

# ASSOCIATION of COLLEGE and New RESEARCH England LIBRARIES Chapter

**Ingenuity:**

- Blackboard Collaboration with Faculty at Bryant University
- Planning for a Successful Collaboration
- Marketing Library Services to Clients

April 21, 2006

## True Collaboration: a Library Presence on Blackboard

**By Colleen Anderson**

The development of Internet search services and virtual learning tools has librarians concerned about becoming distanced from the research process. Course management software, an effective communications tool, offers an opportunity for placing librarians and library resources back into the heart of teaching and research. One of the strengths of the software is that when students visit their class site, it provides them with a “one-stop shopping” experience. Here they can locate their professor’s syllabus, read articles and documents posted by the professor, communicate with other class members, send an assignment, and view their grades. The logical question--

why not access the library’s resources?

### Integrating Blackboard

My first encounter with the idea of using Blackboard to collaborate with faculty came from an article by Christopher Cox, former Chair of ACRL/NEC NELIG, in College & Research Libraries News. The article, “Becoming Part of the Course: Using Blackboard to Extend One-Shot Library Instruction”, described his efforts to use Blackboard to extend in-class library instruction. At the same time I was reading Christopher’s article, I started to use Blackboard as a graduate student, and was impressed with its ability to make my life as a student easier. As databases continued to be added to our

library’s collection, I began thinking about how we could use Blackboard to reduce student confusion by customizing, or pulling out appropriate resources, for specific classes.

### Getting Started

I decided to take the leap, and in Fall 2005 I partnered with Professor Janet Morahan-Martin, from Bryant’s Applied Psychology Department, and with Enoch Park, Bryant’s Instructional Technologist, to develop a library module for an Abnormal Psychology class. Mr. Park signed me on to the site as a “course builder”, a function which allows me to develop content and a discussion thread with students, but not have any access to grades. Dr. Morahan-Martin and I discussed appropriate resources to place in the module.

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## Library Grand Rounds: A Tool for Both Education and Marketing

**By Cindy Stewart, Lora Thompson and William Garrity**

The Dartmouth College Biomedical Libraries created “Library Grand Rounds” as a forum for presenting information resources and tools of particular importance to Dartmouth clinicians. This venue has given us the opportunity to both teach our clients and

market ourselves in the medical center environment. The Libraries offer four grand rounds a year, and presented our twenty-ninth in February 2006.

The mission of the Biomedical Libraries is to provide health and life sciences information resources and services that advance research and scholarship, edu-

cation and patient-care activities of Dartmouth Medical School, the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center (DHMC), and Dartmouth College. The Biomedical Libraries consist of the Dana Biomedical Library on the Medical School’s Hanover campus and the Matthews-Fuller Health Sciences Library located at DHMC.

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## Planning for Collaboration

By **Mary Piorun** and **Deb Dulmaine-Coonan**

The Lamar Soutter Library at the University of Massachusetts is a mid sized academic health sciences library with a staff of 45 FTE's. We are the states only public medical school and serve approximately 900 graduate students and an additional 950 faculty. In August of 2005 the staff started a strategic planning process where forming partnerships and working in collaboration with others was given a priority. A small team was formed (5 librarians) to develop a plan that could be used over the next 3-5 years. What follows is the four major areas the team identified that will lead to forming successful partnership and collaborations and some idea's on how to get started.

### **Area One - Internal:** *Foster an Environment within the Library Conducive to Collaboration*

We recommend that libraries regularly perform a strengths and weaknesses assessment of Library resources and staff in the area of collaboration. In order to make collaboration a natural part of the work culture, the library needs to establish a system that will continually identify collaboration opportunities and provide ways to allow staff to develop and participate in new projects. We suggest that a framework be developed that allows interested staff to submit project proposals and submit them to management for funding so that ideas can be moved to reality.

### **Area Two – Project Management:** *Implement a multi-faceted approach to managing outreach projects throughout their life cycle (conception, implementation, evaluation, maintenance, retirement).*

Library staff may not have any formal training in project management. To better prepare staff for outreach work, formal training may need to be implemented. A system should be put in place to capture project ideas at the conception stage and to evaluate proposed projects for feasibility and appropriateness. Various evaluation and assessment models for projects should be developed to establish best practices for the Library. The most difficult part of project management is identifying the resources to operationalize successful projects into the Library organization. This also requires buy-in from upper management.

