

Niagara University Library

Annual Report

2003-2004

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What Was New in 2003-2004

Facility and Equipment

The Library renovated the current journals display area. Located on the first floor of the building, this area now has new chairs, a sofa, and a table.

The Office of Academic Support installed an Aladdin Video Magnifier in the Library. It is designed for use by people who have visual impairments that make it difficult or impossible for them to read printed materials.

The Library upgraded the computer lab. Eleven machines were replaced. Windows XP was loaded on four others.

The Library is housing the office of the Director of Sponsored Programs and Research, Adrienne Leibowitz. To make up for a lost group study room, the Study Abroad room was converted into a combined Study Abroad/Group Study Room that can be reserved by students.

Library Staff

Three employees were honored for outstanding service:

- Joe Umhauer, Head Cataloger and Systems Librarian, was named the Niagara University Employee of the Month for December.
- Mary Ann Santangelo was the Fall 2003 recipient of the Library's "Excellence in Customer Service Award." MaryAnn was recognized for "proactive, empathetic reference service to students of Niagara University."
- Laura Bradum was the Spring 2004 recipient of the Library's Excellence in Customer Service award. Laura was recognized for "fast and efficient document delivery service to students and faculty of Niagara University," especially in the context of the electronic reserve work she took on over the past year.

Staff changes included:

- Friedl Fuerst, Circulation Department Coordinator, retired after 25 years of work at Niagara.
- Michelle Dubaj replaced May Ann Santangelo as a part-time reference librarian, who chose to leave for scheduling reasons.
- Kathleen Delaney was hired as a part-time reference librarian and archivist.
- Erna Tominich, part-time reference librarian, left for a full time job at Trocaire College.

- Kathryn Horner was hired as a part-time Circulation Supervisor.

Other staff news:

- Kristine Kasbohm served as co-chair of the University's Information Literacy Task Force.
- Samantha Gust was elected chair of the WNYLRC's Resource Sharing Committee.
- David Schoen was named acting chair of WNYLRC's Preservation Committee.
- Jonathan Coe, Coordinator of Public Services, co-authored "Current Trends vs. Traditional Models: Librarians' Views on the Methods of Library Instruction" in *College & Undergraduate Libraries*, Vol. 10, No. 2.
- Charles Dabkowski was appointed to the Curriculum Committee of the University Senate.

Collections

Access to the **ReferenceLink** database was discontinued, but New York State provided the following replacement databases: **Custom Newspapers** provides access to full-text articles from a collection of 150 newspapers, both national and international, **Informe** (Revistas en Español) provides access to full-text magazine articles in Spanish, **National Newspaper Index** provides indexing (not full-text) of America's top five newspapers from 1977 to the present and **New York State Newspapers** provides access to full-text articles from 10 newspapers.

The Library began a yearlong trial to **Academic Search Premier**, a database from Ebsco that contains many more full text titles than **Academic Search Elite**, especially in the sciences.

A subscription to the electronic version of the **Encyclopedia Britannica** was initiated.

The Library and the Career Center teamed up to purchase a subscription to **ReferenceUSA**, a database that contains information on more than 12 million U.S. businesses and 1 million Canadian businesses.

The Library created a **College Success Collection** that consists of books that provide practical advice on college life topics like study skills, money management and job hunting. This special collection is located on the first floor of the Library near the stairwell.

Student, Faculty, and Staff Services

The Library enhanced customer service in several ways:

- Collaborated with Professor Tom Chambers in integrating library instruction into his HIS 200 course.
- Cataloged the collection of the Career Center, thereby making their collection more accessible.

- By collaborating with other libraries throughout North America, virtual reference service was expanded and made available 24 hours a day 7 days a week.
- The Library installed a color printer and laminator at the reference desk for patron use
- In response to the new emphasis on Information Literacy by Middle States and by the Association of College and Research Libraries, the Library completed phase one of the most significant expansion of training in its history.

Year	Sessions Taught	Attendance
2001-02	76	746
2002-03	101	1375
2003-04	155	2370

Administrative Operations

Kathleen DeLaney, an experienced archivist, began organizing the archives and working with various people on campus to determine what should be in the archives. The benefits to the campus and to history are already being realized. However, funding ended on May 31, so we need to find a way to continue the funding.

