

**College Libraries
Program Review
2008-2009
Self-study**

Introduction

This self-study prepared by the staff of the College Libraries is organized in four parts. The first part is a narrative description of the key service functions carried out by the libraries. The second part is a narrative that responds to a series of questions posed for the specific purpose of exploring issues related to how the libraries function overall. The third part is comprised of recommendations of the library staff as a result of their consideration of the first two parts. The final part is a compilation of documents that illustrates the work of the Libraries over the last several years.

Methodology

The overall program review plan was designed by the Director of Libraries in consultation with the Provost. Though modeled after the College's program review process for academic programs, the self-study questions are unique to the College Libraries. The Director of Libraries explored the available literature regarding library standards and other forms of library institutional assessment and concluded that for the self-study to be meaningful a different approach was needed. The intent of the self-study questions is to focus on outcomes rather than inputs.

The program review design was reviewed and endorsed by the Coordinating Council which consists of all library faculty and the two senior clerical staff members. The Director required every member of that group to participate in the process. Other members of the clerical staff were invited to join. None chose to do so.

The process began with consideration of the self-study questions. The Director sent out questions in sets. For each set, individuals were asked to send a personal e-mail response. The director compiled the responses into a single document attempting to represent all perspectives, but reduce redundancy and protect individual privacy. The compilation for each set was then distributed and discussed in small groups of 3-5 individuals facilitated by the Director. The Director then re-wrote the document to integrate the discussions and the e-mail responses. The document was shared with the entire staff. A series of meetings were held to provide everyone opportunity to comment and to discuss recommendations.

Part I. Description

The Libraries - Crumb Library and Crane Music Library - operate under By-Laws that describe the organizational structure and work methodology. Personnel Policies are also in place to guide the promotion and tenure requirements of library faculty. The Libraries' culture has been one of participative decision making and empowerment of all staff.

Administration

The Director of Libraries reports to the Provost and is a member of Leadership Council, Academic Cabinet, and Academic Council. This reporting structure is an important one for ensuring that the Libraries are represented in College planning processes.

Planning

The Libraries have instituted a regular planning process and cycle. This process begins in May with a staff retreat typically planned and facilitated by the director. The retreat offers the opportunity to highlight both College goals and the Libraries' mission, vision and values.

During the summer months each functional area meets to develop their goals for the coming year. These are shared and integrated across areas as needed at a special meeting of the Coordinating Council in August.

The Director meets regularly with each coordinator and group of team leaders at 3 week intervals throughout the fall and spring semesters. Progress in achieving the area's goals is the focus of these meetings. Each area prepares a written report to inform a Q & A session at Coordinating Council meetings so members are kept abreast of library activities and accomplishments.

Fund Allocation

The College allocates State funds to each unit. Historically these funds are the same each year. The Director is given autonomy in the internal allocation of these funds and that process has never been scrutinized or "second guessed" by a supervisor. The Director may also submit requests for additional funding, though in few years has any additional funding been available for distribution.

As the College's finances have not been robust, there have been several years of "restraint" on those funds when the base amount was temporarily reduced and only one instance in two decades when the base amount was increased by any amount of significance. Therefore fund allocation is an ongoing challenge in order to balance the needs for library acquisitions in a dynamic environment, the processing costs associated with those acquisitions, investment in professional development, equipment and technology needs, and investment in innovation.

In addition to regular State funds, the Libraries have access to three other accounts under State spending regulations: overdue fines, book replacement, and revenue from a photocopier contract. The Libraries also have several Foundation accounts, not subject to State spending regulation – four small endowed accounts, and three accounts in which any donor support designated for the Libraries is deposited.

The Director begins building funding plan for the year's budget in early August. Often adjustments must be made well into the fall as the College may not know what its allocation from the State will be until mid September and in lean years, this may be reduced. The plan takes into account the Libraries' goals and is shared with all library staff members.

Personnel

The Director is responsible for the work assignment of all library staff members. As a public institution, all employees in the Libraries work in the context of collective bargaining agreements. The library faculty are represented by one union, the clerical staff by another. The clerical staff work in positions that are in civil service classifications and hiring for these positions are subject to those regulations.

The Libraries have a relatively flat structure. Two senior clerical staff members directly supervise all other clerical staff, except in Crane Library. The senior clerical staff are evaluated by the library faculty who are team leaders in their area. Building supervisors report to a librarian. Other staff report to the Director.

Advancement work

The Director of Libraries engages in regular Advancement work including meeting monthly with a member of the Advancement staff. Recently, the Libraries have also been included as a giving category on the Advancement web site and in the annual fund drives. Despite these activities and other efforts to engage with Advancement staff, there is little evidence those staff think of the Libraries in conversations they have with donors. Due to the efforts of the Director, the Libraries have a small but growing number of loyal donors who make relatively small gifts on an annual basis. This income has enabled some modest, but important improvements.

Collaborations

The Director has actively sought out collaborations with other areas of the campus in support of student and faculty learning needs. These have resulted in some important initiatives and in increased visibility and understanding of library resources and services.

Most significant of these is with Computing and Technology Services. In 1991, the College was an early adopter of the organizational integration of libraries and computing services. Staffing challenges and changes, however, resulted in a separation of these units organizationally. The relationship between the Director of Libraries and the Vice-President for Computing and Technology Services in recent years has been a strong one, with regular meetings and efforts to provide mutual support.

Public Relations

The Director tries to ensure that the Libraries are a visible presence on the campus. Strategies include: library programming (e.g. book discussions, Library Expo); having a library presence at Admissions open houses; making library space available for learning-related group and individual displays and presentations; offering internships; providing staff time and expertise to the Sheard Literacy Center for collection and circulation management.

Physical Facilities

Crane and Crumb Library spaces and furnishings are dated and tired. Both need significant renovation to be modern facilities. Small efforts have been made in both

facilities to update furnishings. More is needed, but it is unlikely to be possible other than with a piecemeal approach given funding challenges.

In 1991, Crumb Library was the top priority in the College's facilities master plan. When an appropriation for renovation in 2000 turned out to be inadequate, some smaller renovations were done (new carpeting, new ceilings, Minerva's Café) and Crumb Library dropped off the list. Though it sits in the center of campus, Crumb Library is isolated from other areas of the campus. Collaborations in the service of student learning are becoming increasingly recognized as the most effective use of resources. There is no space in Crumb Library for such collaborations. The Director has developed and advocated for a plan to put additions on the north and south ends of the building to enable both improved library spaces and room to bring in other program areas with which library collaboration would be advantageous. This plan has received support and is included in the College's MOU with system administration and the President's Bicentennial Plan for the College. It is currently the third building priority for the College.

Crane Library's most serious problem is an entryway that is unwelcoming, inefficient, and an obstacle to full use of the facility. A renovation plan was designed in 2003, but making the plan a funding priority has been a challenge. A recent bequest that can provide a significant portion of the funds needed has stirred movement. It is hoped this renovation will take place in summer 2009.

