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Public Services Department : Annual Report : 2004 - 2005

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Annual Review
Public Services
July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2005

A great many changes took place on the personnel front which has had a major impact on public services. Jackie Jackson and Signe Oberhofer, both long-time, experienced reference librarians retired. When Jackie Jackson retired in August 2004, the responsibility for Poynter instruction services was moved to the Public Services department. During the fall of 2004, Mika Nelson assumed responsibility for the newly created Access Services department. At that time, interlibrary loan services were moved from reference to Access Services. Anita Lindsay was hired on a full-time instructor line to help with reference coverage and bibliographic instruction. Tony Smith was also hired to fill in at the reference desk on a part-time basis. Both have been a tremendous asset to the department. In June 2005, Patricia Pettijohn was hired as the new Head of Collection and Technical Services. Her reference experience and approachable style will also provide a tremendous boost to the department.

During the fall of 2004, a flyer describing the Poynter Library instruction services was sent out to every teaching faculty member. Class instruction requests increased by 21% in 2004/2005 with 52 sessions offered and 1135 students reached. Jim Schnur, Signe Oberhofer, Karilyn Jaap, Deb Henry, Mika Nelson, Anita Lindsay, and Tina Neville all provided class instruction this year. In the fall, students in most instruction sessions were given a brief survey asking them to state what they had learned in the library session and to comment on anything that might still confuse them about library research. A meeting of all of the instruction librarians was held in the spring to discuss the survey results and to brainstorm on methods for improvement.

The popularity of the Blackboard course management software may have implications for the library. Robert Cooksey from USF Academic Computer came over in March 2005 to demonstrate how librarians can make links to individual course web pages. As a follow-up to that session, Tina Neville and Anita Lindsay went to Tampa for additional training on how to use the Blackboard software. During the spring, Tina Neville also took an ACRL web course that investigated ways that librarians can work with the teaching faculty through course management software. Finally, a survey of the teaching faculty was conducted in the spring to determine the amount of Blackboard usage on campus and the level of interest in partnering with the library through Blackboard. The results were extremely encouraging. Of the survey respondents, 69% said they were already using Blackboard for their courses. 85% of the respondents said they would be interested in learning more about adding library links to their Blackboard pages and 72% said they would be interested in allowing a reference librarian to have teaching assistant status for their Blackboard course so that they could provide direct assistance to their students. Implementing a library Blackboard program will be one of the main goals for the 2005-2006 academic year.

The highlight for the reference department during the 2004-2005 year was the installation of the new reference desk. The best feature of the new desk is that it provides a comfortable area for consultation with a library researcher. The desk also provides improved visibility to the more heavily used areas of reference. The new arrangement should allow for greatly improved reference services.

The reference desk continues to be very busy but the role of the reference librarians seems to have changed to some degree. Brief ready reference questions are becoming less frequent; however, the librarians are being asked for more in-depth help with construction of search strategies, database recommendations, and help with learning to cite resources. A greater level of technical expertise is also required as questions are no longer limited to library resources—students also need help with remote access, how to use the Blackboard course management software, how to manipulate Microsoft Office files, etc. Deb Henry and Tina Neville have been researching the changing role of reference service and hope to publish in this area.

Although the total number of reference questions (instruction) is down by 18% compared to last year, the door count was also down. A great effort has been made to make library resources accessible from outside the library and this may contribute to the decreased number of patrons actually in the library building. In addition, when comparing the ratio of the number of instruction questions to the door count, the statistics are virtually the same as last year. The reference staff also responded to RAP requests (one-on-one instruction appointments) as they were requested but, because of staffing shortages, the service wasn't heavily promoted. This may account for the 27% decrease in RAP requests.

Late in June 2005, the new library management system went live. This will have major implications for the reference and bibliographic instruction; however, the majority of the effects won't be seen until the 2005/2006 year. To prepare for the new library catalog, a basic demonstration of its features was presented to the librarians in June.

A departmental goal for the year was to make the first floor more hospitable for the students. The new reference desk was one step in this process. We also wanted to improve the marketing of our library services. Candace Pascual, a senior library technical assistant in access services, created a wonderful, student-oriented display for use at Campus Showcase and during the first few weeks of classes. The display received many compliments. Anita Lindsay also contributed several library displays to emphasize resources and services. Her initial displays highlighted the interlibrary loan department and journalism resources.

In spite of personnel shortages, the remaining librarians rose to the occasion and provided expert reference coverage in addition to their other obligations. Deb Henry, Mika Nelson, Tina Neville, and Anita Lindsay all contributed hours to the USF Libraries chat service. Deb Henry and Tina Neville had an article published in the refereed journal, *Journal of Academic Librarianship*. In addition to serving on several major campus committees, Deb Henry applied for, and received, a well-deserved promotion to full librarian.

