Stanford University that would allow us to archive our own backfiles of journal subscriptions. Recent investigations reveal that many journal vendors do not promise access to all of our subscription backfiles should we cancel them, despite the fact that we paid for them. A proposal for LOCKSS is being presented at the Academic Systems Technology Services Roundtable (TSR), and its eventual implementation will require cross-LIS cooperation due to the technical issues beyond the librarians’ expertise.

4. Information Literacy

The library supports the college’s defining characteristic as “a community of inquiry” through programs which develop skillful approaches to seeking and using information. Information literacy is a critical underpinning for all else that takes place in the academic library, assuring that students will make informed decisions about their information needs and how to fulfill them. Concepts and approaches to information literacy are taught in multiple ways at Dickinson College: through formal library instruction classes, through assignments developed within academic courses, in workshops, in individual consultations, and via materials accessible on our website. In the coming year, the library plans to develop a pilot online tutorial through which students can learn specific critical skills at the point of need in their research process.

Information literacy has long been a priority of the librarians at Dickinson College. Even during periods of professional staffing shortages, librarians remained committed to the college’s strategic goal of providing a useful education. The library’s mission has consistently been that information literacy (formerly termed “bibliographic instruction” and “library instruction”) should be nurtured as a lifelong learning process, and that the Waidner-Spahr Library should be fashioned as a teaching and learning laboratory. The commitment to teaching students, faculty, and staff “to become effective researchers and critical users of information” was affirmed in the library’s 1999 self study.

**Table 2 – Four Year Instructional Activity Summary  
(Number of sessions per year. Length of sessions varies.)**

	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009
Curriculum integrated classes	53	148	151	127
First-year seminar classes	51	83	113	87
Academic Integrity sessions	(not offered)	26	23	27
Instructional support	(not available)	5	15	7

### a. First Year Seminar Program

With the arrival of our new director in 2005, we focused on formalizing and sequencing information literacy programming. Around that time, the Provost's office conducted a study of the college's first-year seminar program and concluded that it was one of the most critical experiences for a Dickinson student. In the spring of 2007, the Provost's Office released a report acknowledging the progress of the library in providing increasing support for the teaching of foundational research skills, and reiterating the need for librarians to assume enhanced roles in the educational mission of Dickinson College. In fall 2007, the campus Academic Program & Standards Committee advanced to the Dickinson faculty a proposal, subsequently passed, maintaining that "First-year seminars will include at least one assignment requiring students to seek, evaluate and use information emphasizing the college's expectations in regard to academic honesty and citation." This was intended to move beyond required "inputs" (some number of stand-alone library sessions) to meaningful experiences through which students would apply their skills to actual research assignments. In response, the librarians developed a set of specific goals modeled on the Association for College & Research Libraries' (ACRL) Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. To facilitate working with faculty to integrate information literacy instruction, the librarians created a "menu" of instructional "modules" in 2006 (available on the Library's website). These modules are not intended to be rigidly dropped into courses; rather they provide tangible examples of the kinds of skills librarians can teach. Librarians work closely with faculty to tailor instructional content and technique to fit the existing syllabus and course content and goals. By the end of the 2009 academic year, 100% of all first-year seminar classes met with a librarian at least once, with most scheduling additional sessions. We conduct formal assessment of our first-year information literacy sequence annually (once via a National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education-sponsored "First-Year Information Literacy in the Liberal Arts Assessment" and twice with home-grown instruments), and use the information gathered to continuously improve the program.

A challenge for the librarians is working with a diverse array of first-year seminar course plans, which are not consistent in their requirements for research. Contact time that librarians have with first-year students is also dependent on negotiation with individual first-year seminar faculty, and has typically ranged from one to five class sessions or partial sessions depending on the amount of time the faculty member allots. Additional practice via research assignments required by the professor also runs a broad spectrum. Examples range from no assignment requiring research to extra assignments developed and graded by the librarian to an annotated bibliography required by the professor to a full research paper with bibliography required by the professor.

### b. Curricular Integration

While the first-year seminar research modules were being developed and implemented in 2005, the library director appointed one of the existing librarians Coordinator of Information Literacy. (This special position continued until 2008 when these functions were transferred directly to the associate director for research & instructional services.) This librarian (and later, another

member of the staff) attended the ACRL Information Literacy Immersion program. We have subsequently used cumulative knowledge and experience to build upon the successful foundation of the first-year seminar program to infuse information literacy throughout Dickinson's curriculum.

Since Dickinson College does not have a general education requirement (other than the first-year seminar), librarians have focused on developing information literacy approaches that are integrated into the curricula of individual academic departments. By working closely with faculty, this approach provides for the most relevant, sequenced information literacy for students as they move through their major course of study. Because the disciplines are so different, the information literacy approaches are also diverse. Three departments (History, English, and East Asian Studies) have become models on campus for well-planned and strategically executed information literacy. Statistics in the Oberlin Group of Libraries show that Dickinson librarians consistently teach among the highest number of information literacy classes per year, despite having a smaller professional staff.

The librarians are committed to taking an active learning approach to information literacy instruction. Whenever possible, classes are taught in rooms with a computer for each student, since so many information resources are now online. Classes involving use of archival, primary sources are conducted in the Archives reading room. Active learning techniques include individual and group exercises, think/write/report, group discussion, Socratic method, and group list making. The librarians also make use of a variety of innovative technologies in their instruction, including:

- classroom response system technology (used in Academic Integrity, transfer student library research instruction, and some other classes) – in use since 2006.
- iTALC classroom management software – in use beginning in fall 2009.

Examples of innovative pedagogical approaches include:

- Extensive integration of archival and special collections materials in courses in History and in Women's & Gender Studies. In the classroom, we have developed interactive methods of teaching about primary sources, incorporating hands-on activities, group discussions, and focused assignments. Articles about these methods recently appeared in two different publications. Since 2007 we have routinely asked students in the History 204 (Introduction to Historical Methodology) classes to evaluate their learning experience in the Archives. We use that information, as well as our own observations and the formal assessment results gathered by the History Department liaison, to guide our efforts at continuous improvement in teaching methodology.
- The Critical Approaches and Literary Methods (C.A.L.M.) Lab as a requirement for all English majors. This program for English majors, begun in fall 2009, focuses on the use of the discipline-specific resources required for the advanced study of literature, and provides students with the research skills necessary to begin working on a senior thesis. Upon taking any 300 level English class for the first time, English majors are required to enroll in a three-session C.A.L.M. Lab, which is taught by a librarian outside of regularly scheduled class time. This may provide a model for overcoming challenges of integrating information literacy into non-sequential curricula.