Archives and Special Collections

In the last decade, Archives and Special Collections has become a vibrant function of the College Libraries that has brought the Libraries recognition and distinction. The application of modern standards of practice, a grant-funded external review, and the improvement of physical facilities have all contributed to renewed interest in the collections and services. Archives and Special Collections are now an integral part of the instructional program in several disciplines with the librarian in charge providing formal instruction to classes and students making regular use of the materials. The area has also been a regular site for student interns in both History and Museum Studies with several going on to pursue a career in Archives work. The Archives librarian and the collection have also become essential resources for College activities, most notably the creation and ongoing maintenance of the Mary E. English Commons, a display of the history of the College.

Automation

As a SUNY institution, the College Libraries use the common SUNY library management system, Aleph, from the Ex Libris Company. This system is both flexible and complex. The Library's Automation Coordinator is responsible for the underlying systems work necessary to making the system function for the Libraries. She is supported by the senior clerk in Technical Services who serves as her back up for systems work.

The Automation Coordinator also oversees all the Libraries' software and hardware, maintaining inventories, overseeing the replacement lifecycle, chairing the committee that makes recommendations about technology, troubleshooting problems, and serving as a liaison to staff in Computing and Technology Services on technology issues.

Collections

Library collection management is guided by a comprehensive policy that is reviewed on an annual basis. A Collection Development coordinator assisted by a committee of six additional librarians carry out collection development activities. Every major academic program is

represented by a librarian liaison and a teaching faculty liaison whose responsibilities are to ensure appropriate communication between the program and the Libraries.

A number of important activities have occurred in the last six years, driven in part by the shrinking funds available for library acquisitions and the dynamic environment in which information packaging is constantly changing. The Libraries engaged in a complete revision of funding allocation formulas for monographs and standing orders in order to ensure appropriate and equitable distribution of funds across programs. A more comprehensive approach that includes electronic resource funds is underway. The Libraries introduces a “zero-based” approach to the selection of print periodicals, initiating dialogue with faculty on a department by department basis to identify print titles that were deemed essential to student learning. The Libraries have introduced a comprehensive and on going weeding plan to ensure that the collection remains vital and that there is adequate shelf space for new additions.

Crane Library

Crane Library is a separate facility located in the Crane School of Music complex. Under the administration of the Libraries, it is staffed by three full time staff members, a librarian, a clerical staff member, and an evening building supervisor who is a member of the professional staff. It's collection is defined as those materials that classify in M (i.e. music classifications) in the Library of Congress classification system. A very small number of non-music items are housed there for basic reference purposes. Likewise, Crumb Library, the main library, holds no materials that classify in M, except for a few basic reference titles.

Technical Services and interlibrary loan staff provide significant support for processing music materials, but Crane staff members share in the work load of those functions. Efforts are made to have consistent policies across the two libraries where it makes sense to do so. Crane staff members are routinely included in College Libraries' committees and activities.

Distance and Off Site Learning

For the last several years, the Libraries have designated a librarian as coordinator for distance and off site programs. The College has for many years offered education courses in Watertown, 70 miles to the south. The resources of Jefferson Community College, including library collections and staff, have supported those courses. Recently, non-campus based programs have expanded from limited education courses in Watertown to full programs in education and business administration in Watertown, MST programs in Ogdensburg and Ottawa, and a growing number of on line courses that do not expect or require students to be on campus. The Libraries have had to adjust work assignments, develop new expertise, experiment with new services and engage with new technologies to support these programs with some degree of equity to the support given to on campus programs.

Government Documents

The College Libraries have been a depository site for both federal and State documents. One librarian and one clerical staff member have a portion of their work assignment allocated to support these collections. In recent years, paper items have declined and electronic (first CDs, then web-based) have increased. The level of local cataloging of these materials has diminished as staff resources dedicated to cataloging have shrunk. Finding the most effective ways to provide access to these materials as they have evolved from primarily print to primarily electronic has been an on going challenge.

Instruction

The College Libraries' instruction program is by intention both course-integrated and developmental. Five librarians in Crumb and the Crane Librarian all provide instruction at the request of teaching faculty for specific courses, both lower and upper division. The Information Literacy Coordinator manages the scheduling, except for Crane classes. The coordinator also chairs the Information Literacy Committee and provides leadership for program planning. In a typical year about [x] instruction sessions are provided. In increasing number of instances, multiple sessions are provided to the same course, as faculty members recognize both the complexity of the subject and the value of the instruction for their students – and themselves. Faculty professional development is an important side benefit of our instruction program.

Basic information literacy skills have been embedded in the College's general education program since the inception of the current model in the late 1980s. A recent revision of the first year program was led by the Libraries' Information Literacy coordinator. As a result it produced a more coherent addressing of outcomes and some designated content pieces across three first year requirements. The Libraries' are now engaged in a substantive effort to assess the success of the information literacy component in general education.

Understanding that teaching faculty are the key to engaging students with information resources and facilitating their information literacy development, we have offered two different workshops over the last several years to teaching faculty. The first – held once - was designed for individual faculty. The second has been designed for teams of faculty who teach in the same academic program and is intended to help them plan for how they will produce information literate graduates of their programs. The workshop experience engages them in identifying key learning outcomes for their graduates and in mapping them into appropriate courses. The workshop has been offered three times with 16 departments now having participated.

Interlibrary Loan

Interlibrary loans services are an essential component of our collection development strategies. A library faculty member coordinates the service, providing ILLiad systems support and general oversight. The daily work is carried out by a clerical staff member with back up from another clerical staff member and assistance for student employees. In a typical year we process [x] requests both from our patrons and from other libraries.

We have used the ILLiad management software for several years. In the last year, it has been recommended as a foundation to support universal borrowing among SUNY Libraries.

In order to support faculty research, we fully subsidize all requests from faculty by paying loan and copyright fees. We have been subsidizing article loans for students since 1992 when we began cancellation of print periodical subscriptions due to increasing costs and flat budget allocations. While full text resources have now more than made up for these cancellations, we still continue to subsidize student article requests; as electronic databases enable the discovery of many more titles, demand for interlibrary loan services has remained high.

The College Libraries participate in a cooperative project initiated by SUNY comprehensive colleges, but now encompassing public and private academic libraries. The project, Interlibrary Delivery Services (IDS) is based on an agreement among participants to use ILLiad management software and New York's LAND delivery service to share materials in a timely manner. Use of ILLiad has enabled the capture of data that allows each library to identify bottlenecks in moving materials and to use that information to make work flow adjustments for maximum efficiency and minimal delivery time.

Patron Access

Patron Access encompasses circulation and reserve services in both libraries. It is led by a team of two librarians and a senior clerical staff member. Key issues are coordination between Crane and Crumb Libraries and with Interlibrary Loan, application and assessment of loan policies, managing and effectively using the circulation functions within the library management system, documenting policies and procedures, and hiring, training, and supervising a large number of student employees in each library.

Reference

Instruction is the underlying philosophy of reference service in both libraries. Each library, however, has a distinct approach to the service.