Annual activities as they relate to the Poynter Library Goals:

Poynter Library Goal #1: *Provide optimum collections and services to meet the demands of USF St. Petersburg's expanding curriculum and faculty.* **(USFSP Goals #3-5 and USF Goal #4)**

More than 130 new books were added to the reference collection in 2004-2005. Of these, 7% dealt with gender or multicultural issues. 22% of the new reference materials were related to business—an area of reference that was particularly in need of updating.

Poynter Library Goal #2: *Provide appropriate services and technologies to meet the needs of USFSP's mission and its continued expansion. (**USFSP Goals #5 and 6, USF Goal #4**) Action item: Work with other campus departments to establish a comprehensive information literacy program to support lifelong learning.*

and

Poynter Library Goal #5: *Support USFSP's efforts to achieve separate SACS accreditation.* **(USFSP Goal #1)**

During the fall 2004 semester, each librarian that taught a class-related library instruction course was asked to distribute a brief survey aimed at finding out what the students had learned in the session and what they still found to be confusing. The results of the survey were tabulated and shared in a group meeting during the spring 2005 semester. This shared discussion allowed the instruction librarians to discuss ideas that might enhance the information literacy program at Poynter Library.

SACS core requirement 3.8.2 states that "the institution ensures that users have access to regular and timely instruction in the use of the library and other learning/information resources.[1]" During March 2005, Tina Neville participated in an online web course: *TLT/ACRL Group Workshop: Effective Collaboration for Campus-wide Information Literacy: The Blended Librarian's Perspective on How to Make It Work.* She has also been accepted to the *ACRL Immersion* program during the summer of 2005. These courses should give her the tools needed to help strengthen the information literacy program at Poynter Library.

[1]Commission on Colleges. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement.* Commission on Colleges. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools: Decatur, Georgia, December 2001, p.26.

Progress on Departmental Goals for 2004 / 2005

Incorporate informational literacy into the reference department. As requested, provide assistance to the new head of Access Services regarding interlibrary loan to help ease the reorganization activities.
Done

Continue to pursue the implementation of a more user-friendly and ergonomic reference desk.
The new desk was installed in early October 2004. The new desk allows better visibility and provides an area for sit-down consultation with students.

Enhance marketing services and outreach to students. Continue plans to make the library more user-friendly.
As noted above, the new reference desk was a major step towards making the reference process friendlier. Displays have been used throughout the year to highlight particular services and resources. Marketing slips were prepared for use at the reference desk. These slips provide the reference department's phone number as well as the URL to the USF Libraries web site. When librarians jot down call numbers, database names, etc. for student use, they now go away with some additional information. During the fall semester, we also attempted to make a "mental break" area for students. Comfortable chairs were

grouped by the library entrance with games and a TV. The area was used more by the public than by our students so it was eventually removed.

Work with the systems team on a long-range plan for technology in the reference area.
Waiting lines during the spring and fall semesters proved that there was a need for expanded access to computers in the student research area. Furniture and computers were ordered to double the number of workstations available for students. By the end of the fiscal year, the furniture had been installed, the wiring was nearly completed, and the machines had arrived. Final installation for this area is scheduled for late summer 2005.

Conduct additional assessment activities regarding perceived approachability of reference librarians.
Postponed until Fall 2005.

Suggested Departmental Goals for 2005-2006

- ❑ Complete installation of additional student computers in the reference area.
- ❑ After attending *ACRL Immersion,* work on an information literacy plan for Poynter Library.
- ❑ Expand Blackboard involvement between course instructors and library.
- ❑ Weed the reference collection.
- ❑ Conduct a reference approachability follow-up survey (fall 2005)
- ❑ Conduct a survey of satisfaction from faculty that requested classes in spring 2005 and fall 2005
- ❑ Investigate offering faculty workshops on selected topics (Blackboard library links, Refworks, etc)

Public service statistics:
July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2005

	FY 2004/2005 (new)	2003/2004 (previous)	Change
Reference:			
Instruction:	7025	8540	down 18%
Information:	14598	14981	down 3%
Telephone:	2028	2203	down 8%
Instuction:			
Classes:	52	43	up 21%
Students reached in classes:	1135	824	up 38%
Student orientation sessions:	20	14	up 43%
Students reached in orientation:	983	815	up 21%
RAP sessions:			
Requested:	46	63	down 27%
Completed	38	55	down 31%
Door count:	137111	148576	down 8%