- A specialized set of resources on Victor Hugo’s Paris created using wiki software, Google Earth, and historical maps of Paris. This was first developed in 2008 as a collaborative project between the liaison librarian to the French Department and a French professor for a 200 level course. Support includes an instructional session, taught in French, in which the librarian participates to orient the students to the extensive supplementary online materials developed.

Challenges faced by librarians to develop and sustain consistent curriculum integrated information literacy programs include:

- strongly established curricula, with courses that do not require research;
- “special topics” courses and non-linear course requirements in some disciplines, making sequential research skill building difficult;
- new majors and programs being added regularly by the college with no increase in the number of librarians;
- courses that are major requirements but also meet other graduation requirements, and thus include a broad cross-section of students at different levels of study (first-year through senior) and from a variety of majors;
- use of adjuncts and visiting faculty, and turnover of faculty in some departments, necessitating ongoing re-building of relationships;
- competition for “smart” classrooms in which to provide hands-on instruction;
- depending on their major and curricular path, some students receive repetitious information literacy instruction, while some may receive little or none beyond the first year.

To gather further information about this last concern, we are conducting longitudinal tracking (begun in 2008) to determine how much research instruction individual students receive, and in what courses, during their Dickinson career. While it will take several years to accumulate sufficient data, we anticipate that this will help us identify areas of strength and weakness in our instructional program across the curriculum.

Librarians have sporadically conducted assessments of individual classes by gathering feedback from students and faculty, and in some cases by developing graded assignments (with individual faculty support). The results are used to help improve librarians’ instructional skills and techniques in specific courses. Most of the librarians also participated in a weekly “instruction salon” in summer 2009 to share best practices for classroom techniques. As part of our work at implementing information literacy plans for individual majors, we plan to develop more programmatic assessments. Our challenge is to identify and implement discipline-appropriate outcomes measures and practical means for assessing them.



### c. Academic Integrity

In 2005-06, the faculty approved an Academic Integrity instruction requirement for all first-year students. Librarians developed a structured, interactive session to deliver instruction on what plagiarism is, how to avoid it, and the consequences under Dickinson College policy for an academic integrity violation. Our oft-borrowed, and highly-commended interactive “clicker” program, *The Seven Deadly Sins of Plagiarism: Working Honestly at Dickinson College*, debuted during the fall of 2006. This instruction has been consistently delivered to all incoming first-year students for the past four years. As of fall 2007, students are barred from requesting courses for the next term during early registration if they fail to complete the Academic Integrity instruction, reinforcing the importance that the college places on this program. Since January 2009 the Academic Integrity session has been offered to transfer students as well, although not all transfer students choose to attend and there is no consequence for their failure to do so. (Instituting a consequence has been recently proposed.) Too, the liaison librarian for international programs, identifying special cultural misunderstandings related to U.S. academic research standards, delivers additional academic integrity instruction to incoming international students. Students are sent to the librarians for follow-up instruction if they are found responsible for having committed plagiarism. Our library’s involvement in and approach to presenting Academic Integrity instruction has garnered a great deal of interest from professional colleagues. Two articles have been published about our program, and there have been several conference presentations about it. In 2010 we will be exploring the development of an online, asynchronous version of the program to improve flexibility of delivery for all incoming students and to further ensure consistency of content delivery.

### d. Instructional Outreach

The library takes a pro-active stance toward outreach to students, particularly those who might otherwise “fall between the cracks” of our major services and programs.

In 2007 we began working with the campus “Steps to Academic Success” Program for students placed on academic probation. These students, second semester first-years and sophomores, must take a non-credit mini-course with the goal of helping them “develop the skills, habits and attitudes that are essential for your success in college” (from the program syllabus). The librarians developed a session on basic library research and information literacy skills, which is an established part of the annual program. The session is also an opportunity to emphasize to these students that the librarians are available to help them.

We provide proactive outreach to help international students transition to using an American liberal arts college library. For example, the library has hosted special welcome receptions, given tours of the library with discussion of policies, and has developed a special “survival guide” handout. International students receive additional instruction on plagiarism, tailored to different cultural attitudes on the topic. The international programs librarian participates in their campus orientation, and personally contacts incoming students individually to offer them consultations and support.



A potential gap for foundational information literacy instruction exists for transfer students, who do not take a first-year seminar. In January 2009, the college began providing a more formal orientation for the college's increasing number of transfer students, and the library worked with student services to incorporate a special interactive 45-minute library skills instructional session into that orientation. Although this instruction is not mandatory, most transfer students attend.

#### e. Self-Service Research Tools

The library also makes an effort to embed research tools at the point-of-need for students. Working with other LIS staff, we have developed a standardized set of research links that automatically appear in all Blackboard and Moodle courses.

Like most academic libraries, we have developed research guides for the different academic majors, and for special topics such as finding biographical information or statistics. Many of the guides were based on an old html template that segregated sources primarily by format (books, journals, Internet sources). In 2008, led by our digital resources librarian, the librarians began developing guides using a wiki format. This allowed for more flexible editing, and is a format familiar to students. Faculty can be given the wiki password and invited to collaborate on building research guides with high relevance to the curriculum. We have developed more than 20 guides in wiki format and plan to convert additional guides as they are updated. While we have not conducted a formal assessment, feedback from faculty and students on the new format has been positive.

Analysis of qualitative reference inquiry data showed that one of our most frequently asked categories of questions was citation formatting. The college acquired a site license to RefWorks in 2006. In 2008, the library focused on proactively promoting and teaching RefWorks classes, as well as improving our administration of RefWorks accounts. As a result of these efforts we acquired 254 new RefWorks users, and increased the number of active (repeat) users. We continue to introduce students to RefWorks, as an increasing number of students have already been exposed to bibliographic management software in high school.

#### f. Instructional Support for Faculty

The Willoughby Fellows Program in Teaching with Technology is a year-long opportunity for Dickinson faculty to develop effective, media-rich courses. Two librarians work with the Instructional & Media Services unit of Library & Information Services to teach the program's annual week-long workshop series for faculty. These librarians also serve as individual liaisons to Willoughby Fellow participating faculty members throughout the year.