Crumb Library offers face-to-face drop-in reference service for many of the library's open hours. Every librarian contributes some time to covering the reference desk; some have heavier assignments than others, based on other responsibilities. Despite decreasing use of this service, there has been reluctance to reduce access to it by decreasing hours. "On call" and "beeper" strategies have been tried to reduce the time staff are tied to the desk, but have not proven effective. With demands on librarians' time increasing, the Libraries have recently employed an adjunct to cover evenings and weekend reference hours.

Several strategies have been tried to increase student use of reference services. Crumb Libraries have offered chat for a number of years; use by students had not been overwhelming and has not significantly increased the number of reference transactions. A consultation service by appointment is gaining in popularity, particularly with graduate students. We have just implemented the LibGuides product in order to access to information by subject as well as librarian expertise with a Meebo connection on each page. It is hoped this will be attractive to students.

Reference service in Crane Library is dependent on the availability of the Crane Librarian. While he makes an effort to be present at specific hours each day, this is often not possible because of other library and campus obligations. Therefore service availability is less predictable for students and faculty, but also more personal. The Crane School is a relatively small place; with a single individual providing substantive reference service, the students develop a more personal connection with that individual.

One of the challenges of reference service is ensuring that all librarians providing the service are able to keep up with the constantly changing functionality and interfaces of online resources. Monthly meetings have been scheduled for staff training with librarians taking turn in learning the changes and sharing them with others.

Shelf Maintenance

Managing shelving is under the purview of evening building supervisors in Crane and Crumb Libraries. Because of the size and complexity of shelving in Crumb Library, a Shelving Maintenance Committee serves as an advisory group with representatives from collection development, government documents and technical services. When issues that arise that impact shelving in Crane Library the Crane building supervisor is included in the group.

Recent projects include the removal of back runs of periodicals duplicated in JSTOR, the creation of an oversize collection, and the creation of a separate space for vide and DVDs.

Each of these projects has involved extensive planning. Students are hired and trained to carry out most shelving activities.

Technical Services

Technical Services encompasses acquisitions and cataloging for both libraries and government documents management. The area is led by a team of two librarians and a senior clerical staff member. Most of the day-to-day work is carried out by clerical staff members who have become knowledgeable about bibliographic description and MARC tagging. Keeping up with the changes in the software applications that are the “tools of the trade” as well as revising procedures to ensure efficient work flows in the context of those changes are ongoing challenges.

Web Design

The College Libraries web site is the gateway to many library resources. A librarian serves as web master and chairs a committee that advises on web page issues. The need to revise the web site in light of new functionality and changing user expectations is ongoing. The web master and committee must make decisions about when a major revision is an important investment in time. The web master also supports the web presence in other software applications (e.g. ILLiad, Aleph, LibGuides)

Over the last year the College has been engaged in a major re-design of the web site. Ensuring that the Libraries’ need to have the web site deliver content effectively is understood by designers has been a challenge.

Part II. Responses to Self-study Questions

Question 1.

To what degree are we accomplishing our mission of “supporting learning for the college community”?

- **How do we define our community?**
- **How do we inform ourselves about the learning needs of the college community?**
- **How do we know if we are adequately informed?**
- **How do we use our knowledge to inform our activities?**
- **What evidence do we have that our activities contribute to learning for members of the campus community?**

Our Community

We understand the “college community” in a myriad of ways. We do have both consensus that we give primacy to students and pride in the fact that we have fought an historical tendency to put the faculty before the students. We have less consensus on the degree to which we can or should serve other constituencies. Some of us view our community more broadly than others; in addition to students faculty and staff, our community also includes Associated Colleges students and faculty, community members, alumni, and regional high school students - all of whom we have made some effort to serve.

Our Community -Students

Our students can fit into distinct and overlapping groups: undergraduate, graduate; traditional age, adult; undeclared, by program affiliation; honors, standard; on campus, off site; We have taken some steps to differentiate the learning needs of these groups. Most visible is the presence of Crane Library to serve the distinct needs of music scholars. More recently, we have recognized the need to address the special needs of distance-learning students (both online and extended campus). We also have recognized different levels of students in our information literacy program by defining specific learning outcomes for the first year in the General Education Foundations program and by facilitating the work of departments to define and develop their vision for an information literate graduate of their programs. In offering on line resources to our students, we have presented a menu option that distinguishes between general and subject specific resources with the implicit intent that undeclared or lower division students are more likely to find the general more accessible.

Only a portion of our students benefit from our services. For example, students who are reached by our information literacy efforts are being better supported than students who are not formally introduced to library services. Students who can teach themselves how to navigate our website are better served than students who don't know how to take the initiative to learn about our resources. Students who are on-campus receive more and different learning support than students who are off-campus. Students who plan ahead and aren't afraid to ask for help are better served than shy students who don't want to 'bother' the reference librarian.

Trends in how people use information has changed our service landscape. The free internet has become the "point of entry" for most students and possibly for many faculty members. We have no control over what is there and how it is used. Our impression is that faculty members are making different kinds of demands for student engagement with information resources than in the past. Traditional resources are not required as frequently. There seem to be fewer assignments of long papers, and students do more applied and less scholarly research. Changes in the demands for our reserve service may suggest trends or directions in the information and research demands being placed on students. While we have a solid core of frequent student users, it may be shrinking.

Given our resources, having a goal of maximum engagement of all students with our resources and services may be unrealistic. How then should we target our efforts – less for all students or more for fewer students? We can accept and value our small numbers of successful teaching moments that occur in and outside classroom encounters with students.

We strive to make our physical spaces inviting and useful. The irony of aiming our efforts at students is that their understanding of what a library can be and what we should be able to do for them is largely idealistic and often unrealistic. So while we are, in fact, largely as effective as we can be for our student community, we may be perceived by them as ineffective. We do engage with the students to determine their needs and wants; we have conducted surveys, formed a focus group, and routinely inquire informally of our many student workers what they think. We use this information to shape our services.

In Fall 2008, the Student government Association president approached the library director about extending Crumb Library hours to 1 AM. Students had raised this issue in the past, but had not followed through with any action. Given the resource challenges of adding additional hours, the director had not taken action. In this case, SGA did follow through, and after several

discussions a plan was developed that required both library and SGA funding. The plan is being implemented as a pilot in 2008-2009.

We are committed to student learning and the notion of a hand crafted education. Most basically, we contribute to the effort to make our students independent learners. We help to develop critical thinking. Our resources should promote understanding about diversity. And we provide learning experiences to our student employees and interns. Our philosophy of teaching patrons, especially students, how to search for appropriate information themselves, rather than just doing everything for them, is an important element of our involvement in the learning process

Our student employees are a group of students with whom we develop a unique relationship. Our approach has been to treat them like real employees, with expectations of ourselves for their training and supervision and of them for their attendance and work engagement. Through their library employment, many of them learn about library resources and services that serve them as students. All of them gain job skills that will serve them as professionals. We become mentors for many of them; as a result some consider library-related careers. With 60-70 students on our payroll each year, and many who work for us for multiple years, the value of this experience may be significant. We have not tapped into their perspective on our work as a source for improving our understanding of student needs and behavior.

