

ILA/ACRL Newsletter

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Iowa ACRL Spring 2008 Conference -- A day devoted to library advocacy

This year's conference was a day devoted to considering the many aspects of library advocacy, including Dr. Roberto Ibarra's insightful keynote presentation about context diversity; member presentations about advocacy through public services, technical services, library instruction, social networking web sites, and partnerships; and many individual conversations during lunch and beverage breaks.

The Spring Conference Program Committee was challenged this year to develop the conference theme based on the national ACRL's focus on campus advocacy and to encourage library support staff to attend the conference. The Committee successfully applied for an ACRL advocacy grant, which provided \$500 toward the keynote honorarium. Topics of interest for library support staff were kept in mind as concurrent sessions were selected and State Library of Iowa continuing education credit was awarded for conference attendance.

Approximately 120 Iowa and Illinois librarians, library support staff and library school students who braved the icy roads in the morning were highly complimentary about the conference programming, St. Ambrose's conference center and the conference food.

Spring Conference Program Committee members have my undying gratitude for their investment of intellect, ingenuity, talent and commitment. They started their work in mid-August 2007 and finished it as they walked to the parking lot after the conference. Many thanks to Brett Cloyd, Bart Schmidt, Mary Iber, Cecilia Knight, Chris Neuhaus and Katie Dunn. Additionally, I want to thank the Local Arrangements Subcommittee: Barb Kuttler, Jennifer Smith and Mary Heinzman. Special thanks to Holly Martin Huffman, Academic Media Consultant at Cornell College, for designing the conference logo.

Submitted by Jan Dellinger, Hawkeye Community College, Spring Conference Program Committee Chair

Dr. Roberto Ibarra: Context Diversity and What It Means for Libraries



Dr. Roberto Ibarra, Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of New Mexico, gave a fascinating and thought-provoking keynote address to conference attendees Monday morning. His background in anthropology lent a very scholarly, thorough, and research-oriented tone to his presentation, which focused on the history, current practices, and future directions for academic libraries within the larger context of the students and colleges they serve.

Dr. Ibarra opened with a detailed discussion and breakdown of 3 different "dimensions of diversity" (structural, multicultural and contextual), which helped to frame his larger argument about how librarians can help the "system adjust to the people". Some of the points Dr. Ibarra made regarding this adjustment that struck this librarian as especially cogent are: creating a college community attractive to diverse populations; making systemic changes, not just programmatic changes; and thinking in terms of "attracting and thriving" rather than "recruiting and retention".

Later in his talk, Dr. Ibarra drew our attention to the importance of interpersonal transactions in a college environment, and the concept of "High Context" versus "Low Context" cultures. In low context cultures (e.g. Northern European cultures) communication focuses on words and tasks. In high context cultures (e.g. Asian, Arab, Middle Eastern, African, American Indian) community and socio-cultural contextualization are necessary for communicating effectively. This means gestures, social setting, tone and social status as well as words and tasks are important for communication. Put another way, words and tasks communicated without context are virtually meaningless in this culture. This knowledge could of course have important implications for librarians working at service desks or providing library instruction.

Dr. Ibarra has written extensively on these topics, giving much more detail and many references for follow-up. I encourage each of you to read his published paper from a past conference presentation, available on the ALA website: [2005 ACRL National Conference paper](#) (PDF).

Submitted by Kate Hess, Newsletter Committee Chair

Iowa ACRL Research Award's First Ever Recipient

Congratulations to Karen Lehmann of Wartburg's Vogel Library! She was selected as recipient of the first Iowa ACRL Research Award. She received her award with \$500 grant during the lunch-time business meeting at the spring conference. Lehmann's winning article, "Assessment of Student Learning at the Reference Desk," co-authored with Jill Gremmels, was published in the November 2007 issue of *College & Research Libraries*. (This article is available to ALA members [through their website](#).)

SAVE THE DATE! Spring 2009 Iowa ACRL Conference

Please plan on joining us at the 2009 Iowa ACRL Conference

Date: Friday, April 17, 2009

Place: Hawkeye Community College, Waterloo, IA

Info Lit: "Fantasy Sports", "Assignments Worth Doing" and "Scholarly Inquiry"

Information Literacy is seemingly omnipresent in any library conference today, but two sessions in particular focused on unique and workable ways to approach teaching information literacy in your library.