Some faculty members do not require or desire a librarian to come into their classroom to teach, but will take advantage of instructional support services or consultations. Many faculty members list the liaison librarian's contact information on syllabi, assignments, and in Blackboard or Moodle. Examples of ways in which librarians routinely provide instructional support include:

- researching and purchasing books and/or films to support a specific course;
- creating supplemental course guides (typically linked from a departmental research guide or uploaded into Blackboard/Moodle);
- helping to develop effective research assignments (e.g., by providing a template for an annotated bibliography assignment);
- gathering primary sources that the professor can then use in teaching a class;
- meeting with students outside of class time to provide personalized assistance with research assignments (in a fall 2009 survey, over 68% of students responding indicated that they had scheduled a consultation based on the recommendation of a professor).

To aid new faculty in learning about the services we offer, we participate in the college's annual new faculty orientation. All new faculty members (whether tenure track or not) are invited, and have an opportunity to meet their liaison librarians in person. We also have a special "Services for Faculty" section on our website.

## 5. Resource Discovery

Improving resource discovery in the physical collection became a priority in 2003 when we converted our collection from Dewey Decimal Classification System to Library of Congress Classification System. The training and meticulous planning that went into the project paid off as 291,475 books were reprocessed and relocated in only 6 weeks. The rapid pace of the project saved the college \$103,183 from the original cost estimate. As one faculty member put it, "I love the conversion. I had occasion to walk by the PQ section, how wonderful, how logical, I was besotted. Balzac, Baudelaire and Chateaubriand, right next to each other, not aisles apart and in no meaningful order."

The focus on developing the library's digital space as an "anytime, anyplace" resource has touched almost every aspect of the library over the past decade. Since 2005 we have intentionally and strategically moved toward acquiring more electronic resources (e-journals as well as collections such as Early English Books Online, Literature Criticism Online, Oxford African American Studies Center, etc.). In 2006 we enhanced our catalog by adding our vendor's "*iBistro*" content – cover art, reviews, and more detailed contents notes. In 2008 we redesigned our website with usability as a driving principle. In the same year we systematically reviewed our reference collection, and, in addition to relocating items to stacks and withdrawing those no longer relevant, we also replaced print resources with electronic when practical. We began using wiki software to enhance our research guides, making them more familiar in format to our students. We have developed better access tools and interfaces, such as using *delicious* for our database presentation, and making access to ILL services seamless for the user. We have created a rich digital presence making unique materials from our collections available to users around the world.

## a. Website & Portals

The website was redesigned when the LIS merger took place in 2004. As reliance on e-resources and web services grew over the years, links had been added piecemeal, necessitating an overhaul to improve organization and function. In 2007 librarians and staff from across the LIS division began a project to completely revise and redesign the LIS website to make it more user-friendly. Since the web is crucial to routine delivery of library resources and services, library staff had a major presence on the project team. A team of librarians managed three rounds of iterative usability testing with both faculty and student participants, employing some of the techniques pioneered by library anthropologist Nancy Foster at the University of Rochester. In addition to the re-organization, we improved labeling of links to reduce library and information technology jargon. As a result, the new site was extremely well-received on campus, with few complaints or additional suggestions for improvement received following the roll-out in May 2008.

We do realize that not all users will start at our library homepage, so we make an effort to place the library's online resources and services in other places where users may be doing their work. In 2007 when the LIS Enterprise Systems unit developed a centralized portal (the college "gateway" for students, faculty, and staff), the library was invited to collaborate on development of library "channels" in the gateway for core library online search forms (e.g., to directly search the catalog, the journal locator, and the databases directory), as well as for services such as reference and interlibrary loan. This project served as a pilot for development of other campus service channels. When Moodle was developed as the new campus course management system in summer 2009, the library collaborated with other members of LIS to develop blocks of library services which appear in every Moodle course.

We recognize that our website, like all websites, is a fluid, ever-evolving resource. To ensure the library website stays current, we have developed a website management plan for ongoing maintenance and improvement.

## b. Catalog

There have been several noteworthy changes to our integrated library system, Sirsi, to improve the public view of our catalog and the staff interface. In 2005 a Sirsi Group was created to discuss user complaints and make recommendations to improve our public catalog. The group included library staff as well as staff from Enterprise Systems and Infrastructure Systems. Early improvements included customizing locations and item types to be more descriptive, modifying the quick search boxes to limit searches by item type, creating lists for new acquisitions and special book lists, and adding enhanced content to catalog records using Sirsi's iBistro.

In 2008, following the recommendations of the Sirsi Group, we moved to a hosted server using Sirsi's Software as a Service (SaaS); since that time, we have upgraded to the most recent release of Sirsi with minimal interruption to service. Staff members are now better prepared for upgrades by having the opportunity to experiment with the functionality of the software and troubleshoot any unexpected issues on our new test server before upgrading the production server. System administrative leadership has also improved. Staff members from Library

Services (functional experts) and Enterprise Systems share administrative responsibility for Sirsi and have joined to form the Sirsi Administrative Team. Recent priorities of the group have been staff training and development and identifying software functions, which have not been utilized in the past, that may increase efficiencies. We are currently exploring other interfaces (both open source and commercial products) as an option for our online public access catalog.

The library has been actively building its film collection based on proactive acquisitions as well as responsiveness to faculty requests. We purchase primarily in DVD format, and acquire television series, feature films, and documentaries in multiple languages. As the collection grew to more than 10,000 films, it became increasingly difficult for faculty to locate films on a topic/issue when they did not have a particular title in mind. This difficulty was exacerbated by inconsistent standards for film cataloging, the alphabetical arrangement of all DVDs in the library, and the inability to simultaneously search DVD & VHS formats in our catalog. A Film Access Task Force was formed to address this issue, and the primary result was a special Film Search site with both search and browse functions. The site provides a combined DVD/VHS search function and a browse by broad discipline function. All films acquired are now cataloged so they will appear in the appropriate browse lists. Most documentaries acquired since 2006 have been added. We continue to work through our past acquisitions to get all films more completely cataloged to enable the browse function. Thus far we have added local subject headings to approximately 30% of our documentary films so that they will appear in the browse lists.