Our community-Teaching Faculty

Engagement with teaching faculty is on multiple levels. Faculty members generally look first to the libraries for resources – either for their research or for their teaching, depending on their personal priorities. As part of a college with a teaching focus and with limited resources, we have been clear – and explicit in our collection development policy - that our primary resource expenditures are to support student learning. We recognize our significant secondary responsibility to support faculty research by our investment in interlibrary loan services for faculty. The majority of faculty appear to understand and accept this, though there are instances of disagreement and challenge. In general the challenges come from those departments and individuals who view library resources as not an essential component for student learning in their curriculum. We have also taken small and tentative steps to engage in some support for faculty research through development of an institutional repository in SUNY's instance of DSpace. There has been some initial interest from members of the faculty, but limited library staff resources have hindered this effort.

We understand that the best way to reach students is through teaching faculty. We see ourselves as partners in the academic enterprise with teaching faculty and engage in activities that support that vision. Many, though not all, teaching faculty share this partnership vision, though fewer actually translate that vision into their teaching on a consistent and regular basis.

Library activities in support of this vision take place primarily in two venues, instruction and collection development. We have had a liaison program for many years; it has functioned primarily to support collection development. In the last 3 years, we have convened a meeting of the liaisons once a semester so they could serve as an advisory group to us on a range of library issues. Attendance was small until we made it a luncheon. Now we routinely have 15-20 or more in attendance each semester. We have tried to both present information and have a conversation. Though it has taken some time, we are beginning to have some success with dialogue.

Our instruction program, by intent is course integrated. A brief experiment with a 1 credit hour course as part of a learning community for first year students in 1998 and 1999 demonstrated that it was difficult to engage students outside of a content course and that we did not have the staff resources to support such instruction for all first year students. Despite the fact that library research criteria are embedded in the first year general education foundations (GEF), students' exposure to information literacy learning outcomes is still quite dependent on the commitment of individual faculty members. This is especially the case for those outcomes more appropriate at the upper division level. Therefore, we are making a concerted effort to reach teaching faculty at the department and program level through a series of workshops designed to facilitate the integration of information literacy outcomes into academic programs.

We work hard to engage the faculty on the side of student learning; direct input in forming our collections, information literacy classroom sessions and faculty workshops, reserves, reference and other support services. However, our support of their own research takes more time and effort on their part here than it probably did at institutions where they were previously (research institutions). In both these cases, expectations from the academic community may exceed what is possible. So it is a positive statement to say that we are as effective as possible, even though the expectations of the community may not have been met and the perception of the community may differ from that of the library.

There is some evidence that we are not as effective as we would like to be. Were we truly effective, we would be more highly valued and more heavily used. There are departments that seem to operate without recourse to our services and resources; and most departments have some members who ignore us fairly completely. There are circumstances beyond our control that are at least partly responsible for this; such as teaching styles, limited expectations of students, resources obtained from sources external to the library, and more. While we would like to be indispensable to everyone in the communities we serve, that is an unrealistic goal. We are effective within the groups who find our services useful. And we can try to expand that group.

Our community - Non-teaching Professionals and Staff

Our focus for resources and services has been on students and teaching faculty. Other faculty and support staff are generally not considered in our decision-making. Several years ago, we did assign library liaisons to all departments beyond the academic departments (e.g. Student Affairs, College Advancement, etc.), but little came of this due to lack of staff time to engage with these departments. While this is understandable from a budgetary point of view, especially in collections and electronic resources, it is unfortunate from both a public relations and resource-utility point of view. We do have a number of resources that would/could be useful to many college employees who are not faculty, but we make no effort to reach out to inform these potential users. Nor do we know if these people are already using our resources. Examples include our business resources (for certain administrative offices), our education resources for those in admissions, our psychology resources for those in the counseling center, our health databases for the student health center, etc. Having these people use our resources ultimately benefits the student – both directly with the possibility of enhanced job performance by college employees, and also in having a college community that was more aware of the value of library resources and services.

Our Community - Associated Colleges and Community borrowers

The College's participation in the Associated Colleges of the St. Lawrence Valley includes agreements to extend library privileges to students and faculty from the other colleges in the

association (Clarkson, St. Lawrence University, SUNY Canton). In policy and practice we do not distinguish this group from other community borrowers. Over the last decade, there has been a noticeable drop in the numbers of Associated Colleges students (particularly Clarkson students) who come to our facilities. This change is likely attributed to greater availability of electronic resources.

The College's mission statement recognizes an "abiding sense of responsibility to our region." Our definition needs to be in harmony with the College's definition of its community. We do have a core of community borrowers who by habit or need draw on our collections rather than those of local public libraries. These range from individuals engaged in substantive research - as students at other institutions, as professionals, or as independent scholars - to parents and children who are home schooling and draw on our materials to support that effort. The special resources of the Crane Library - distinctive to the region- may be in particular demand for local musicians. On occasion, it seems that difficulties with community patrons draw disproportionately on our staff resources. For example, we have had several incidents when community borrowers have borrowed every book in our collection on a particular subject and not returned them. Pursuing these borrowers is both time consuming and with little teeth unless we employ the services of a collection agency - an expensive strategy and one fraught with potential public relations pitfalls. The public relations benefit, however, as well as the College's mission as a regional public institution have made us reluctant to reduce the access we provide.

Our Community - SUNY

Challenging fiscal times have been the catalyst for renewed collaboration among SUNY institutions. SUNY libraries have been ahead of the curve in this respect. The SUNY Council of Library Directors has endorsed the concept of a single SUNY collection and through the "Library of the Future" initiative is exploring additional ways to leverage resources across SUNY. SUNY universal borrowing is likely to be implemented in the near future with impacts not yet known on our policies, resources, and services. Our Collection Development coordinator has been a leader in bringing four-year SUNY colleges together to explore cooperative collection development options. State fiscal problems make this kind of cooperation within SUNY even more imperative while at the same time creating a climate that disposes individual campuses to put their own needs ahead of collaborative efforts.

In sum, we have a solid core of frequent users (students and faculty) who find our services and staff to be adequate and effective. Unfortunately these users do not represent most of the campus community. We most certainly know that not all students and faculty who need what we offer, know our information resources exist and how to get to them. Simply providing resources and services isn't enough - we do not do an effective job of letting the college community know what we offer. Considering what we spend on the offerings (both in personnel time and in money) the lack of advertising and outreach is problematic. We need to be creative in exploiting technologies that meet our users needs and in marketing our services" to members of the community who don't currently use our services.