Fantasy Sports: The Road to Information Literacy

[Editorial note: Missing image of Paul Waelchli]

Are you looking for a new way to engage students in learning research skills? Paul Waelchli has just the program you need. Fantasy sports - specifically fantasy football - are becoming a near obsession, especially with the millennial generation. The idea is to build upon the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards students use every day while involved in fantasy sports. For example, consider Standard 1: "The information literate student determines the nature and extent of the information needed." In fantasy football, players need to know positions and rosters, so they explore information sources to gain the specific information they need. Indicator two of standard one states, "The information literate student identifies a variety of types and formats of potential sources for information." Players identify several resources from forum discussions and websites to conversations with other players and statistics.

Paul Waelchli is the Assistant Director for Instruction and Public Services at the University of Dubuque. More information is available through Paul's blog, *Research Quest* at researchquest.blogspot.com.

Submitted by Linda Nelson, Newsletter Committee

Assignments Worth Doing: Collaborating with Faculty to Design Authentic Learning Opportunities

Jean Donham, director of Cornell College Library, began her presentation by relating her experiences while working with students' research projects. She said most students develop an inaccurate view of the research process. They think doing research is much like reporting. Through inquiry based learning, students are taught true research skills.



Jean Donham

Through communication and teamwork, the librarian guides the student through the research process. As a result students develop the skills to formulate an appropriate research question by detailing ideas and thoughts, as well as learning to organize and evaluate information, and communicate their findings in a coherent manner. Jean said the Information Search Process, a process researched and developed by Carol C. Kuhlthau, provides a baseline guide for implementation of the program. The Information Search Process focuses on a student's thoughts, actions and beliefs in stages of the research process.

[Jean's powerpoint](#) is available on the Iowa ACRL website.

Submitted by Linda Nelson, Newsletter Committee

Modeling Scholarly Inquiry: One Article at a Time

Anne Marie Gruber, Mary Anne Knefel, Jessica Schreyer, and Paul Waelchli from the University of Dubuque presented this lively overview of a collaborative project implemented in second level composition courses. English faculty, librarians, and Writing Center staff recognized a need for students entering Composition and Rhetoric II classes to develop better research and writing skills, including: developing focused topics, identifying reliable sources, recognizing supporting or opposing evidence in academic journal articles, and citing sources.

Outcomes are mapped to ACRL Standards and to those of the Writing Center. Critical thinking and ethical decision making skills are important components of the unit. Faculty, librarians, and

Writing Center tutors help students move towards analyzing complex issues based on the cognitive development theory of instructional scaffolding.

The Modeling Scholarly Inquiry unit is divided into eight class periods, with faculty, librarians, and writing Librarians are involved early on and assist in selecting topics and discussion articles. They also facilitate small group discussion, meet with students outside of class, and prepare materials such as the [handout](#) linked at the conference sessions web page.

While the unit is assessed as part of the university's overall Information Literacy assessment plan, other criteria are also used, such as: a written assessment piloted during Fall '07 and student success in Introduction to Research Writing and other courses.



Mary Anne Knefel, Jessica Schreyer, Anne Marie Gruber and Paul Waelchli

Their [powerpoint is available](#) on the Iowa ACRL website.

Submitted by Judy Mitchell, Newsletter Committee

Technology: "Txting the Teacher", Facebook and "ICONic Training"

The following presenters focused on specific technology applications being used in their libraries in a variety of ways, for a variety of purposes, weighing the pros and cons of each.

Txting the Teacher: How to Illuminate In-Class Learning with Web Conferencing Software



Kim Bloedel of the University of Iowa discussed and demonstrated Ellumiate web conferencing software, which she uses to meet with her students virtually in an undergraduate business research class. Kim has taught this class in both face-to-face and online settings, and has found definite benefits, along with some drawbacks, to teaching a class in this format.

