This spring, we start our issue with an interview with the library dean, Allen McKiel, who provides an interesting perspective on how academic libraries like ours are evolving in an age when so much information is available online. What was the impetus behind the learning commons remodel? Why is so much effort spent on information literacy? Read the interview to find out. You will also discover articles on the latest exhibits, new collections put online, and some provocative takeaways from our recent library survey of students, faculty, and staff.

On a more personal note, we wish a fond farewell to Jerrie Lee Parpart, our Exhibits and Archives Coordinator, who retires after 28 years of service. Her many library exhibits over the years (see page 2 for the latest) have been exemplary, and her hard work has strengthened both our physical archives and the online collections. Good luck, Jerrie!

Reminder
In June, the EasyBib citation management services will cease, replaced by NoodleTools. Stop by or call the Information Desk if you have questions.

The Changing Academic Library
An Interview with Allen McKiel, Dean of the Library

Q: Tell us a little about your background. How long have you been at WOU? Where did you work before coming here?

McKiel: This is year eleven at Western. The five years before coming to WOU, I was the director of libraries for Northeastern State University in Oklahoma. The twelve years prior to that, I was the director of libraries for region two of Ivy Tech Community College in South Bend Indiana. Before that I worked as a programmer / systems analyst, first for OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) and later for Notis, the integrated library system that Northwestern University created.

Q: Last year, the library added a “learning commons” space with more flexible seating options and The Press coffee shop. Not long before that, the library also added a Digital Media Center on the second floor, complete with video and audio production rooms. Can you tell us a little about the rationale behind these changes?

McKiel: The concept of a learning commons in libraries has evolved with teaching and learning methods that utilize group problem-solving as an aspect of new learning strategies. The commons also accommodates a growing reliance on the internet, media, and online information and communication technologies. The addition of The Press facilitates longer stays in the library because you don’t have to leave the library to eat. Food and drink also enhanced the social ambiance of the library, which further encourages staying in the library to study. It’s a home away from home that’s comfortable and has a variety of study venues. The learning commons concept also includes providing services like tutoring, the provision of media production equipment and instruction, as well as general assistance with information and learning technologies.

Q: While I know the vast majority of people have been enthusiastic about these changes, a few have expressed concerns that the library is shrinking the amount of books available. Is this true?

McKiel: Actually, the number of book titles available has increased dramatically over

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New Online Collections

Library Publishing and Preservation Services recently put a number of fascinating collections online:

- Alfred P. Maurice WWII Correspondence – Hundreds of letters sent home during the Second World War.
- Historical Campus Photographs (grown to 275 images)
- Course catalogs at WOU and its predecessors dating from 1872 to the present.
- History student theses, papers, and projects from WOU’s History Department, dating back to 2003.
- Japanese-American Relocation Center Newsletters – A selection from the so-called “relocation centers” incarcerating Japanese-Americans during World War II.
- We Are Wolves: History of the WOU Mascot – An overview from 1927 to 2017.
- Women of WOU – Notable women in the university’s history who made significant contributions to the institution, Oregon, or the nation.

These collections and more can be viewed in Digital Commons (for documents) at https://digitalcommons.wou.edu and Omeka (for photos and other images) at http://omeka.wou.edu:8080/.

Spring Term Exhibits

Elemental Haiku by Mary Soon Lee, Artist

A review of the Periodic Table composed of 119 science haiku, one for each element. This exhibit is a recreation (with permission) of an online publication. The haiku encompass astronomy, biology, chemistry, history, physics, and a bit of whimsical flair. (Third floor galleries.)

Forces of Nature: New Works on Paper by Jen Bracy

Artist, designer, and WOU professor Jen Bracy explores the eternal wisdom of nature, its influence on our patterns and symbols, and the tension between humans and the environment. (Second floor gallery.)

Also Showing This Spring

China is for Me: Dr. Velva V. Brown, World War II POW ... Hydrology Student Posters ... Bachelor of Fine Arts Student Work (Third floor, end of term.)

Library Survey Results

Last spring almost 1,000 faculty, staff and students took a survey evaluating the library’s collections, services, and facilities. The library rated very well overall: in five-point scales where “1” equaled “very satisfied” and “2” meant “satisfied,” the average scores for building and spaces was 1.4, for services was 1.5, and for collections was 1.7.

We received lots of great feedback through two open-ended questions. In response to “What does the library do really well?,” many people lauded the library staff for helpfulness and accessibility. Respondents like the varied types of spaces in the building and considered them organized, clean, and conducive to study and work. People told us that both the personal interactions and physical design and resources create a welcoming environment.

Among the responses to “What change would most improve the library?,” space availability—including the reservation policies and system—was the largest concern. Additional open hours on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays also emerged as a theme. And many comments lamented inadequate and dated collections, in particular print books.