Informing Ourselves

Over the last several years, we have instituted a number of processes¹, both regular and one time, to provide information about the effectiveness of our work. We have instituted these processes in response to specific issues rather than as part of a comprehensive plan. Therefore, to a degree our efforts are “piecemeal” - which does have the advantage of being fast and flexible. Members of our staff are deeply involved in a wide range of formal and informal activities with faculty and, to a lesser but not insignificant degree, with students that contribute to our understanding of the learning needs of our community. We can point to a number of outreach activities that also contribute to our knowledge of campus learning needs. We are formally involved in department program reviews and the development of new programs of study. If we had more access to program level curricular and assessment plans we might be more informed.

The challenge of data collection is bringing meaning and balance to the process. Are we collecting the right data? Are we spending an appropriate amount of time on data collection – neither too much, nor too little? Are we effectively using the data we collect?

The learning needs of our community are constantly changing as course content and delivery evolve and the students who come to us change. We need to recognize that the only way to be adequately informed is to be continually informed. We need to continue our formal activities, seek opportunities to gather necessary information, recognize important information, share it appropriately and act on it as needed. If we are satisfied with the ongoing efforts we are making to be informed, then we can consider our efforts adequate. That being said, despite engaging in many activities to stay informed about student learning needs and to measure our engagement with students, we have n effective way to measure the degree to which that engagement contributes to student learning.

Using our knowledge to inform our activities

While we have made significant progress in using our knowledge to inform our work, this is an area that needs attention in order to build on the steps already taken.

We know that there are commonalities among academic libraries, and we seek out best practice solutions to design our services. We assess information gathered in relation to the "problem" at hand, but also in the contexts of both whether something has been tried before, and whether it could have lasting implications if it fails.

We know that new initiatives come at a cost, and therefore we are careful and deliberate in adding new services or making changes to existing ones. We don't have the human or financial resources to make all the changes we would like to make. We are better at innovating through addition than subtraction; we struggle with giving up anything, even when data suggests that it may no longer be meeting user needs.

Using Our Knowledge - Student Perspectives

¹ These include: quantitative data on building, periodical, electronic resource, instruction and reference service use, periodical, qualitative data from biannual luncheons with faculty, 3-4 annual “focus groups” with students; a “zero-based periodical” initiative; suggestion box entries; and anecdotal reports. We have implemented LIBQUAL once – in 2001.

We pay attention to the changing nature of our student body through personal observations and through review of published reports of user behavior. We know that “millennials” behave differently than more traditional students. But we don't often survey our user base and although we try very hard not to do it, we also guess a lot at what students REALLY want by what we HOPE they want. Student Consultants to the College Libraries, begun in Fall 2007, has enabled us to engage with a small group of students specifically for the purpose of getting the student perspective on current and potential new services. We have not looked at information that might be provided to us about our students through the College's results on the National Survey of Student Engagement.

Using Our Knowledge - Information Resources

We are increasingly using data to inform acquisition decisions for both physical and online resources. We collect use statistics from a variety of sources: interlibrary loan requests; open URL linking; vendor-generated database use; print periodical use; and circulation and in-house use.

We are conscientious about preparing library impact statements (required for new programs and program revisions) – reviewing programs and curriculum being offered, considering what types of resources students will need in those programs, analyzing existing resources in the context of the curriculum, and adjusting the material we order to meet those needs.

Our choices are also informed by our understanding of our users and their information needs – understanding acquired through personal interactions at the reference desk, collection development conversations with faculty members, and from information literacy classes and the instructional content and student engagement observed there.

We keep a watchful eye for new databases and their relevance to what we need to offer our patrons and we consider database interfaces as well as content in making purchase decisions.

Though we integrate as much data as possible into our selection and presentation of information resources, given the vast resources we strive to manage and the diversity of our users' needs, we know that we cannot always meet every user's need. Therefore, we view interlibrary loan services as an extension of our collection, promoting and supporting its use by students as well as faculty.

Using Our Knowledge - Systems

We explore and use system capabilities to improve patron access and staff efficiency when we have the resources to do so, for example: Aleph capabilities (e.g. courtesy notices; personal log-ins); ILLiad software to manage and enhance interlibrary loan services; and URL resolvers to connect databases. Often we must choose between systems to enhance content and the content itself, because we do not have the resources to do both. Most recently we have encountered this dilemma in our exploration of federated searching. We do not always have agreement on this choice.

Using Our Knowledge- Information Literacy

Our instruction philosophy is to be responsive to point-of-need for both individuals and classes. We know that there are many different learning styles and we design our services to accommodate all types of learners. For example, we have multiple channels of communication for users who want one-on-one assistance: face-to-face drop in, chat, virtual reference service, e-mail, and consultation by appointment (at a distance or face-to-face).

We understand that information literacy needs to be approached developmentally and have made an effort both to take that approach ourselves (e.g. Library Expo, General Education, and upper division classes) and to promote awareness among faculty and administrators of the need for a developmental approach. Our efforts in this area are ongoing and long-term. Ultimately, success will only come when the departments come to own information literacy as one of their own curricular goals.

We understand that the information environment is constantly changing, and that we need to respond to the realities of user information-searching behaviors. The task of collecting useful data to assess the success of our point of need approach to information literacy has appeared so daunting that we only recently tackled it in any systematic way. We now have two years of data collected through the implementation of a locally designed survey intended to capture the degree to which the information literacy component of our general education program is achieving its goals. Finding time to analyze the data and the validity of the instrument is a challenge.

Using Our Knowledge - Physical environments that promote student learning

We know that our students have a variety of study needs including both quiet and group conversations, different furniture preferences, and different study schedules. We have made an effort to understand their needs and be responsive to them.

We are in constant reevaluation of how space is used to maximize learning support to patrons. Study rooms, tables, computer work stations and viewing rooms are arranged to make best use of our physical environment. We use attendance statistics to inform ourselves of area use and times of peak and low use. In fall 2006 we did a "one time" survey directed explicitly at improving seating in Crumb Library, including offering furniture samples in the lobby for testing.

We have responded to changing needs for equipment: updating microform equipment to include scanning; adding laptops; updating listening and viewing equipment to accommodate new formats; maintaining access to Macs and PCs; providing special equipment for students with disabilities; providing wireless access.

Though it was an argued decision, more than a decade ago we responded to a formal request from the student government association to make food available in Crumb Library through the installation of vending machines. Several years later, we initiated Minerva's Café which has greatly enhanced the physical space of Crumb Library for the entire campus.

We have just implemented a plan to extend Crumb Library hours to 1 AM for a significant portion of fall and spring semesters. This was both a result of student government advocacy and with their financial support.

We have worked hard on improving our physical spaces to make them more attractive and to make students feel more comfortable. We have plans for improvement for both libraries that are not yet funded. The buildings are as they are – with the number of study rooms, the number of available outlets, the stack-bearing spaces, and the sound flow. There are constraints on what is possible within the existing spaces.

Within our constraints, we are committed to making the collections and spaces usable to students, drawing on both research in the field, student feedback, and observations on student behavior to position furniture and organize materials. For example, the decision to put the

Crumb Oversize and Media collections in the north alcove was born of the knowledge that students know to look for “weird stuff” in the middle of the library, and working with that expectation rather than against it. Furniture has been distributed throughout the libraries, and the super-silent study room created in Crumb, based on the observed behavior of students as they search for quiet study spaces and drag furniture to new places to create the spaces they seek.

