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Lamar Soutter Library, University of Massachusetts Medical School

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UMass Digital Library Initiative

On August 30, Director of The Lamar Soutter Library Elaine Martin (seated, right) hosted administrators from the other University of Massachusetts libraries at a day-long Digital Library Conference.

Staff members of the five UMass libraries met recently to discuss plans for a shared UMass digital library. More than 60 attendees, representing the President’s Office, University Information Systems, all segments of the five campus libraries and the I-495 Center for Professional Education gathered at the Hoagland-Pincus Conference Center of UMass Worcester to share ideas and set priorities for the delivery of information and services to the Commonwealth.

In May of 2000, the UMass library directors drafted a proposal for a shared digital library. The strategic principles of the digital library are to remove geographical, time, and physical access barriers to the collections and services of the libraries; meet the needs of distance education students and remote users by providing resources and instruction over a robust network; enhance access to information for campus users and citizens across the Commonwealth and beyond; and link campus library and information resources with the I-495 Center for Professional Education.

Lamar Soutter Library director Elaine Martin convened the group and served as host for this day-long meeting on August 30. Ms. Martin charged attendees to think outside of the confines of our current services in planning for the future and to begin to plan so that we may bring the idea of a digital library to a reality. Break-out groups for several library and technology related topics were formed throughout the day. An opportunity for discussion and general sharing of ideas at the end of the day capped off the event.

A review of the core components of the digital library proposal includes system-wide authentication to grant all those affiliated with the campuses’ access to databases and electronic tools; shared digital collections of a variety of resources – such as images, video, archival materials, documents, journals, and newspapers; real-time online reference librarians to support information literacy and online instruction; and delivery of information through sophisticated digital methods as well as an enhanced state-wide physical delivery system. Participants at the planning meeting developed steps for moving the digital library proposal forward from these concepts to implementation.

The directors of the five campus libraries continue to seek funding for the digital library, following continued on page 2
**Library Survey**

In the Spring of 2000 The Lamar Soutter Library conducted a survey of faculty, residents, and students. Libraries have found it beneficial to study the use and satisfaction of these groups. Identifying resources’ amount of usage and patrons’ preferences regarding library collections, resources, facilities, and services, as well as offering the opportunity for patrons to register other comments, enable a library to respond to the expanding needs of a knowledge- and research-intensive environment.

The objectives of this survey were:

- To identify use and awareness of Library resources and services;
- To learn which services, resources, and facilities are used by faculty and students for study, research, and teaching;
- To learn how satisfied students and faculty are with Library resources and services;
- To identify unmet needs and areas for improvement.

The target population of faculty included 500 individuals on-campus; 426 students in the School of Medicine, 168 in the Biological Sciences, 49 in Nursing, and 461 residents. Students in medicine and the biological sciences received an electronic survey and were sent one reminder. Faculty, residents, and nursing students received a paper survey. In order to avoid multiple mailings and encourage participation, the paper survey was limited to two sides of a single page.

The survey included sections on demographics, usage, satisfaction with resources and services, and priority choice funding for Library collections and services. Two open-ended questions provided an opportunity to identify new resources and general remarks. The total number of surveys distributed was 2,104 and the total returned was 620, yielding a response rate of approximately 29.5%. Survey responses by population were:

Survey data for the closed-ended questions was coded by the Office of Research and Evaluation Division and is being analyzed. The open-ended questions generated 698 responses which have been entered into an Access Database developed by the Systems Librarian. The results of the survey will offer insight into the expectations of our patrons and enable the Lamar Soutter Library to better promote, design, and evaluate its services and resources.

**Evaluation Division cont. from page 1**

strong efforts to reallocate existing resources. The library directors are optimistic that support will be forthcoming for this pace-setting initiative, which will move Massachusetts into the ranks of those states where public higher education is a leader in providing information resources to their citizens.

**Worcester Area Community Gateway for Better Health**

Reference Librarian Gael Evans, Assistant Director for Technical Services Barbara Ingrassia, and Assistant Director for UMass HealthNet Javier Crespo, under the coordination of Principal Investigator and Director of Library Services Elaine Martin, are involved in The Gateway Project. This grant-funded program promotes the consumer health resources and services of several Worcester area organizations. In addition to the Library, participants include the Learning Center at Worcester State Hospital; the Community Health Resource Library at UMass Memorial Health Care; Worcester Public Library; Worcester Senior Center; Massachusetts Brain Injury Association; and the Worcester Evening Free Medical Service Clinic offered by the Epworth United Methodist Church.

Under the auspices of the grant, computer training is being offered to information providers at each site, and local consumers receive training in the use of MedlinePlus. A website with a referral database is being created (http://www.gatewayforhealth.org), and the book collections of each grant participant are receiving some welcome additions.

A traveling exhibit has been developed and displayed at various events, including the cross-generational Wellness Day 2000; the Senior Center Fair; the 25th Anniversary Celebration of the PIP (People in Peril) Shelter; and the YMCA-sponsored Men’s Health Fair. In October, The Gateway Project represented UMMS at WOMEN 2000, a national conference on women’s issues, which will also commemorate the first national woman’s rights convention, held in Worcester in 1850.

The Gateway Project is funded by the National Library of Medicine through July, 2001.

**The Library Collection: Help Us Help You**

The Lamar Soutter Library welcomes and encourages suggestions for books to be added to the Library’s collection. Request forms are available at the Circulation Desk or on the Library’s webpage at http://library.umassmed.edu/ MatReq.html.

Items are added to the collection in support of the mission of the Library and its written Collection Development Policy, as the budget allows.