Some of the important lessons-learned that Kim shared with us include sending out messages to students reminding them of the start date, with detailed instructions for getting to their online meeting place; giving yourself extra time to prepare for the class and allowing extra class time for students to adjust settings on their end; and as with any technology, being prepared in the event of technology failure.

One surprising anecdotal finding, was that Kim found many of her students to be "worried about this new, formal online environment". Some students needed extra help in logging on and making use of the technology, and some students simply dropped the class due to their discomfort with the online classroom environment. On the plus side, Kim found that students who stuck with the class were more likely to ask questions during class, the result being that she felt there was more interaction with students online than in her face-to-face classes, with a greater sense of community and social networking.

Some features of the Elluminate software include the ability to record class sessions, instant messaging during class, built-in polling feature, and audio and video on the instructor's end. Although audio and video are available on the student end, Kim has not personally explored giving students this option!

Submitted by Kate Hess, Newsletter Committee

"You were poked by the OPAC" -- Facebook Applications in Libraries

Ryan Gjerde of Luther College presented information helpful for any library considering having a presence in Facebook, or wanting to make better use of their current Facebook account. He discussed features such as groups, events, pages and "the wall", as well as a variety of applications you can add to customize your Facebook account. Most importantly, Ryan noted

that libraries often pull content right from their website and put it into Facebook, bringing the library to their users.

Some of the features and applications that might appeal most to academic librarians, are building pages with basic library information (including photos or videos), and the ability to promote library-related campus events to your students with Facebook accounts. Applications such as embedding a "quick search" of your library catalog and databases on your Facebook page are also possible, and require some programming skills, access to a web applications server, and the addition of a developer application to your Facebook profile. Ryan noted that Facebook has worked in support features for developers such as a wiki and discussion boards where you can learn more about advanced applications. One other nice feature is the ability to collect usage statistics related to your page.



You may also [view Ryan's Google Doc slides](#) online.

Submitted by Kate Hess, Newsletter Committee

ICONic Training: Using a Course Management System for Continuous Student Training

The session presented by Sarah Andrews and Catherine Reed Thureson turned into a group discussion when technical difficulties didn't allow them to make their presentation as planned. But this didn't squelch their enthusiasm for the project they've been working on for a number of years with the student workers they supervise at the Hardin Library for Health Sciences at the University of Iowa. Sarah and Catherine have worked together to design training modules within ICON, the U of I course management system, for training new employees and posting messages and updates for all part-time service desk employees.

In the time they have worked on this project, they have made many changes, and they passed along to session participants many helpful ideas on what works, what needs improvement, and what doesn't work. There are many features on their ICON training module that work well, for example: having a "centralized repository of training materials" and a "place to organize and store manuals/documentation for easy access", as well as basic information like desk schedules and contact list for coworkers. ICON also makes it easy to create quizzes and tutorials, where progress of each individual employee can be tracked. For a library like Hardin that has many student employees all with different schedules, this type of training makes it available to the student employees during down time on their shift, and also frees up time for their supervisors, since many aspects of the training lend themselves to the online environment.

Some potentially useful features that Sarah and Catherine are looking to alter or maximize include discussion boards, listservs for time-sensitive information, loading information still found only in paper documents, and improving the use of videos.

Some of the potential negatives for creating this type of training system include the steep learning curve for library staff creating the modules, and the time involved in upkeep. Another downside is the need to remind or somehow motivate students to regularly log in for updates.



Above: Catherine and Sarah describe their online training system.

Submitted by Kate Hess, Newsletter Committee

Off-Site Storage: Value-added?

Off-Site Storage: Value Added?

Cecilia Knight of Grinnell College presented an in-depth look at the issues facing anyone who may be looking at moving library materials to an off-site storage facility. While at first glance such a project might seem as simple as "moving old books to a warehouse," the reality is far more complicated. Material is moved to storage for reasons as varied as duplication, availability in multiple formats, protection from damage and low usage.

Remote storage may be preferable to withdrawal for a number of reasons. Access to electronic resources is often not guaranteed, digital versions of a title may be incomplete due to copyright restrictions, scanned images can be of low quality and the original resources may have contextual value. Then too, resources in original format can be scanned or re-digitized as new methods or better OCR techniques become available.