With regard to physical environment factors, our information about student preferences (which may or may not be the same as physical factors that promote learning), is fairly strong. We have conducted multiple studies/surveys and have used the results to provide more variety in the choices provided to individuals and groups.

Using Our Knowledge - Virtual Environments that promote student learning

We have always provided a high level of cataloging for traditional library materials both to ensure that patrons have comprehensive access points when searching for material in our catalog and to reveal, to the extent possible, the content of the material on our shelves.

We have struggled with how to best address access to e-resources in terms of the catalog. After several years of false starts, a working group did a comprehensive review and made recommendations for each category of e-resources. Implementing these recommendations, however, has not emerged as a priority for staff resources.

We generally have assumed that having a high quality catalog is desirable and have not investigated the degree to which there is a return on the investment in staff resources that we make in order to achieve that quality. We also have not engaged locally in discussion that is taking place at the national level about the legacy nature of the library catalog.

We know that our information literacy program reaches only a small percent of our user base and therefore we have sought to design our web pages to enable users to find information unassisted. We know that many of our students don't begin with Library resources to start their research projects, but we aren't sure how to best make our resources more inviting, easier to use, or more google-like. We aren't sure how to best meet our users in their online spaces to draw them back into library resources, but we are aware that there technology solutions being developed to do just that.

On the web design level - we have looked at what page presentation options are available and within our abilities to implement. We regularly modify our web presence, and when needed, redesign it completely. We try to employ novelties in information handling, such as rss, javascripting, social bookmarking, etc, to improve the virtual learning environment. Some of the impetus is from observation of the changing information environment - what is happening that we can use to our students' benefit.

We also depend on our vendors to create environments that promote student learning. We can and do provide feedback to the vendors, and try to take ease of use in to account when making purchase decisions - though of course we often have to take what we get through SUNY.

We continually work on problem areas in terms of the library's website, using our experiences in reference service and library instruction to inform us about student difficulties with the site. The current web site is the result of work by the web committee with feedback from the rest of the staff. We have not done enough usability testing; we know from observing students in classes that many find our web site confusing. Library jargon, user inexperience, and users' unrealistic expectations are challenges here.

Our recent awareness of student patrons' habitual practice of "clicking through" sequential web pages in order to gain information raises a deeper question of just what kind of virtual environment currently promotes learning for those students. Our recent decision to join a SUNY contract for federated searching, though a much debated one, has been driven by what we think we know about student search preferences and lack of strong information literacy skills.

We need to do direct observation of how students use our virtual spaces – given our current digital information society, we must acknowledge that the majority of our users are not coming to the library but instead to the library's website, and that the vast majority of users within our library are also relying on our website as the online portal to our resources. We, therefore, must gather information to inform our actions and our design of this resource in a far more focused and direct way than we currently do, and respond to what we learn from that data.

Staff time and skills are the limit on virtual learning environments. We could do more, but we don't have time. We are also potentially at the mercy of outside forces.

Evidence that our activities contribute to learning

We have a great deal of data about library use and engagement with library provided resources. Campus web statistics indicate that the library web pages are used very heavily. The library is one of the top 10 URLs for campus visitors. Decreasing reference activity may be an indicator that users are able to find information independently. We have repeat users (upperclassmen who use the libraries when they're not "assigned" to); teaching faculty make assignments which include the College Libraries' use and repeat requests for library sessions. Departments are actively involved in Collection Development within their respective subject areas; our collection is used directly and through ILL, though circulation of physical materials has not increased significantly.

Use statistics and head counts show that our materials and physical spaces are being used. We don't *know* that our activities contribute to learning, but we can infer that if our services are being used, then we are *probably* contributing to learning.

One does have a sense when a one-on-one encounter has really resulted in learning. It is much harder to determine the success of a class – whether or not learning outcomes were achieved. Sometimes there is anecdotal evidence. Our biggest informers are faculty members. They many times pass on information to us regarding what their students have learned by using the library, the impact of library instruction, and how they have found improvements in their students' assignments and papers from what they have learned about using information resources.

Talking to our student workers who love working here and have aspirations to go on to become librarians is proof that we are engaged in a respectable and interesting business.

We know that some of our activities contribute to learning for some members of our community but at this time, we do not adequately measure the impact of our activities' contribution to learning in a way that allows us to point to a relationship between our activities and learning in a comprehensive manner.

We have very little direct evidence of our successes or failures. The feedback we get from our users is generally sporadic and random evaluations, representing unique users more than a community-wide view. We have expressed a resistance to doing surveys of our users, citing

survey fatigue or the workload involved in analyzing such data, but as such we have little direct evidence to use for assessment of our activities. We need to ask how much of our assessment and course corrections are based on negative feedback, rather than positive – are we reacting to complaints more than we're building on our successes? Random feedback is far more likely to be prompted by negative interactions than positive, and if we rely on that random feedback, are we reacting only to the unhappy user, rather than the satisfied one? Is that appropriate?

Question 2.

Are our values coherent with our mission?

- **Are our values implicit and explicit in our policies, procedures and daily work?**
- **Are we an organization with integrity?**

Wikipedia's entry on integrity begins with the following: "In discussions on behavior and morality one view of the property of integrity sees it as the virtue of basing actions on an internally-consistent framework of principles." In this sense, we are an organization with integrity. We know who we are, what we're trying to do, and why we're trying to do it, and in the main our actions follow logically from those beliefs. The very fact that our mission statement includes values makes us, on paper at least, an organization with integrity.

The Library has invested a great deal of effort in developing our mission and values; they are coherent and appropriate. They also are sufficiently general so that what we actually do can change and respond to external forces and to creative initiatives from within. We are careful with budgets and spending. We attempt to create a learning environment and culture that reflect our values of community and collegiality.

We do fairly well in terms of our values being implicit and explicit in our policies, procedures and daily work. Documents that have been written since we articulated our mission and values and mission are much more likely to have been directly influenced by them. We must recognize that awareness of our values is critical to ensuring that the explicit values are made implicit in our policies and procedures. It is important, especially as we make decisions about policies and procedures, to remind ourselves to carefully consider the relationship between what we create and our stated values. We have the tools in place to accomplish this – particularly Coordinating Council, Library Council - and we are improving in our efforts to ensure that as we make change stakeholders are both identified and consulted.

Several factors challenge us in accomplishing the values in our daily work. Acting with integrity takes a lot of time. None of us consider "slacking" as an option, but the priority of our values may be different depending on both work function and individual perception. Our strength is in the level of engagement of every member of the staff; this is also our weakness. We all want to be engaged. We are beginning to have some understanding that everyone is not an equal stakeholder in every situation and that while procedures may be in place for voices to be heard, not all voices can prevail.