We have initiated several physical and virtual programs to highlight our collection. “Dickinson Reads” and “This Just In” are two examples of physical displays to help generate interest in new acquisitions. Using the library’s catalog to highlight topical collections is another method to improve access to material. One such example is a collaborative effort between Human Resources (HR), the Conflict Resolution Resource Center (CRRC), and the library, in which HR funded the purchase of materials dealing with conflict resolution, and the library staff set up a “virtual” shelf for the collection in the catalog, which is also highlighted on the CRRC website. Our cataloger built similar options for browsing films, e-books, reference material, CDs and other specific types of material. In addition, we are constantly trying to make our databases page more intuitive for students, and have recently launched a new *delicious*-based search option based on the Web 2.0 technology that is familiar to today’s students.

### c. Improving E-Access

The library uses many techniques and technologies to enhance and improve accessibility of our electronic resources, some now standard library practice and some more innovative. In 2002 we implemented our Journal Locator list (from Serials Solutions). In 2004 we incorporated print journal subscriptions into Journal Locator to allow “one-stop shopping” for people looking for a specific journal; although print journals have records in our catalog, e-journals do not. In 2005 we implemented a link resolver, and have placed a “Get It” button or link in all our licensed databases, as well as some open source databases, where that is possible (e.g., PubMed, Google Scholar). When the link resolver cannot make a local match to full-text of the article, a link to a pre-populated ILLIAD form makes ordering the article much easier for our users.

In August 2009, we went “live” with a new databases display using *delicious* social bookmarking. Prior to this we had been using an in-house programmed site that was difficult for librarians to edit and maintain collectively. The new site tested well with students and faculty during development, but because this is a radical change for our users, we have kept the option for the old interface in place while we continue to evaluate the usability of the new interface for students and faculty. From a management point of view, the use of *delicious* allows librarians to easily “crowd source” maintenance of the database list, descriptions, and tags.

Other technologies we have adopted in the past 3 years to aid in resource discovery are:

- a downloadable library toolbar with shortcuts to library online tools such as the catalog, databases page, journal locator, etc.;
- RSS feeds for library “News and Events,” “Faculty Publications,” “New Acquisitions,” and the “Dickinson Reads” collection;
- use of wiki software as our research guides are revised (which is more flexible for collaborative updating than static html pages);
- use of Flickr to present images of rare books and photographs from our Archives, an online tour of the library building, and historic photographs of the library;
- use of a Meebo widget on our Ask a Librarian page (since July 2009) for instant messaging reference service, to increase the prominence of this service.

To enhance self-service physical way-finding we added an electronic kiosk near the main entrance in February 2008. The kiosk provides touch screen access to building hours, maps, study room and computer availability, and library news and events. That same month we installed two digital signs in the library, which are used to post information on news and events, advertise services, show images of interesting items in our collections, announce hours changes, and provide urgent announcements as needed.

#### d. Access to Unique Holdings

The Archives has been particularly innovative in its use of technology to aid discovery of its unique resources by the global user community. In 1999 we began developing our online presence by posting our completed finding aids on the web. In the summer of 2000 we launched the *Chronicles* website sharing substantial content about the history of Dickinson College. This site has served as a model for at least one of our peer institutions, Davidson College, while proving a valuable resource for researchers of all types worldwide. The *Chronicles* website is visited more than 100,000 times annually.

We were among the early adopters of CONTENTdm software to share digitized books and manuscripts, launching our first digitization project, *Their Own Words*, in 2003 and developing our own metadata model for that and subsequent digital projects. CONTENTdm software has been used for most of our digitization efforts, including the *James Buchanan Resource Center*, the *Patagonia Mosaic*, the *Isaac Norris Collection*, and *Slavery and Abolition in the US*. These resources have a combined total of more than 75,000 fully transcribed and searchable printed and handwritten pages, and collectively they have been visited more than 50,000 times

annually. (URLs for these resources are given in section 8.c. Knowledge Creation – Digitization.)

Using Drupal software, and with the assistance of colleagues in Instructional and Media Services, we developed in 2007 the first archives reference blog of its type. This blog serves as both a discovery and management tool, presenting for the public the basic subject matter of the research query while maintaining, just for use by the Archives staff, information about the patron who placed the request. Through this tool we are now able to generate statistics about our offsite reference with ease, we are able to see patterns of use of materials more readily, and new users are able to discover our resources through search engines that retrieve our blog posts among their results. Three different institutions have contacted us about copying this model, and so far one, Kalamazoo College, is known to have completed an implementation.

In 2008 we were among the early archival users of Flickr to share images from our collections, and we developed our own unique approach toward digitization and metadata for that project, opting for lower resolution and lighter amounts of metadata in the interest of streamlining the digitization and discovery process. In the first year we uploaded more than 600 images and registered more than 55,000 viewers. Adding to our Flickr collections is an ongoing project.

This past year we used Drupal to launch a blog as a means to document the history of women's experiences at Dickinson over the past 125 years. With more than 1,000 student-generated posts about coeducation at Dickinson College, this blog is now being used by faculty members to teach about women and gender issues. We are currently working with our Instructional and Media Services colleagues to develop a new blog – a “catablog” – as a way to share basic information about our materials that are not fully processed and available through standard finding aids online. We have also sought federal grant funding (unsuccessfully) to develop a Drupal instance that would allow crowdsourcing as a means to augment metadata regarding our materials, and would allow users to engage one another in discussions about these materials.

All of these different online resources attract users from around the world, and the Archives generally receives between 200 and 250 offsite reference queries each year. Our statistics show that at least 30% of these offsite queries begin with that patron finding and using some information from these various web resources.

Our greatest challenge right now, besides keeping up with the reference traffic that is generated by these projects, is maintaining the currency of our use of technology. As digital projects have developed over time, the particular tools used to present that digital content have evolved. Migrating that information to more current data structures and platforms is a constant struggle, particularly as demands for new content increase. We also need to seek appropriate ways to integrate our different information resources more effectively so that the research experience for our users can be more effective. We hosted a retreat in the summer of 2008 to bring together past student employees and interns in order to discuss some of these challenges and how we might envision the future of our web presence. The ideas developed at the retreat are continuing to inform our decision-making as we explore new ways to share our unique resources with a worldwide public.