### **Area Three – Technology:** *Use Technology as a Catalyst for Promoting Collaboration*

The library is in a unique position to work with partners and match their unique content with the appropriate technology such as a web site, podcast or database. In many cases the library is able to form a partnership with a group/department and then together approach the larger school IT department. The library can act as a liaison to the IT department on behalf of other school departments. The library can also play an important role as institutions try to integrate, manage, and provide access to data across departments. Librarians must establish their roles as experts in this area early on.

### **Area Four – External Focus:** *Increase the Visibility of the Library's Collaboration and Partnership Initiatives*

The library must make an effort to document and evaluate current and past collaboration efforts, especially those collaborations that can lead to the furthering of existing relationships and to identifying successful projects as models for future endeavors. To explore new opportunities for collaboration, the Library should implement a multi prong approach including events such as inviting current and future partners to sharing sessions and researching/ identifying groups beyond the Library's primary clientele as potential outreach partners. As always, the library must effectively communicate its willingness and ability to be a contributing partner to both traditional and new groups.

## Conclusion

By first undergoing a self evaluation, and then incorporating outreach in all Library positions, a culture where partnerships and collaborations are encouraged and valued will form. Utilizing effective project management skills and practices, and use of technology as a catalyst for promoting collaboration, the Library will be better positioned to enter into collaborative projects. Once the internal structure for collaboration is in place, communicating the Library's ability and willingness to become an active partner with others is the final step.

*Mary Piorun is Associate Director of Library Systems at the Lamar Soutter Library and Deb Dulmaine-Coonan is Financial Officer at the Lamar Soutter Library at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.*

**"The library can also play an important role as institutions try to integrate, manage, and provide access to data across departments."**

## True Collaboration—continued

### ◀ cover

The contents of the module included library databases (PsycINFO, PsycARTICLES, and ProQuest), websites such as the NIMH, an APA style guide section, e-reserve access, an article on what constitutes a peer-reviewed journal, and a link to contact information for the librarian. By making a Library Resources module available on the course menu, each time a student accessed the Blackboard site for a class, he or she would see an advertisement for the library. In addition, with the move to Blackboard, the reference librarians at Bryant have an opportunity to become true partners with teaching faculty and work together to improve class content. There have been many positive outcomes of our collaborative Blackboard work. Among them:

#### Improved Communication

When a librarian develops a library site within a faculty course site, he/she gains access to the course syllabus and any correspondence the faculty member sends out to his/her students. The librarian can read the syllabus over to make sure the resources being added to the site are the most appropriate for completing assignments.

#### Prevention of Information Overload

Information anxiety has many students so overwhelmed that after

looking at the multitude of resources available through the library; they decide to retreat back to the simple, non-threatening screens of Google. Students live in a world where companies offer them opportunities to customize their music, clothes, and food. Why not customize our library resources to fit the needs of each course they take? If we do this, and it helps students produce higher quality papers, they will continue to investigate what the library can do for them.

#### Keeping Faculty Current

Many faculty feel uncomfortable in acknowledging to library staff their ignorance of new library resources in their field. Offering to develop a Blackboard module for a professor's site creates an inconspicuous way to keep faculty updated on new resources in their subject area.

#### Increasing Library Visibility

Increasing the visibility of library resources, especially databases, leads to increases in database usage and a lower per student cost. At Bryant, it has also led to an increased request for library instruction.

#### Tracking Resource Usage

When you add a resource to Blackboard you can indicate that you want to track the usage of the resource. Librarians can then dis-

cern what resources students find most useful.

#### Adding New Media and New Partners

There are possibilities for adding more resources and more collaborators on an individual Blackboard site. For example, Camtasia training presentations could be added as an additional resource and/or staff from the university's writing center could be added as additional collaborators.

#### Conclusion

Bryant's Blackboard collaboration to add library resources into course sites has been very successful. Faculty requests for library modules on their Blackboard sites have gone from the one site in the fall to 26 sites in the spring. These sites will now only need to be "tweaked" to be used again next fall. We hope to continue to add library modules to more class sites and also to experiment with developing "library office hours" using the discussion thread feature. Blackboard collaboration is one of many new ways reference librarians can place themselves and library resources at the heart of the research process in a virtual environment.