We hesitate to implement new initiatives agonizing over potential problems and issues, not wanting to roll out an imperfect service. We have a wide range of comfort level with imperfect processes, yet we have not analyzed our activities to understand if there are services we might do less than perfectly because "good" is good enough. Nor have we considered by what criteria we determine the quality of our service.

Putting our values to work, day to day, in policies and procedures, is a balancing act influenced by factors within the library (e.g. personalities, workload), the college (e.g. the relationships with administration and faculty), and the wider world (e.g. the state budget, increasing prices of

information resources of all sorts.) There are times when our commitment to our values, or at least our ability to carry them out, is scraped thinner by stresses, especially by the collision between our budget and resource/service prices, and by our need to take care of ourselves as a staff and as individuals.

Conclusion

As long as we are moving towards accomplishing our vision, using our values as our standards and carefully and critically assessing our progress, then we are achieving our mission.

Question 3.

Are our organizational structures effective ones for achieving our mission?

How do we know these structures support and promote:

- **Effective communication;**
- **Innovation;**
- **Effective use of resources;**
- **Individual and organizational learning;**
- **Leadership at all levels;**
- **Excellence in practice and performance?**

Structure

The Libraries organizational structure has evolved over time. There is sharp disagreement among members of the staff about whether or not it is an effective structure. Generally, but not in all cases, those who have been part of the Libraries for a long time and have participated in the evolution are more satisfied with the current structure than those who have joined the staff more recently. Some of the disagreement may be ones of temperament. Some believe a clearly defined structure written into by-laws is an important way to define individual work and responsibilities. Others see such codification as an obstacle to innovation. Some see the structure as broken. Others see the problem as one of individuals who disregard the structure and the procedures established in the structure. The discussion of this issue brought to the surface significant levels of distrust of colleagues.

Characteristics of an effective structure desired by a number of staff members are flexibility, agility, higher levels of trust between colleagues, a better balance between functional autonomy and consultation / communication, and effectively informed staff. The structure needs to take into account the temporal and geographical dispersion of staff members.

Effective Communication

Our efforts to acknowledge and empower all members of the staff have had positive outcomes in many respects, but also some negative ones. On one hand, some staff members feel they are forced to sit through too many meetings about issues that have no relevance to them. On the other hand, those who spend time developing proposals feel they are open to second guessing from everyone – even those who may not have a stake in the proposal. Coordinating Council was created to reduce the time spent discussing the details of action items in Council and to ensure that when items were brought to the table for a vote, they were sufficiently complete and ready to be voted on. The net effect, however, has been to gut the decision-making power of Council.

Communication styles differ with some favoring spoken and others favoring written.

Communication breaks down if investing the necessary time for effective communication is not a priority. If people come to meetings unprepared, those meetings are inefficient. Does our

requirement that people attend meetings lead to inefficiency? Could we have better communication by holding meetings on issues for those who care?

Innovation

Though there is some perception that our structure does not foster innovation, we manage to be fairly innovative despite that structure – especially in small ways. We have moved to an “if it can be done simply, just do it” approach (e.g. stress busters). Innovation may be impeded by our unwillingness to give things up; good ideas may die because we do not have the time and energy to pursue them (e.g. features for The Racquette). Lack of financial resources also hinder innovation as trying something new that costs money generally requires us to reduce expenditures elsewhere. This was a significant underlying theme of our discussion in 2008 of federated searching. Do we give up content in order to provide a different kind of access?

A key element in developing innovative services is having enough time for professional development and time to design and implement new things. While, library faculty are challenged to find blocks of time to do research, we have learned to balance our administrative duties with exploring and trying new things. Clerical staff are equally committed to exploring new services and work flow, and are supportive of new initiatives. When we compare ourselves to our peer libraries we can see that we are not always cutting edge, but we are usually ahead of other SUNY campuses. It is not an uncommon experience for us to hear presentations at State and national conferences about “new” practices that we undertook years before, but didn’t view as innovative or think to promote to others. (e.g. drawing on expertise of clerical staff in service management and supervision; offering consultation services in Satterlee; integrating circulation and interlibrary loan staff)

We are most hampered in our desire for innovation by staff time limitations, budget issues (both dollars and the timing of the budget year), and meeting schedules which may mean that we cannot take advantage of possibilities on the order of days and weeks, but only months. Increasingly, we get opportunities for consortial purchase of innovative products (e.g. ILLiad, 360Search, Reference 24/7) in which decisions have to be made in a time frame not realistic for our structure.

In short, the spirit is willing; staff, time, and money are lacking.

Effective Use of Resources

We have a clear consensus that we do an exceptional job in making effective use of our financial resources.

Our budget is itemized with care and we use data whenever possible to make decisions as to the best use of our funds. Our real spending capabilities have shrunk with multiple years of restraint on spending in recent years (2003-04, 2005-06) and only one year in the last two decades (2006-2007) with any significant increase (\$30,000) to our base allocation. We work with what we have and we make it work, adding new formats to our collections (e.g. e-resources) and new technologies to improve services (e.g. ILLiad, scanning microform reader). The Director of Libraries has engaged in donor relations work, seeking to improve donor gifts with some incremental success. In addition, despite our courtesy notices, overdue fines have been a large source of income that has bolstered our library acquisitions expenditures.

We have less consensus on our use of staff resources. We were on the cutting edge of more effectively using the skills of clerical staff when, in the early nineties, we assigned them all

higher level work in cataloging and interlibrary loan and moved the supervision of clerical staff from library faculty to senior clerical staff.

Despite falling demand for reference services, we have been reluctant to reduce our coverage of the Crumb Reference desk in order to free staff time for other purposes. We have experimented – with varied success - with services to increase our reference contacts (e.g. Satterlee satellite, chat, consultations by appointment) so that reference expertise is more effectively utilized. We have also moved to using an adjunct librarian for evening coverage.

In 2000, we also moved from a more “wholistic” model in which reference, collection development, and – to a lesser degree- instruction responsibilities were distributed to all librarians to a more specialized model with more depth than breadth in work assignments. Time and new services (e.g. web site, distance learning, Aleph, growth of Archives) have eroded the more specialized model so that most librarians are back to having a broad array of responsibilities.

Whether our staff is deployed effectively in decision-making processes is a matter of debate. Some argue that our structure, though it requires a lot of staff time, leads to a more fully informed staff and to better decisions. Others argue that we spend too much time in meetings, and decisions made by several key stakeholders would be as effective or more effective than those made under our current structure.

Individual and organizational learning;

Professional staff also have expectations for learning in the promotion and tenure criteria outlined by the SUNY Board of trustees. While it is not an explicit structural element, our library culture is steeped in the idea that individuals will look for opportunities for learning and will certainly need to “keep up” in the field in order to effectively perform their jobs. Our annual retreat provides an organizational learning opportunity on a small scale.

There is administrative support (financial support and release time) for professional development for all staff to attend local, regional and national conferences and workshops. While resources are limited and not always 100%, we fare better than many of our colleagues in other campus department and other libraries.