## 6. Service

A commitment to service excellence is a core value of the library. We strive to provide consistent service, while maintaining the flexibility to address special circumstances as they arise. A prominent “Services” section on our website leads to pages tailored to the needs of each of the populations we serve; students, faculty and staff, alumni and friends of the library, and visitors. A key feature of our service philosophy is to be proactive in communicating with our users, and to anticipate and implement service improvements that will enhance their research experience.

### a. Liaison Services

In the past four years, the library has built a strong liaison program as the primary means of communication and outreach to faculty. Eight librarians have specific departmental liaison assignments, which allows them to focus on getting to know the individual faculty and developing expertise in the discipline, unique collection needs, and the curricula. The liaison librarian also serves as the primary conduit for communication of library news, services, and policies to the faculty. We are fortunate to have librarians whose educational and experiential background includes specific expertise in one or more, though not all, of the departments they serve. On the faculty satisfaction survey conducted in November 2009, over 90% of respondents indicated they were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the communications and services they receive from their liaison.

### b. Research/Reference Services

In 2006 the library began collecting detailed quantitative and qualitative information about all reference encounters using an online form. Analysis of the data showed a multi-year downward trend in the number of desk encounters that were truly reference questions requiring librarian expertise. Because librarians were also taking on a greater teaching role, we began to question the value of having them devote so much time to staffing a low-use service desk. However, we also wanted to maintain a high level of appropriate research support for students. We decided to play to the strengths of the liaison subject-specialist approach used to serve the faculty by extending that model to students, and we instituted an on-call/consultation model. A marketing program was put in place to counter any loss of visibility for reference services that might result from removal of the reference desk. Lengthy reference encounters and research consultations have increased over 81% in the two years following this change in our reference model. The success of our on-call model is facilitated by appropriate referrals from the circulation desk (although many students self-refer directly to the librarians). Ongoing reference marketing and routine reference referral training for Access Services staff will help us to ensure the ongoing success of our service. The associate director for research & instructional services worked closely with the assistant director for access services to develop and deliver regular, formal training for Access Services staff, including student workers. Our new model has been the subject of much interest from our professional colleagues, and we have had many inquiries into

how our system works. In October 2009, a librarian from Westchester Community College in New York came for a site-visit to learn more about our model. An article on the change is forthcoming.

In addition to our in-person reference services, we provide service via phone, email, and, since 2005, instant messaging. These means of service are lightly used at our institution despite our marketing of them.

Within the Archives, we respond to requests from all offices and departments of the campus community, as well as from users around the globe. The initial years of mounting finding aids and other content to the website led to steady increases in the number of offsite reference requests received annually. That steady rise has been followed by several years where the number of requests has remained fairly consistent, typically 225 from across the U.S. and several foreign countries. Those off-campus requests involve a number of requests for use of Archives resources in publication and exhibits. A similar trend was noticed regarding requests from college offices and departments. As word spread about the services provided by the Archives, more college employees began to make requests. Now that knowledge of the Archives has permeated the majority of offices on campus, the number of requests has remained even.

### c. Circulation/Reserve Services

In 2001 a library building space use task force was created to address building inefficiencies. The group determined that service suffered from the proliferation of service points in the building. Users often had to visit three or four service desks to receive the support they needed. To improve the user's experience, in 2003 we decided to consolidate service points. We started by moving reserves and audio-video to the circulation desk. Over the following years other services, such as general information, interlibrary loan and reference referral service, have been moved to the circulation desk. Cross-training desk staff is a continuous focus as we strive to provide excellent service to our patrons.

Although national statistics indicate declining use of libraries based on gate counts and circulation, since 2004-2005 our gate count is up 40% and our overall circulation of books and other materials is up 20.25%. Since moving the DVD collection to open stacks in the library in 2006, circulation of those items has increased 126%. Conversely, there has been a considerable drop in the circulation of traditional reserve items, and in the number of items on reserve. In 2004-2005 nearly 3,200 individual items were placed on reserve with a circulation total of 9,073. The following year, as more faculty members began using the college's course management software, the number of items placed on reserve was reduced to just 2,400 for the year while circulation dropped 34%.



#### d. Interlibrary Loan & Document Delivery

Interlibrary loan management systems have also been upgraded, with the goals of improving access, decreasing intermediation, and shortening turn-around time. In 2002 we joined the Pennsylvania Academic Library Consortium, Inc. (PALCI), which is dedicated to improving resource sharing. In 2004 we purchased OCLC ILLiad Resource Sharing Management Software, which automated many of our interlibrary loan processes. Patrons could now submit and track their own requests on a web-based interface. Productivity increased and error rate decreased because staff no longer manually input citations. We activated Odyssey, a document delivery system available through ILLiad, to allow direct delivery of documents to our patrons via the Web; we also activated direct request options in many of our First Search databases. In 2007 we contracted with library consultants to review and recommend improvements to our interlibrary loan process. The consultants found several processes that we could improve upon, particularly with regard to PALCI/EZborrow and article scanning. By implementing their recommendations, we have improved turn-around time and reduced processing backlogs. Filled requests have increased by more than 40%, and overall turn-around time for books and articles has been reduced from nearly nine days in FY2005 to five days in FY2009, with non-returnable items arriving in many cases within 24 hours.

We have been leaders among our peer institutions in the effective integration of new access technologies, and are regularly consulted by others on system implementations. We were early adopters of RapidILL, a software solution to provide speedy access to articles our library does not own. From grant writing (which secured start-up funding) to smoothly implementing RapidILL into day-to-day workflow, our staff took the lead among our Central Pennsylvania Consortium colleagues and our peers in the Oberlin Group and PALCI. We were the first ILLiad hosted site in our RapidILL consortium to set up unmediated borrowing, a process that has the potential to deliver an article within minutes to the patron without using any staff time. Colleagues from Oberlin College, Skidmore College, and Vassar College are among those who have sought our expertise on implementation details. Access Services staff members have presented at regional and national professional meetings on our success with RapidILL and other innovations in Access Services.

#### e. Services for Patrons with Disabilities

Two library managers sit on the campus-wide Advisory Council for Disability Services. Working with this group and the campus coordinator of disability services, the library has put in place adaptive technologies including a computer with Kurzweil software and a CCTV magnification device for reading print text. The library also provides spaces for exam proctoring for students requiring special testing accommodations. The library is physically accessible via a ramp and automatic door opener at the front entrance.