Progress Report on Last Year's Objectives

Conduct a needs assessment and vendor evaluation in order to make recommendations to the AVP regarding an automation system upgrade.

The Library recommended that the University fund an upgrade to Horizon. The University provided capital funding of \$62,940 for 2004-05.

Step up the pace of inventorying the collection.

The Library completed an inventory of the class L, Education, but then aborted the operation as not providing sufficient benefit, given the costs. In the summer of 2005, after wireless connections and a new automation system are installed, we will resume the inventory.

The Library will work with the Criminal Justice Departments and CIS departments to weed their subject areas.

A methodology has been established with Criminal Justice. The computer science section was in such bad need of weeding that the Library was able to complete the first phase itself.

The Library will attempt to orient all first-year Niagara students to the Library.

The new program was implemented.

The Library will pilot a coherent program of Information Literacy Instruction with the College of Education

The design is nearly complete and will be implemented in the fall of 2004.

The Library will analyze the results of the Library Service Quality Survey.

Full results will appear on the Library web site this summer. Nearly every dimension rated exceeded the benchmark (other 4-Year private colleges in New York State). Our main concern is undergraduates did not rank our reference service as highly as faculty and graduate students did. In the fall of 2004, we will implement a more pro-active approach to reference service that may result in undergraduates making better use of the Library's reference services. Combining this with the new freshmen orientation should increase awareness and satisfaction

The Library will convert the print periodical list from Excel to Access.

This is one of those things that in retrospect we do not know why we wrote it as objective. We did not do it because it ranks low on our priority list.

The Library will develop procedures for supporting the research needs of honors students.

The Library disseminated contact information to Honors Students, letting them know who their subject specialist was and indicating that individualized research assistance was available. This resulted in a handful of appointments, which is not good enough, so we will meet with the Honor's Coordinator to discuss doing outreach better.

Objectives for 2004-2005

Implement a new Library automation system

The Library received capital funding to upgrade to Horizon. This is the most difficult process a library can undertake, so this will be our only major goal for 2004/05.

Incorporate teaching into reference interactions

The following statement has been in the Library Instruction Mission Statement for several years:

"The Library commonly provides training to groups, but also considers every reference interaction to be a teaching opportunity, where students are encouraged to think critically and analytically about their research." We have greatly expanded our training to groups, but have not implemented the one-on-one teaching, so in 2004/05 the reference department will begin to incorporate teaching techniques into its reference interactions. With the objective being not just to meet our patrons' immediate needs but also to teach them tools that make them more effective researchers.

Continue to Diversify the Recreational Reading Collection.

Last year, we began correcting an under representation of African American authors. We will also work on Latino and Native American representation.

Provide Customer Service Training to new student aides.

In an effort to maintain high quality service standards, formal customer service training will be provided to all new student aides.

The Library will increase marketing and promotion.

In a time of flat budgets, we need to maximize what we do have by ensuring that the University Community is well aware of our current services and collections.

Future Challenges

Budget

The numbers express our biggest challenge:

1991-92: the University budgeted \$376,298 for materials.

2003-04: the University budgeted \$411,000 for materials.

An increase of only 9.2% over 12 years.

If the Library had only received CPI inflation increases, the current materials budget would be **\$96,809 higher** than it currently is. Inflation in the Library world is greater than the CPI, however. Periodical Price increases typically range from 8% to 10% per year. Since 1991, the U.S. Periodical Price Index has increased 200%.

In an era of limited budgets the Library needs to obtain the most bang for the buck so to speak, so we need to start doing more systematic cost/benefit analysis of the print and electronic collections.

Information Literacy Program

The number of sessions taught by the reference department has increased 104% over the last two years, which means that in terms of available training staff, we are maxed out. Even so, we are not currently offering advanced research training to most majors, which is a long-term goal. One option is to offer more online training. Another option is to hire additional staff. The direction that we take will depend on how the University implements new Information Literacy initiatives.

Assessment for Continuous Improvement

Niagara University Library exists to support the Mission of the University by providing services and materials that meet the informational and lifelong learning needs of students, faculty, and staff.