We have on a number of occasions used our own staff expertise to provide internal training to each other (e.g. reference databases, Web 2.0) We are not as creative as we might be in finding informal or unstructured learning opportunities such as library-wide brown bags or site visits to other libraries.

While the team structure provides a venue for shared organizational learning within functional groups, there are varying perceptions about the degree to which this is successful .

Leadership at all levels

Different perspectives on leadership among the staff lead to different perceptions of leadership opportunities. For those who view leadership in a structural context, particularly one with supervisory responsibility, there are few opportunities. External constraints do play a role. Civil service titles limit career advancement for clerical staff. Librarians progress only through rank. There is no career path in the Libraries for those in professional lines. Our relatively flat structure also minimizes the number of positions with traditional supervisory roles.

For those who view leadership as taking charge of something, there are opportunities at different levels and varying scope and complexity for any one who wishes to step up, from initiating and implementing projects of various sizes (e.g. Library Expo, Stress busters) to chairing working groups on a variety of topics (e.g. Student Awards, Laptop circulation, Library Expo). Our “new initiatives” process is open to any member of the staff regardless of position, and offers both opportunity to individuals who have ideas they wish to pursue and structure to ensure those ideas are conceptualized appropriately.

Excellence in practice and performance

Overall, we have an extraordinary commitment to excellence, with high expectations that everyone will do a good job. Individual staff members are committed and conscientious about carrying out their responsibilities. Our definitions and perception of excellence, however, vary from the ideal - excellence is perfection - to the realistic - excellence is doing the best one can with the resources one has. These differing perceptions can and do put us at odds with each other with an impact on communication and morale.

Our annual planning process ensures consideration of both long term and short term goals in every functional area. We have not, however, routinely framed those goals in terms of measurable outcomes. We have initiated data collection in every area and use the data to inform our decision making. But we also find the work load of data collection and analysis daunting and have some fear of what it might tell us about our work.

Our college culture values the “handcrafted” education and personal service and our library culture reflects the college culture. We have been reluctant to use packaged products and services that could reduce our work load for fear of eroding quality by losing a customized and personal approach; (e.g. outsourced virtual reference, standardized information literacy assessment tools). We find ourselves pushed in this direction by work load, student expectation, external mandates, and financial constraints.

Question 4

Are we an effective member of our various communities?

- **How do we support institutional goals and priorities?**
- **How do we build relationships outside of the college Libraries?**
- **How do we contribute to the development of our profession?**
- **How do we build relationships with our peers in other organizations?**

College community

We are first and foremost a part of the SUNY Potsdam *academic* community, and this is where we are most effective and where we focus our energies. We understand that making sure we are connected to the College community is a basic survival issue for us. We engage with the college community in formal and informal ways.

The level to which library faculty engage in university service is extremely high; as a percentage of our staff and a percentage of our time, we are among the most committed of campus units on an ongoing basis.

Library faculty are highly visible in campus governance. The Library is always represented on one or more Faculty Senate committees and library staff frequently serve in leadership roles –as committee chairs and officers. We are active in college-wide committees (e.g. General Education, TLTR, PACES, Web Design, Undergraduate Research, LTEC, Middle States

Accreditation) so we are well informed about college-wide issues and activities and represent the library perspective to others.

We collaborate with a wide variety of offices (e.g. Accommodative Services, PACES, Student Success Center, We CARE program) to help ensure the student experience is a positive one. Often we initiate these collaborations and take leadership for them (e.g. TWS, T4P2, Tech Buddies). We participate in Admissions, Alumni, and Student Affairs events and host liaison luncheons, book discussions, and displays of student work.

We participate in campus social events (e.g. President's ice cream social, UUP happy hour). The most effective way is for us to go outside the College Libraries to the various academic departments and knock on doors, talk to people. We have to be outgoing. We have to engage our colleagues and our students. And we do this, but we could do better. Sometimes this requires engaging in activities outside the standard work week. It is hard to develop the habits that make personal contacts on campus easy.

Through frequent, brief, contacts, e.g. assisting faculty and staff at our various service points, we often build relationships with patrons who use our services frequently. The Libraries encourage dialog with our patrons in order to update, improve, and enhance the resources and services we provide.

Institutional Goals

We pay attention to College goals and as participants in faculty governance are often participants in College planning processes. The mission and goals of the library are created within the framework of the SUNY Potsdam goals and mission. We pay attention to particular college goals that have meaning for us, for example ensuring that our collections represent diverse cultures and points of view.

Relationships and Contributions in the Library Community

As a library, we are part of a broader professional community. Most central is the SUNY community, where we are strong participants. Election of a representative to SUNYLA is routine and we expect that person to participate in SUNYLA meetings and the library budget supports their participation. It is not unusual for us to have additional librarians serving as officers or on committees. Our directors have served in leadership roles on the SUNY Council of Library Directors and on state-wide committees such as the SUNYConnect Advisory Council. We routinely participate in and often provide leadership for SUNY-wide activities (e.g. MultiLIS clusters, IDS Project, Universal Borrowing Task Force, Cooperative Collection Development initiative)

We have supported our local library council, NNYLN, with representation on different committees at different times. We have been instrumental in maintaining relationships with other librarians in the Associated Colleges despite the differences that seem to impede substantive cooperation. On occasion, we have reached out to K-12 colleagues.

We are participants in other statewide associations, most particularly ENY-ACRL, NYSLAA, NYAC, the regional MLA chapter). Many of us are active participants as officers and members of professional organizations at some time during our careers, usually at the State level, but sometimes at the national level. With limited funding from the College, participation at the national level may not be possible for everyone. Time constraints are also a consideration. Some library faculty members consciously choose to focus their time on campus outside the

libraries, as the most effective venue in which to promote professional goals. Librarians talking only with each other may limit understanding and impact.

When called upon to present at conferences or workshops, or participate on executive boards, we usually say yes. We serve as mentors to graduate students in library school programs and host internships for undergraduate students. We are proactive in advancing our personal professional development. We present at conferences and publish in library journals and books. As a result of campus engagement, we have also had opportunities to present at conferences beyond the library profession (e.g. Middle States, Learning Communities, Association for General and Liberal Studies)

Through this array of activities and partnerships, individually and collectively we build relationships beyond the libraries with a broad spectrum of peers, in and beyond the library field. We are active on email discussion lists, wikis and other social software. The challenge is not in “building relationships”, but in finding useful ways to put those relationships to work in the interest of institutional and professional goals.

Our geographic location is a challenge for individual participation in activities and organizations away from campus. It costs us both more money and more time. Despite that challenge we have a strong record of contribution and an appreciation for both the professional development benefits and institutional distinction that such participation brings.

Part III. Recommendations

Part IV. List of Appendices

College Libraries Mission, Vision, and Values

By-Laws

Personnel Policies

Organizational chart

Collection Development Policy

Loan Policies

Information Literacy Workshop Prospectus

IDS Data Analysis example

Minerva Center Proposal