## f. Global Education and International Programs Support

The library actively supports the college's international programs via a variety of services. All online resources are of course available, as is reference service via email or instant messaging. A Blackboard site for students and faculty in off-campus programs provides access to Dickinson's print collection. Articles and chapters are scanned and uploaded for viewing (within copyright guidelines), and books are shipped on request. We market our services to members of the Dickinson community studying or working outside the local area as the "Dickinson Global Library."

The international programs librarian is in regular communication with administrators in the campus Office of Global Education, and meets with global program directors when they visit Dickinson. After three years of focused outreach, the library is now a regular part of the Global Education pre-departure orientation program for students leaving for overseas locations and the Global Education orientation program for incoming international students. In March 2008, a survey of students abroad indicated that 65% were using the library's online resources, and 75% knew they could contact a librarian electronically. Since fewer than half knew they could request books, we have increased communication about this service.

While we do not have librarians fluent in all the modern languages taught at Dickinson, we are fortunate to have librarians with strong language skills in Chinese, Japanese, German, and French. Although we do not have a librarian who speaks Arabic, a librarian attended an all-day continuing education program on research sources for Middle East studies just prior to the approval of this department as a new major at Dickinson, and thus was able to build an appropriate start-up collection with the help of grant funding support from the new department. In spring of 2005, 2006, and 2007 the East Asian Studies liaison librarian led that department's senior seminar students on a research trip to the Library of Congress Asian Division in Washington, DC, to take advantage of the rich vernacular research resources there. Unfortunately, the East Asian Studies department budget no longer includes funding for this trip for the foreseeable future, but the liaison librarian is being involved earlier on in the senior seminar to assist students in choosing topics for which they will be able to obtain sufficient research material.

## 7. Public Face

In the ten years since the last review, the changing character of libraries has been the subject of a great deal of conversation in professional venues. "Library" now encompasses both physical place and digital space; the design and organization of the online library is as critical as the arrangement of rooms and furniture in the building. At Waidner-Spahr, we have attempted to provide physical environments that anticipate changing user behavior and that support both individual study and group collaboration through access to spaces, technology, expertise, and collections. In 2004 we enhanced the user's experience by installing wireless technology throughout the building. We have also developed a thoughtful, useful digital presence that enhances discovery and access.

## a. Physical Spaces

The Waidner-Spahr Library is a complex building with a 1967 original structure and a 1998 addition and renovations throughout. Wayfinding was a problem for library users. In 2006 we developed, tested, and implemented a new signage plan, including clear and readable floor plans; comprehensible identifying labels for services, collections, functions, and spaces; and directories for offices, services, and collections. In 2007 we added digital signage, which identifies real-time availability of public workstations, announces and advertises programs and policies, and highlights collections and services. Recently, following some “dangerous” suggestions from staff members, we developed better ways to point users not only to collections, such as reference area posters that direct to online resources, but also to environments that suit their study preferences. However, our recent survey of faculty satisfaction illuminated some problems that remain for users in following the arrangement of books in our stacks. We will address these this spring by adding floor plans to each level. In the past few years we have monitored the nature of questions asked at both the circulation and the former reference desk by those unfamiliar with our library. In response to what we have learned, we have reworked the physical spaces to create a point of entry that is intuitive instead of intimidating. The space is designed to educate the patron from the moment he or she walks in the door. Kiosks highlight areas of the library, signs direct patrons to points of interest and information, and the website, maps, and tour brochures all facilitate patron independence.

The physical arrangement of the library’s user spaces can best be described as fluid. For example, the Sharp Listening Room of 2005 has morphed into a media/viewing room, where soft sofas (hijacked from nearby areas by students) replaced desk chairs at viewing stations that now accommodate small groups. After observing student behavior at computers in the reference area, we confirmed that they were using it as a collaborative workspace, and equipped it with additional seating and rolling whiteboards. A little used area near the Archives was refurbished with soft seating, good lighting, and display shelving. Renamed the Friends of the Library Reading Area, it recognizes this group of library supporters and offers students a cozy and out of the way study space. The Biblio Café, envisioned as a space where small groups can meet, houses current newspapers and magazines, and is fitted with both soft seating and study tables, which are reconfigured on the fly to accommodate seminar classes. Throughout the library, furniture placement and selection suggests purpose: on the quiet side (the Spahr wing), individual seating and smaller tables prevail; on the collaborative, less quiet side (the Waidner wing), chairs are clustered and larger tables provided. The use of group study rooms is regularly assessed in order to identify emerging needs or behaviors; for example, two rooms were recently equipped with computers and large monitors to facilitate group work, and most now include the soft seating which previously migrated into them each evening.

Library collections have been reorganized physically to improve access and usability. In 2006 the English language collections in the East Asian Reading Room were relocated to the stacks, while all materials in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean languages were moved into that space to create a reading room for Asian language learners. In 2006 “Dickinson Reads” was launched to bring current fiction, poetry, and non-fiction works to a prime location near the main entrance. In 2007 DVDs, formerly only searchable via the library catalog, were arranged in a browsing collection on the main floor.

At the time of the last review there were four large “satellite” libraries serving specific academic departments. This posed a number of problems for library staff in securing, maintaining and providing access to these collections. With increasing interdisciplinary programs in our curriculum, and a migration to electronic journals, the division of physical materials among these outposts was an impediment to access. In 2006, after the hire of the liaison librarian to the sciences, plans were put in place to reduce the number of satellite libraries while still providing a space that could be utilized by students and faculty with materials that would assist them in their research process. With input from key faculty stakeholders to help with consolidation, we were able to identify resources that would be most appropriate for the Tome Reading Room, which supports the departments of astronomy, physics, chemistry, computer science, and mathematics. In 2007 we addressed the ongoing problems with discovery and access in the map library of Kaufman Hall by reorganizing the facility in a meaningful, coherent order and developing finding aids to facilitate discovery of these resources.

## b. Programs and Events

While the library is clearly a place for contemplation and collaboration, it is also a place for community and the sharing of ideas. The opening of the Biblio Café this fall highlights the position of the library as a gathering place for the diverse Dickinson community. Events that showcase the library as an intellectual center of the campus are held throughout the year.