For more information, please contact Barbara Ingrassia, Assistant Director for Library Technical Services, at (508) 856-1041 or by e-mail at: Barbara.Ingrassia@umassmed.edu.
The Lamar Soutter Library has recently added some new titles to the Reference collection. Many of these are books which the Library had never owned. The addition of titles to this collection is the result of an evaluative process by Reference Department staff. This process involves researching various sources to find new titles, evaluating the authoritativeness of the prospective title to the pertinent subject matter, and determining the need that the Library’s customers may have for that title. The patrons of the Lamar Soutter Library are diverse, and the selection process of the collection must reflect that diversity. The primary focus of the Reference collection is, of course, a biomedical one, but the selection process for new titles to add to the Library collection must also consider source materials having a general, technical, and consumer health focus. Two recently added titles reflect the diversity of our collection needs.

Because many users of medical resources are familiar with Melloni’s Illustrated Medical Dictionary, it would seem obvious that the Library would acquire Parthenon Publishing Company’s new Melloni’s Illustrated Dictionary of Obstetrics and Gynecology. This specialized work contains over 280 illustrations, and its more than 15,000 entries range from abandonment (of the doctor-patient relationship) to zygote. The last part of the book contains the section “Selected Abbreviations Used in Obstetrics and Gynecology.” The Reference Department selected this book because it would serve clinicians, medical students, and patients who need an authoritative definition of a word in the field of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Lamar Soutter Library users will find Melloni’s Illustrated Dictionary of Obstetrics and Gynecology in the Reference collection under the call number WP13 M527 1999.

Another recent acquisition for the Reference collection is the new 3-volume Encyclopedia of Stress, edited by George Fink. An encyclopedia, this publication treats its 394 topics in a more comprehensive manner than would be covered by the dictionary format of the aforementioned Melloni’s texts. The topics in Fink are alphabetically arranged, and many of the individual articles are preceded by a helpful glossary. This 2,448-paged source was chosen to assist researchers, clinicians, other health professionals, and students who are interested in many aspects of stress research. The Stress Reduction Clinic at the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care and Society has long been active in the field of stress reduction, and the addition of the Encyclopedia of Stress to the Reference collection is the Library’s recognition of that research leadership. The call number of this Reference source is WM172 E56 2000.

The Reference Department frequently adds new titles to its collection. As information constantly changes, the collection must reflect the recognition that sourcebooks can quickly become outdated. Newer editions must supplant older editions of books within the collection, and just keeping up-to-date on newer editions of reference sources is challenging enough. However, collection development involves much more than supplanting older sources. It also involves an awareness of newly appropriate sources for the Library.

In some cases, the Library has a standing order for some of the essential books of the collection. The newest edition of the book is sent to our Library for cataloguing and is then made available to patrons as quickly as possible. The above-mentioned recent acquisitions, however, were ordered after Reference staff utilized an electronic publishing review service, Doody’s, which lists books and other materials in the biomedical field of stress reduction, and the Encyclopedia of Stress to the Reference collection is the Library’s recognition of that research leadership. The call number of this Reference source is WM172 E56 2000.

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Congress controversy cont. from page 3

guaranteed, but rather, the promise
of its accessibility - something that
many believe GPO cannot assure.
As one depository librarian in San
Diego stated, "Failure to provide
permanent access when no copies
have been distributed could mean
permanent loss of that informa-
tion."

While the FDLP has been pro-
gressing toward a more electronic
system, more formats are currently
available than just online access -
including microform, cassette and
videotape, and CD-ROMs. The
proposed transmutation to an all-
online access program should be
seriously questioned. The aban-
doning of the depository program,
a system that has worked well for
decades, should be thoroughly
examined before adopting a new
unproved strategy.

The extent of the proposed
changes locally cannot as yet be
determined. The Lamar Soutter
Library currently receives over 30
percent of all available government
documents through the Federal
Depository Library Program. RK

Professional Staff Serving Elsewhere

Several staff members of the Lamar
Soutter Library occupy professional
offices or related positions in
library organizations beyond the
confines of our Worcester campus:

Elaine Martin, Director, is Secre-
tary of the Directors of American
Association of Health Science
Libraries (AAHSL).

Deborah Sibley, Deputy Director,
following a four-year term, is Past
Chair of North Atlantic Health
Sciences Libraries (NAHSL), which
is an official chapter of the Medical
Library Association (MLA); she is
presently serving the first of a
three-year term as Conference
Chair/Chair Elect of the Massachu-
setts Health Sciences Libraries
Network; also, she is a member of
the Grants and Scholarship Com-
mitee of the Medical Library
Association.

Mary Ann Slocomb, Access
Services Librarian, is currently
Chair-Elect of NAHSL; beginning in
late October, she will become the
Chair of this association.

Barbara Ingrassia, Assistant
Director for Technical Services, is
Chair of the Government Relations
Committee of NAHSL.

Mary Piorun, Systems Librarian,
is serving as Secretary of the
Information Technology Commit-
tee of the Boston Library Consort-
tium (BLC), from September, 2000-

Peg Spinner, Reference Librarian,
is Chair of the Education Commit-
tee of Massachusetts Health Sci-
cences Library Network (MAHSLIN).

Pauline McCormick, Head Cata-
loger, is an elected trustee of the
Beaman Memorial Library in West
Boylston, MA; she is in her third
three-year term and is Vice Chair
of a six-member board. JL

The Reference Collection cont. from page 3

and other sciences. The staff
reviews these suggested titles as to
their suitability and usefulness to
the collection. Sometimes budget-
ary constraints prevent these
purchases, but the Lamar Soutter
Library’s first priority is to select
the most useful sources that can
best serve our diverse clientele. PJ