

Dulaney-Browne Library

Quarterly Report

July - September 2009

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Director

Staff Retreat

The library's annual staff retreat was also designed to achieve the goals of providing a



time for the entire staff to gather and focus on the direction of the library while reducing the cost of the activity. The library staff met in the library's Honors Study Area and engaged in team building activities and brainstorming about possible changes and reorganization of library tasks. Lunch was included in the event for those who chose to participate. The most popular team building activity was the competition to build towers from old library checkout cards when the rules keep changing.

Parents Library Information Sessions

Library Director Victoria Swinney again participated in the parent information sessions offering two sessions on how to help your student become more independent by using the library. Approximately 30 parents attended the sessions.

New Faculty Picnic in the Library

The continuing tradition of the picnic in the library brought most of the 22 new faculty members to the library and provided them an opportunity to meet with the librarians assigned to their areas and become acquainted with library resources.

Meet the Author Event

The "meet the author" event of the OCU Reads program was held in the library on August 21st. Students and faculty had an opportunity to talk informally with Da Chen



in the Rapp Foundation Reading Room. After the discussion ended, the event became even more informal with a discussion of the winning entries in the art contest associated with the book. Then Mr. Chen got out his calligraphy equipment and provided beautiful calligraphy signatures on copies of his book and other items for the participants.

Sundae Sunday

The library staff welcomed new students as part of their orientation week activities with “Sundae Sundae” on August 23rd. Each area of the library was marked with a numbered sign and a self-guided tour was available. In addition, the sundaes were served as a progressive meal, with each item (bowls, spoons, napkins, ice cream) on a different floor. This gave new students a change to socialize and to browse various areas of the library in addition to enjoying some ice cream. Approximately 35 new students attended the event.



Staff Changes

The library had to deal with several current and expected staff shortages during the quarter. Government Documents and Serials Librarian Chariyar Nillpraphan went on extended leave beginning the first of July. Jeremiah Goodman, the library’s archives and circulation technician decided to go back to school full time to pursue a graduate degree at the end of July. Parker Atkins began an extended leave in late early September. The library hired one permanent and one temporary library technician to help serve our students during this difficult time. Katherine (Kat) Herbison started work on August 5, 2009. She has extensive experience as a student worker in three different academic libraries and a Master’s Degree in Flute Performance from Oklahoma City University and will be working to provide additional supervision in the Leichter

Listening Library, assisting in interlibrary loan (especially for music materials), and providing service at the circulation desk. The library hired Andrew Rose on August 12th for the temporary position and he provided valuable additional service at the circulation desk until he found a permanent position as a history teacher on September 14th.

Since the university did not maintain its expected international enrollment in the fall a hard hiring freeze was announced on September 10, 2009. This has meant that the temporary position has remained vacant and that the search for a replacement for the Serials and Government Documents Librarian has been suspended.

Reference Desk Experiment

Total reference questions dropped almost 15% in the fiscal 2008-2009 year when compared to the previous year and the librarians began looking for ways to both reverse this trend and make better use of librarian time.

In July we began an experiment. Instead of taking turns sitting for three hours at the reference desk, we each walked through the building several times during those shifts and then returned to work at our desks. In July this seemed to have the desired effect and reference numbers increase compared to the previous year. In August we added another feature. We asked the new temporary circulation technician to sit at the desk and answer simple directional and equipment questions and refer more complex library related questions to the librarian on duty. (Librarians still walked through the building several times during each shift and then returned to their desks.) This second innovation appeared not to work as the number of reference questions of all types dropped significantly in August. With the departure of the part time circulation technician in mid-September, librarians returned to their visible location at the desk while maintaining the practice of walking through at least the first floor several times during a shift. With this change the numbers of complex reference questions did climb again, while basic questions continued to decline. We are continuing to review the statistics and to test new methods for improving our reference services.



Library Use Statistics

The library use statistics for the quarter show a surprising pattern. Visits to the library have increased significantly (36%) and circulation to students is also up a healthy 6%. Other areas that show improvement include interlibrary loan borrowing, library instruction, archives use, and visits to the library's internet home page (up 12%).

However, there is one major area of usage decline and it is related to the last item mentioned as an improvement. Use of all of the library's online resources has declined. Searches of the library's reference databases (Oxford English Dictionary, Grove's Music Online, Books in Print) were down 60%. Retrievals from article databases were down 35%. These declines are important especially because of the proportion of total library use that they represent. In July to September of 2008, 2.8 online articles were downloaded for every book that was checked out or used in the library and reshelved by staff. In the same period of 2009, the number was 1.6 articles per book.

We need to continue to work on methods to promote the use of the library's online resources and to make sure that the resources we have are those most needed by students, faculty, and staff.

Library Training

The library training session in July focused on finding materials in the music listening library, especially how to use the new specialized call number search to browse for scores in the Library of Congress classification scheme and how to find scores within collected volumes. The attendance was limited to library faculty and staff, but the workshop was an important introduction to these methods of assisting our students.

The library training session in September focused on new features in JSTOR and EBSCOhost and drew one classroom faculty member in addition to most library faculty and staff members. It offered an excellent opportunity to become aware of newly introduced features in these databases and discuss ways to improve the user experience.