In 2007 the library partnered with a faculty member from Judaic Studies in bringing the American Library Association’s “Let’s Talk About It” Jewish Literature program to the campus. Over a semester, college and community members met in the library, and read and discussed literature on the theme of fathers and daughters. Monthly “FaculTeas,” providing an opportunity for faculty members to speak about their research, have been a fixture in the library for more than six years, reviving a tradition that dates back to the 1940s. In the past four years, a library exhibits and events committee has served to organize and manage these and other social and cultural events. These receptions are well-attended, sometimes attracting standing room only crowds of students, faculty, and community members.

In 2008 the library partnered with the Career Center to hold a session about careers in librarianship for students called “It’s Not (Just) Your Grandfather’s Library: 21st Century Careers in Library and Information Sciences.” Invited speakers included Dickinson alumni working in public, academic, and corporate libraries, a community member representing school libraries, and three recent graduates from library school on our staff.

Other public events are held during National Poetry Month, in collaboration with the campus Belles Lettres Society. These include poetry readings, book displays, and sidewalk chalk to encourage student creativity. Since 2006, we have invited the Photography Club to hold exhibitions in our library, which are marked by opening events with refreshments provided by the library.

The Archives regularly hosts events for college friends and alumni during Homecoming and Alumni Weekends. Among the more popular events are “Hands-On History,” and “Dickinson’s Most Wanted.” The former program allows visitors the opportunity to handle and explore for themselves old college documents, scrapbooks, rule books, diaries, notebooks, and photographs, while the latter asks the assistance of alumni in identifying individuals in unlabeled photos. The Archives has also hosted history slideshow presentations and historical walking tours of campus.

The Friends of the Library group provides programming through an annual spring dinner and presentation. Speakers have included famed book artist Barry Moser, Dr. William Noel of the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, and several authors and scholars whose areas of research and expertise center on notable historical figures related to Dickinson College, including James Buchanan, Joseph Priestley, Moncure Conway, and of course, John Dickinson.

Some of the less formal traditions, however, are perhaps among the most popular. Each academic year during the study period prior to final exams, the library sponsors a “food for thought” study break featuring familiar comfort foods. This twice-annual spread of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches has become a popular Dickinson tradition. Coupled with Halloween candy in October and fortune cookies stuffed with information literacy fortunes to mark the Chinese New Year, the library makes great effort to provide a welcoming and comforting atmosphere for the students.

### c. Exhibits/Displays

The library regularly mounts displays of circulating books and films, which are linked to programs and speakers on campus. In this way we seek to encourage a “read more about it” ethos. We work actively with the Clarke Forum to acquire and display materials relevant to current programs throughout the year. We also mount annual displays of works by the Stellfox Visiting Scholars and Writers Program (e.g., Maxine Kumin 2009; Mario Vargas Llosa 2008; Edward Albee 2007) and, on request, other visiting scholars invited by academic departments. Recent thematic displays have included such diverse subjects as Health Care Reform, National Geography Week, the anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, and Fat Talk Free Week. We annually create circulating book displays for Poetry Month, Banned Books Week, and a display of books authored by Dickinson alumni during Alumni Weekend each year. We frequently have to refresh the displays as the books and films are checked out, attesting to the value of this approach. Our thematic book/film displays have proven so popular that we sometimes have a waiting list of requests from departments to fill the three bookcases dedicated to this purpose, and we are working on developing a management plan for circulating book displays.

Within the Archives, exhibits are developed regularly to celebrate major events in Dickinson’s history. In 2000 we marked the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Carlisle and Cumberland County, and in 2002 we highlighted many fine small presses represented in our collection, which coincided with the visit of Barry Moser for the Friends of the Library spring dinner. In 2003 we celebrated the bicentennial of Old West, the college’s oldest structure, with an exhibit curated entirely by one student, who was selected through a competitive application process. We also showcase individual manuscript and book collections through our exhibits, and during the current year we

are marking the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the enrollment of the first women at Dickinson College with another student-curated exhibit.

The Friends of the Library Reading Area hosts Archives' exhibits marking annual events, such as welcoming the incoming first-year students in August, celebrating the Joseph Priestley Award in the fall, and highlighting materials related to the Friends of the Library speaker each spring. We have also recognized the birthday of John Dickinson, as well as Poetry Month in April.

Students have also come to see the Library as a space for their own creative endeavors; student-curated exhibits relating to course themes and student-run photography shows have regularly enlivened the library. On two different occasions the Friends of the Library Reading Area has been graced with literary exhibits showcasing the work of students taking courses on E. M. Forster and the Bloomsbury Group, and plans are currently being cemented for an exhibit next fall highlighting issues relating to the African-American experience at Dickinson College. All library users now benefit from the permanent displays of student and faculty artwork.

## 8. Knowledge Creation

Staff and librarians are engaged in professional associations, as both members and officers, at the local, regional, and national level. Beyond mere attendance at meetings and conferences, librarians and staff members serve on boards and committees within their professional associations, offering their time and expertise toward collegial shared governance. They seek opportunities to share with their peers through conference presentations and scholarly publication. They serve as peer reviewers and consultants for other institutions, and colleagues regularly visit the Waidner-Spahr Library to observe our operations. These activities enhance the professional and personal growth of our librarians and staff. They also identify Dickinson College as establishing best and creative practices in areas from collection management to information literacy instruction to interlibrary loan to archival management.

### a. Presentation

Librarians and staff members remain active and involved in local, regional, and national associations. Through these associations staff members and librarians routinely prepare poster sessions, serve on panels, deliver papers and presentations, and teach workshops. Librarians have been invited to present their ideas at international conferences.

We have hosted regional library symposia twice in recent years. Our library collaborated with Gettysburg and Franklin & Marshall Colleges in April 2007 to host a one-day "Outreach Solutions for College Libraries: A Symposium," which drew more than 60 participants from libraries throughout Pennsylvania. In April 2009, Waidner-Spahr Library hosted "Scholarly Resources for Research and Teaching on East Asia: A Workshop" for more than 30 scholars and librarians from throughout the country. The workshop was sponsored by the Associated College Libraries of Central Pennsylvania and the North American Coordinating Council on Japanese Library Resources, and our international programs librarian was one of the primary instructors.



Waidner-Spahr librarians and staff actively engage with their colleagues through professional listservs, blogs, and other communication channels as a way to further share their ideas and experiences. As a department, we are committed to sharing with our colleagues our expertise and innovations through a variety of formal and informal channels.