The Library will focus on assessing these areas in 2004-2005

Objective	Perf. Standard	Measure	Methodology	Timetable	Findings
To provide training to students to become self-reliant information seekers and lifelong learners	Students learn about the library and how to do research.	Pre and Post tests In class assessment worksheets Student Evaluations	The Library will be implementing a more thorough plan of assessing the learning outcomes of training sessions. This will be the first assessment of learning outcomes of the new training programs.	Fall and Spring semesters.	
To assist students, faculty, and staff in identifying, locating, and interpreting information in all of its formats	In interactions with reference librarians, students will feel that they are part of the research process, not just receiving information in a vacuum.	Self Reports of reference librarians.	The main aim of the first year is to get reference librarians thinking more about including patrons in the reference process, explaining more about what is happening. So we will be asking the reference librarians to self-report their behavior.	Fall and Spring semesters.	
To provide high-quality books that support the curriculum.	The Library acquires reference books that are used.	Count reference book usage.	During the Fall semester, the Library will count reference book usage via the placing of a small sticker on the book each time it is reshelved. Then the collection will be shelf-read and reference book usage tabulated.	Fall semester.	

**The Library improved services or changed operations
in several ways in 2003-04, based upon assessment activities.**

- Fall 2003 was the first semester that the Library Mystery Tour (LMT) was used with NUS. Thirty-eight sections of NUS (590 students) participated in the LMT. Because the program was designed to be fun, our first-year survey focused more on that subjective aspect. Eighty three percent of participants indicated a favorable opinion of the LMT. We also discovered that our clues were too wordy, which we revised for the fall of 2004.
- In the fall of 2004, the Library sent a Book acquisition survey to faculty and received 69 responses. One thing we sought to measure is how effective we were in getting the word out to faculty about who their Library liaison was. More than half of respondents did not know. To remedy this situation:
 - Librarian liaisons will contact chairs and ask if they can attend a departmental meeting to introduce themselves.
 - Individual emails will be sent from library liaisons to faculty at the beginning of the fall semester each year.
- During the fall 2003 semester, the Library conducted a web usability study. The purpose was to determine what we already do well and what we can improve upon regarding our web site's navigation, design, and ease of use. Our findings revealed:
 - Though dull in color and plain, our web site seems to get the job done from a user perspective. So at this time we are not planning a major redesign.
 - Students could not find the Library periodicals directory; so we moved this link to the home page.
 - Information about the Infopass reciprocal borrowing program was hard to find. So we added a link to ILL/Document Delivery pages.
 - An interesting finding is that survey respondents did not read the web pages. They sometimes were on a page that provided the answer they were seeking, but would click off the page quickly. We therefore need to ensure that navigation does not require too much reading. We also discovered that the links in sidebars were rarely used as a navigation tool, so we should not overly rely upon them.
- In April and May 2004, 28 students were interviewed about their book selection preferences. The analysis is just now occurring, but we already have some data that can be passed on the Information Literacy Librarian than can improve the "Book Evaluation" component of the Information Literacy Program.
- Late in the fall 2003 semester, the Library surveyed users of ARIEL Document Delivery. The main purpose of the study was to determine if users were having problems downloading or viewing articles. The survey responses were favorable and we did not discover major

problems. Three respondents indicated that it is tedious to have to enter personal data every time a request is made. This is actually a technical limitation of the system we use to submit requests. Ideally, students should be able to login to their “document delivery account” and the system would know who they were. We will put a note on the form indicating that after an article is submitted, the user can click the back button to submit another article, re-using the form that already has personal information on it. Another respondent indicated that articles do not always load on the computers in the lab in St. Vincent’s Hall. During the summer of 2004, we will check into this.

- Niagara University’s materials budget was compared to the materials budgets of other catholic college libraries similar to ours. Of the 21 schools who responded, Niagara University ranked 14th in materials budget per fte student. The level at which the University chooses to fund the Library is mostly beyond our control, though we will continue to seek more funding. Nevertheless, we also evaluated if our allocations for databases, books, periodicals, and AV materials was in line with standard practices. In general it was, except for AV expenditures. Most of the libraries in the benchmark spent more on AV materials than we did. This is to be expected, because at Niagara the Media Center is responsible for this. However, one might argue that the Media Center may be serving faculty more than students in this regard, and that our Library should be buying more AV materials. With this in mind, we spend about \$1,000 on AV at the end of the 2003-04 budget year, and will evaluate whether the items circulate.