Knight went on to examine the roles that individual libraries might play in the preservation of the shared intellectual heritage. Off-site storage

decisions are closely linked with a library's understanding of its preservation responsibilities. Preservation commitments are frequently made on the basis of geography with libraries tending to emphasize resources important to a particular area or region. At times, this local approach can lead to a neglect of considerations such as the appropriate roles of research, college or public libraries.

The speaker concluded with a survey of digital preservation initiatives undertaken by such organizations as LOCKSS, CLOCKSS and Portico. These initiatives, in combination with the activities of organizations like the Center for Research Libraries and Open Content Alliance are leading to an environment in which libraries will decide which content to maintain as "e-only format," which content to store off site and which will be provided via on-site tactile access. Cecilia's [Powerpoint](#) and [bibliography](#) are available on the Iowa ACRL website.

Submitted by Randy Roeder, Newsletter Committee

What Counts? Using Data to Influence Practice

What Counts? Using Data to Influence Practice

Presented by Tonnie Flannery and Jessica Johanningmeier of Cornell College

While many are fond of using rigorous statistical methods, sometimes for making rather unimpressive distinctions, the authors of this paper show that fairly simple descriptive measures can yield very useful results and inform the process of asking the right questions.

In the first case, an unrestricted interlibrary loan policy generated a very large and increasingly expensive mass of requests. The tracking system at first produced only a distinction between requests for photocopies and requests for original materials (loans) which did not prove particularly helpful in explaining what was happening. Recoding the raw data into spreadsheet form allowed creation of a much clearer picture of the patterns of use, types of materials called for, timing of requests, and variations of use within different sectors of the user population. More detailed inspection proved that much of the demand was for entertainment-related CDs and videos. Other measures showed patterns of demand that were generated by class use and those that appeared unrelated. The analysis allowed for a reasoned restriction of the ILL policy to meet budgetary necessities without unduly limiting requests needed for classroom and research purposes, and also revealed problems in searching that could be remedied during user-education sessions.



A second project concerned use of the Quantitative Reasoning Studio. Again, studying patterns of use revealed how to most efficiently target resources. Addition of a few questions to user

surveys allowed tracking of use by freshmen vs. juniors, for example, and also comparing usage trends between, say, freshmen of one admission year and those of another.

What seems to be most significant is that both projects were of a practical nature related to improving service at a specific institution and for the user populations involved. In both cases the methods used allowed detection of broad trends that were not immediately obvious from the raw data. Perhaps as useful were the relatively easy means of developing new questions to ask of the data and the ingenuity employed in finding practical applications of the results beyond what was initially sought.

[Powerpoint](#) available.

Submitted by Jeff Dodd, Newsletter Committee

From Support Personnel to Librarian

“Making the Move: From Support Personnel to Librarian, a Closer Look”

Mary Iber, Cornell College

Sue Leibold, Clarke College

Rob Van Rennes, University of Iowa

Moderated by Brett Cloyd, University of Iowa

This panel discussion featured three librarians who began their library careers in support staff positions. Making this transition can offer some unique challenges but can also be very rewarding. Panelists will discussed their work as support staff personnel, their decision to transition to a librarian position, educational opportunities that helped make the transition possible, and issues related to embracing new challenges and responsibilities once becoming a librarian.



Please note: Due to weather conditions the newsletter committee was not able to cover this session. If you have comments, observations, or would like to write a review of this session for your colleagues, please sign in and add your comments below. Thank you! *KH*

Is Cataloging Dead?

Is Cataloging Dead? Advocacy for Bibliographic Control

Randy Roeder and Rebecca Routh of the University of Iowa Libraries surveyed a wide range of developments that call into question many of the foundational assumptions of current cataloging practice. R & R examined a few of the stereotypes associated with catalogers and their work but then challenged participants to consider if the disconnect between the perceptions and realities of bibliographic control is an understandable reaction to a group that has been reluctant to embrace change.