### b. Publication

Over the past several years, librarians have been active in sharing their knowledge, creativity, and experience through professional publication. Scholarly articles have appeared in regional and national peer-reviewed journals, as well as in edited volumes.

In support of greater visibility and outreach, the librarians also collaborate in the production of a library newsletter as a means to share with the college community information about notable acquisitions, events, and initiatives. In addition, the college archivist is responsible for researching and authoring quarterly articles on the history of the college for the alumni magazine, and Archives staff routinely fill information requests for students and staff writers for various college publications.

### c. Digitization

In support of Dickinson College as a community of inquiry, the Archives has been particularly active in digitizing rare books, original manuscript materials, and photographs in the interest of sharing unique resources via the web. These digitization projects, often produced in collaboration with faculty members, have generally included the creation of new information to provide context for the materials digitized; thus, our online projects reflect more than mere electronic copies of print media, but new and unique information resources. The *Chronicles* website on the history of the college (grew out of work with Professor Osborne in the History Department, whose students frequently explore some aspect of Dickinson's past. The *Their Own Words* website was also a collaboration with Professor Osborne, with the Archives digitizing materials and Osborne authoring contextual notes. The *James Buchanan Resource Center* features material regarding this notable Dickinson alumnus, Pennsylvania's only U.S. President. For the *Patagonia* project, led by Professor Borges in the History Department, and the *Three Mile Island* project, led by Professor Malmsheimer in the American Studies Department (both projects operating through the Community Studies Center), the Archives provided guidance on scanning standards and metadata, as well digitizing select material from local holdings that complemented the subject matter of the two projects. *House Divided*, led by Professor Pinsker in the History Department, offers another example of the Archives offering both digitized content as well providing support on standards and metadata. A collaboration with the Archives and Special Collections Department at Millersville University led to the creation of the *Slavery and Abolition* project, and this project is now in its second phase of development. The 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of coeducation at Dickinson College led to the Archives developing the *Women's Experiences* blog, a collaborative effort involving more than a dozen undergraduate students as well Susannah Bartlow, Director of the Women's Center, and faculty members of the Women's

and Gender Studies Department. To date, these various web projects have led to the digitizing of more than 75,000 pages of printed and hand-written text, have included the development of thousands of individual web pages, and have been supported through the contributions of dozens of undergraduate students and faculty members.

## 9. Conclusion

The past decade has been a period of transformation at the Waidner-Spahr Library. During the first five years, the effectiveness of the prevailing library administrative structure was challenged and a new direction, embedded in incremental changes, was taken. The establishment of a permanent library director was followed by changes to the librarians' professional status. The library was reorganized structurally from a distributed model of shared authority to one with an associate library director overseeing library resources and programs. The library's book collection was reclassified in record time, symbolizing new, forward-leaning momentum. The library was merged with information technology functions into a new campus division, intended to capitalize upon synergies of formerly dispersed technology and expertise.

In the most recent five years, a new director was followed by the arrival of four new professional librarians. A focus on information literacy, the strengthening of the liaison program, an active agenda of cultural programming, a routine of assessment, a renewed appreciation for our unique holdings, and the adoption of technologically enhanced information access marked the changing culture. During the past five years, library collections have migrated online; library processes and services have been dramatically reconfigured to take advantage of efficiencies and improvements offered by the digital environment. The place of the library in the life of the college has added social and cultural dimensions. In perhaps the most radical departure from the past, our vision has turned most decidedly outward. We have made a value of scanning our environment, locally and globally, and adopting, adapting, or developing best practices that align with and enhance the Dickinson experience.

In 1999, 108 faculty and administrators responded to an information services survey conducted by the office of the Dean of the College. While the focus was on information technology, there were some gleanings for the library. More than 70% of respondents strongly agreed that services relating to problem resolution, technical expertise, the website, and ease of working with library staff were adequate; 71% were generally satisfied with library services. Fewer respondents were satisfied with proactivity of library support (54%), sufficiency of number of library staff (56%), and frequency or adequacy of technical training offered by the library. Comments about specific library services and resources were also captured. Several faculty members indicated that library instruction sessions were too time consuming, dull for students, and that not all librarians were knowledgeable. They mentioned gaps in database coverage, and appalling backlogs in processing of materials. We expect that the structural and administrative changes noted in this self study were motivated by the conditions described by these survey responses.

In Spring 2004, at about the time of the merger of the library into the newly formed LIS division, the Library implemented a LibQual survey. In the subsequent changes of personnel and



administration, the data from that survey were never analyzed. In general, the library exceeded minimum expectations but fell short of desired expectations. The library's spaces were perceived as most successful; services, somewhat successful; and information control, farthest from meeting community desires. Among the faculty responses, the "library as place" was perceived as greater than desired for the most part. However, in many areas relating to information control and affect of service, faculty responses indicated that their minimum expectations were not being met. For example, neither printed materials nor access to electronic resources met their needs; notably, access tools and the website were identified as inadequate to their minimum requirements.

In 2009 the library (borrowing from another institution's annual "ten at ten" survey of user satisfaction) surveyed faculty about their satisfaction with ten areas of library services and resources. Of 83 respondents (from a total of 237), 92.8% indicated that they were satisfied (48.2%) or very satisfied (44.6%) with their overall library experience. Through this survey, which we plan to conduct annually, we have identified areas needing further and focused exploration; these will be analyzed by the library managers and follow up data gathering will be scheduled. All of the specific comments, suggestions, and complaints by respondents have been closely examined, and will be addressed.

This self study includes much that we have accomplished over the past decade. It also reveals our challenges. As for all libraries, our primary challenge is in meeting expanding needs with diminishing resources, both for library collections and personnel. Another challenge is to identify and employ mechanisms that will enable us to keep up with the rapidly changing scholarly communication arena and to take advantage of emerging advances in information delivery and access. Developing ways to communicate effectively with all Dickinson faculty members, and to provide useful support for their varied information needs is yet another area for library effort. We are committed to partnering with faculty to help our students become confident, competent, and critically analytical information seekers; we are challenged in how to develop and implement a coherent program to effectuate that goal. As expectations for information literacy and technological competencies in academe, industry, and all areas of employment grow, the library is also challenged to partner in building seamless services in support of student research, writing, and communication skills. We look forward to the comments of the reviewers on how well we are organized and prepared to meet these challenges.