To address these and other identified deficits, the library faculty have identified two lists of projects. Projects of the first list are achievable by library staff alone or in coordination with other campus units, and we are currently discussing the prioritization, timing, and implementation. Among these projects are improving awareness of existing resources and services; analyzing collections and articulating goals and priorities; improving several aspects related to printing; and determining the enforcement of quiet on the third floor. The second list comprises major potential undertakings that are beyond the exclusive control of library staff, requiring funding and/or physical planning. Examples are adding a public entry on the north end of the building and increasing and updating collections.

The seven-page executive summary, available on Digital Commons@WOU (digitalcommons.wou.edu/hamlibrep), provides more overall results.

Recent Acquisitions


Changes Over Time - The Evolution of Jazz Arranging (Book & CD) by Fred Sturm

Picking Cotton: Our Memoir of Injustice and Redemption by Jennifer Thompson-Cannino
the years as the cost of electronic access to books and journals has correspondingly decreased. The average cost of a print academic title in the US is approximately $60 for a humanities title, $70 for behavioral and social sciences, and $100 for natural sciences. Hamersly Library has approximately 167,000 print book titles on the shelves. Last year Hamersly Library provided access to 240,673 titles online. The total cost of e-book access last year for Western was $23,127. Besides providing ongoing access to the base collection, the subscription provides about a 20% annual increases to the number of titles. The cost increases with inflation at about 3% annually. Last year the e-book collection grew by 46,973 titles. Dividing the total cost of e-book access ($23,129) by the titles added (46,973) shows a cost per title added last year of 49 cents. While it’s true that we have shifted aggressively toward an access strategy, the overall amount of content available is much higher than it was ten years ago, as you can see in the included chart.

Q: What do you mean when you say “we have shifted aggressively toward an access strategy?” Could you elaborate?

McKiel: Most academic library information resource purchasing is now with vendors who provide electronic access to information. Purchasing print books or journal subscriptions accounted for approximately 11% of library information resources last year compared to 66% ten years ago. Nearly 90% of library information resource expenditures are for online materials that we do not own. What I mean by this is that the material, such as electronic journals or pay-on-demand journal articles, are not actually housed in the library itself. This means we pay for access rather than purchasing physical material. Among the benefits of electronic access is the dramatically increased volume of journal and book titles it provides faculty and students. For example, roughly the same dollars needed to provide access to about 1400 print titles provides access to roughly 128,000 electronic journal titles online. There are other advantages. Electronic books and journals are available 24/7 from anywhere. There are also no processing or housing costs. The cost of the physical infrastructure to keep a book on the shelf is roughly $4 a year.

Q: It sounds like you believe that academic libraries like ours must evolve if they are going to continue to play a vital role at universities. What are other things Hamersly Library is doing to adapt?

McKiel: The lead article of our last issue was “How to Spot Fake News.” This actually gets to the heart of one of our central roles: teaching information literacy. The American Library Association defines information literacy as a set of abilities requiring individuals to “recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and effectively use the needed information.” How do you know what information you need? How do you find it? Is it reliable? How do you use it? How and why do you cite it? Our instruction librarians, and others within the library, work with faculty across the curriculum to tailor face-to-face information literacy sessions or to embed this instruction into their courses (Moodle, etc.) in their specific discipline.

We also provide publishing and preservation services for scholarship, research, and archival access to aspects of resources produced at or related to Western. This is becoming an increasing role for academic libraries in this era of disintermediated media. You can find out more at http://www.wou.edu/library/lpp.

Q: If you could just say one thing about the library to incoming students, what would that be?

McKiel: Come visit the library! It’s a good place to be and we like having you here.
Library Spotlight: Interlibrary Loan

The Winter issue of Hamersly Library News spotlighted Summit, the “lending club” of regional, academic libraries. Now we pull back the curtain a bit more to reveal a broader picture of resource sharing among libraries.

The Interlibrary Loan (ILL) cooperative involves over 10,000 academic, public, and special libraries across the United States and the world. Participating libraries agree to principles and practices, but, unlike the Summit program, they are not bound by a set of uniform policies, software, and procedures. For example, ILL requesting libraries are encouraged to maintain patron confidentiality by not sending patron names to supplying libraries. Lending policies are at the discretion of the individual libraries: they each determine the length of their loans, the possibility of renewals, and if and when they charge for supplying materials.

While Summit is our preferred service for borrowing books and sometimes other physical materials (what we in the biz call “returnables”), the interlibrary loan process allows us to borrow millions of additional materials that are, for one reason or another, unavailable through Summit. Lots of current and out-of-print books, DVDs, and CDs are shared through ILL, of course, but so are bound journal volumes, newspapers on microfilm, older formats of sound and video recordings, maps, etc. In addition to loaned items, Interlibrary Loan handles all requests for scanned copies (called—you guessed it—“nonreturnables”). Most copy requests are for journal articles, but libraries also scan and send, for example, book chapters, tables of contents, and fragile documents.