Library Lines

POST LEARNING COMMONS AND DREXEL LIBRARY

Fall 2014
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Welcome to a New Semester

I am delighted to serve as the Library Director for the Post Learning Commons and Drexel Library. Since joining the Library in 2008 as Associate Director for Public Services, I’ve enjoyed being a part of the Saint Joseph’s community. We have wonderful students, faculty, and staff. I’m pleased to work with a library staff that prides itself on great service, which includes providing access to a collection that serves the curricular needs of the University.

The challenges of the 21st century academic library are great, not to mention the challenges that face higher education. We have lost valued staff to retirement and have had to cut resources due to budget reductions. These events, however, also present us with an opportunity to rethink what we do as an academic library.

Apart from our commitment to service, the Library is data-driven and uses such information to inform our policies. In turn, we evaluate our data and experiences serving students to generate new ideas. We are continually assessing what we do in order to improve. The Library is not the same as it was 50 years ago, 20 years ago, even five years ago. It is a changing and evolving organization and perhaps that is what makes it a library of the 21st century.

Anne Krakow
Library Director

Collection Inventory

This summer, the staff began an inventory of the Library’s collection. Why would we want to do this? Our last inventory took place in 1995, so it’s been almost twenty years and a lot can change in that time. The inventory process allows us to find items that are not in the catalog, identify items that are not on the shelf, remove items that are in poor condition, etc.

To date, we have scanned the barcodes on 14,096 items. This includes the Reference Collection, Reserves, audio-visual collections, Popular Reading Collection, and several ranges on the third floor. Although we have made good progress this summer, it will be a long time before we have completed the process. The end result will be a more accurate catalog which will benefit our users.

A New Look for Library Research Guides

In August, we migrated our Research Guides to version 2 of Springshare’s LibGuides platform, giving the guides a fresh, new look. The new platform is built with responsive web design so that we no longer need to maintain a separate mobile-friendly version of our guides. Among the many new features is an A-Z Databases listing, allowing users to find databases by subject and note which databases are “Best Bets” recommended by the subject specialist librarians. The database list also can be filtered by type of content and publisher.
Saint John’s Bible Notes

A blessing and presentation ceremony for the Bible took place on April 24th with C. Kevin Gillespie, S.J., President of Saint Joseph’s University and Brendan Lally, S.J., Rector of the SJU Jesuit Community presiding. Single volumes of the Bible were placed on permanent display in the Chapel of Saint Joseph and the Post Learning Commons. Special cases were designed for this purpose by craftsman Eugene Sell, Class of ’97.

The Archives and Special Collections hosted a showing of the Bible for Pastor Stephen E. Godsall-Myers and several members of the Advent Lutheran Church of Harleysville, Pennsylvania on August 13th. Their church is working on a special project related to hand-written pages from the bible.

The University recently received the Gospel and Acts volume of the Bible. It contains a beautiful illumination that recreates the genealogy of Jesus. The volume will be on view in the Chapel through the end of the Fall Semester. Pages will be changed on a weekly basis, so take a few moments out of your busy schedule to reflect and enjoy this wonderful work of art.

Consider scheduling a class or making an appointment to view the Saint John’s Bible. Dennis McNally, S.J. and John Braverman, S.J. have already brought in some students in art and biology. For more information, please contact Christopher Dixon, Archival Research Librarian, at (610) 660-2164.

Give the People What They Want: Demand-Driven E-Books Project

Last year, the Library participated in a pilot project with 32 other libraries in the Pennsylvania Academic Library Consortium, Inc. (PALCI) to provide electronic books in an unusual way — allow our library users determine which e-books to purchase.

A carefully selected assortment of e-books was made available for viewing and downloading, but wasn’t purchased until a patron used the book — hence the name “demand-driven.” Once a purchase was triggered by patron use, a record for the book was added to our catalog, and the book became part of the collection.

With 857 copies of 310 titles purchased for the PALCI consortium-shared collection, the project was judged a success and will be continued for a second year. For more information about this project, please contact Kristine Mudrick, Associate Director for Resources Management, at (610) 660-3215.

What’s New?

Need to quickly check the Library catalog? Having trouble locating a book? An informational touchscreen kiosk is available at the main staircase of Drexel Library, first floor.
Welcome, ATDL and OTL

Over the summer, areas of Drexel Library were redesigned in an effort to make better use of existing space and foster greater collaboration among departments.

Construction on the Library’s first floor created additional office space for the Academic Technology and Distance Learning (ATDL) staff and a new office suite for the Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL). The ATDL staff members were formerly located at 175 City Avenue, and this move unites them with the other members of their department who are located on the second floor of the Post Learning Commons.

Later this year, OTL will move into its new space. As part of the same construction project, the Library’s Technical Services offices were relocated and upgraded.

Did you know?

Every year, our Interlibrary Loan staff processes thousands of requests for materials from our students and faculty, as well as from other institutions.
Online Learning Modules

Online learning modules were created and automatically added to all First year Seminar courses in Blackboard. These modules cover general research skills, freeing up class time for course-specific lessons and activities.

Under the umbrella of the GEP Committee and with the assistance of ATDL, Stephanie Riley, Instruction and Outreach Librarian, and Kevin Clapano, Director of Assessment and Accreditation, hope to pilot assessment this fall with two sections of First Year Seminar. The assessment team will analyze the integration of sources into student research papers to determine the effectiveness of library research instruction and to identify areas for improvement.

In addition to this project, the Library is hoping to expand online instruction to other programs next year. Using the academic catalog and faculty input, librarians are identifying appropriate research-oriented courses and are planning relevant content. These videos, tips, and links will be provided as supplemental material rather than as required content. It is hoped that if students are familiar with library services and research skills at the beginning of their programs, they will feel more comfortable with research practices and reaching out for help from the Library.

Thank you to Jim Boettcher, Ben Jezyk, and Kevin Clapano for their assistance with these initiatives.
Videotape Collection

DVDs and streaming video are replacing the videotape format. Fewer classrooms on campus still have VCR equipment. Accordingly, videotapes in the Library’s Media Collection are slowly being phased out. Items are selected for removal based on criteria such as circulation history, date of publication, and duplication in the collection.

A list of items identified by library staff for removal over the summer will be provided to the academic departments’ faculty liaisons.

Staff Notes

Stephanie Riley, Library Instruction and Outreach Specialist, presented “SoftChalk on the Boardwalk” at the Tri-State College Library Consortium Summer Camp 2014 on July 31st at the Brendlinger Library, Montgomery County Community College.

Congratulations to Anne Z. Krakow, Library Director, upon her completion of the Executive M.B.A. from Saint Joseph's University’s Haub School of Business.