Routh described the redundant work that takes place in library cataloging departments and the amount of that activity that is not shared at the network level. She went on to point out that the cataloging community has also been slow to integrate metadata from other sources into its workflows. While catalogers have lagged in these areas, e-businesses have moved aggressively to include data from non-library sources into a variety of bibliographic records easily viewed by researchers on the Web. While initiatives such as the WorldCat Identities Project demonstrate the ways in which existing library data can be repurposed to meet new demands, catalogers still tend to view their work as a local effort.



After a quick survey of "next generation" catalogs, Roeder pointed out that some catalogers question the value of the ILS as a discovery tool. While it may be too early to predict the demise of the local catalog, there are two divergent trends that bear watching; one is that of the highly sophisticated local catalog with integrated instructional content; the other is that of a more generic, web-based catalog such as WorldCat Local.

After reviewing the new functional requirements for bibliographic records (FRBR) and looking at the new content standard-RDA-participants were again challenged to think about the relevance of MARC data and the traditional techniques of bibliographic control in this new environment. The movement of library customers towards web-based discovery calls into question much that goes on in local cataloging units and makes it apparent that catalogers will need to acquire new skills and a more network-centric mindset if this part of the profession is to survive.

[Powerpoint](#) available

Submitted by Randy Roeder

Partnering for Lifelong Reading

WPL@HCC and CFPL@UNI: Partnering to Advocate for Lifelong Reading

Linda McLaury (University of Northern Iowa), Sheryl Groskurth (Waterloo and Cedar Falls Public Libraries), Jan Dellinger (Hawkeye Community College) (left to right)

This presentation described the partnerships between the Waterloo Public Library and Hawkeye Community College, on the one hand, and Cedar Falls Public Library and the University of Northern Iowa on the other to expand recreational reading among college and university students.



The authors began the presentation with a review of research on declining reading proficiency in the general population and more surprisingly the college student population. More unexpected correlations were revealed in these studies between lower levels of reading and lower participation in cultural activities, volunteer work and even sports. These unfortunate trends are obviously ones that should be reversed. The second set of facts concerned the decline in use of existing recreational collections in the two academic institutions.

The projects described were intended to combat the decline in recreational reading in the academic student population by, in effect, opening public library branches inside the academic libraries. The speakers outlined the negotiations involved. Some of the predicted roadblocks, like possible labor relations difficulties between union and non-union shops, did not prove to be a major issue; nor, because of common library systems, did many of the technical difficulties that might ensue if the technical systems were vastly different. The process was carefully thought out so that it would evolve smoothly (down to the provisions for ending the partnerships amicably if that should prove necessary).

Collection development was one of the more trying experiences, as could be expected, but a common view of the purposes of recreational reading collections, the experience of the public libraries in developing such collections, and sources of donated materials (the latter requiring some tactful negotiation with library friends groups) made it possible to overcome the difficulties. One of the failings of the earlier academic recreational reading collections was its lack of currency, so it was decided at an early stage that there should be a steady influx of new material in the satellite collections.

Circulation was another issue that required cooperation at a very detailed level. It is unusual (outside interlibrary loan) for one library to circulate materials for another. The staffs of the four

institutions worked together to solve the routine problems of circulation and even some of the potentially unpleasant problems like library fines and return of materials to the "wrong" library.

One of the collections that had been targeted to open with 300 volumes is now pushing 500. The work of the respective staffs and use of donated materials made it possible to create the two new branches at a stunningly low cost. The prognosis for success in the partnerships is very good. The aim of encouraging lifelong reading has been fostered, and the missions of all four institutions have been supported. One can only say "bravo!"

[Powerpoint](#) available

Submitted by Jeff Dodd

About this newsletter

Newsletter Committee Members, April 2008 Newsletter

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Special Thanks to...

Ryan Gjerde of Luther College, chair of the Electronic Communications Committee. His work on this website has been above and beyond the usual call of duty, and he is a credit to Iowa ACRL. Thank you Ryan!

This newsletter is the work of the ILA/ACRL Newsletter Committee, with chairperson Kate Hess. Please contact Kate (khess@kirkwood.edu) with any corrections, questions, or news stories for future editions of the newsletter. Thank you for reading!

Submitted by Kate Hess