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**"Students live in a world where companies offer them opportunities to customize their music, clothes, and food. Why not customized our library resources to fit the needs of each course they take?"**

*Have an informative, practical piece to share with your New England Colleagues?*

Next ACRL Newsletter **deadline** is

**Friday, May 12, 2006**

**Contact: [bpulliam@providence.edu](mailto:bpulliam@providence.edu)**

## Library Grand Rounds— cover story continued

One of the Libraries' core priorities is education; specifically, developing and implementing programs to train and educate faculty, staff, and students in the skills needed to find, evaluate, and manage health and life sciences information. Over the years the Biomedical Libraries have developed a successful education program; one which offers a wide-range of activities to its primary clientele of students, residents, physicians, faculty, nurses, and undergraduate and graduate students in the life sciences.

"Grand rounds" are an important pedagogy of medical education. In the clinical environment this teaching method typically consists of a meeting at which a clinical problem or case is presented and discussed. As a way to resonate with the teaching culture in an academic medical center, the Biomedical Libraries developed the idea of a Library Grand Rounds, emulating the grand rounds series offered by clinical and academic departments in academic medical centers. One goal of the Library Grand Rounds is to promote and market the Libraries' resources and services in the clinical environment. Another goal of the grand rounds is to provide programming in support of the six general competencies, as required by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

This innovative approach to library education has generated successful collaborations with faculty who have been invited to co-present with us at Library Grand Rounds. Over the years the Libraries have worked with physicians who specialize in palliative care, hematology/oncology, pharmacology/toxicology, surgery, and internal medicine. The Libraries have also partnered with staff from Ophthalmology, the Dartmouth College Office of Sponsored Projects, the Office of the General Counsel, and Special Collections. The responsibility for presenting at Library Grand Rounds is shared among the staff, as interest and responsibility dictate. Ideas for topics are generated by staff and clients or as suggested at staff meetings, by the Libraries' clientele, or as suggested in information and library science, academic medicine, and medical education.

Topics of the Library Grand Rounds over the years have included:

- Evidence-Based Medicine: Resources for Clinicians
- Keeping Current...Keeping Sane: Coping Strategies for Busy Clinicians
- Guiding Your Patients to Reliable Health Information Resources: Hints for Clinicians
- Oncology Resources for All – Not Just for Oncologists
- Medical Faculty Development Resources
- Addictions Resources for Care Providers
- Chronic Illness: Information Resources for Primary Care Providers
- PowerPoint: the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly
- Cultural Awareness: Resources that Can Help
- Succeeding in the Publication Process
- Google and Beyond: New Ways to Search the Web
- Tracking References and Citing Sources: An Overview of Managing References with EndNote and RefWorks
- Finding Money, Getting Money: Support Services for Research Funding from the Office of Sponsored Projects and the Biomedical Libraries
- Philosophers, Grave Robbers, and Anatomies: Medicine at Dartmouth

Each grand round becomes its own web site, including links to research guides, PowerPoint presentations, and a web stream of the event itself. At the start of each presentation, a faculty member typically introduces the grand rounds by framing a specific set of issues associated with the topic. He or she may then also participate throughout the presentation. The librarian usually delivers the presentation, highlighting and demonstrating many of the resources included on the research guide. Hard copies of research guides and presentations are made available at the start of the grand rounds. Starting in mid-2003, the presentations are also audio- and video-streamed, so individuals who cannot attend the grand rounds can watch it "live" or after the fact.

Library Grand Rounds provides the Biomedical Libraries with a good deal of visibility. In addition to flyers posted throughout the medical center and medical school campuses, announcements are sent to each department via inter-office mail. We email all medical school faculty, residents, medical school students, nursing personnel, and administrators. Information about the grand rounds also gets distributed in weekly updates from the DHMC Graduate Medical Education Office to residents, and in updates from other departments to their staff and affiliates. Announcements are posted on the Biomedical Libraries and Dartmouth College Library web sites, as well as the medical school web site. Library Grand Rounds are open to all and not restricted to medical staff, residents, and students. Approximately 70 individuals have attended each presentation. Evaluation forms are provided; feedback on each session is encouraged, as are suggestions for future Library Grand Rounds topics. The Library Grand Rounds series is approved by Dartmouth's Center for Continuing Education in the Health Sciences for AMA Category I CME credit.

Library Grand Rounds is a successful didactic venue and marketing tactic for the Biomedical Libraries. It is recognized by the medical center leadership as a valuable opportunity for fostering lifelong learning skills, and it promotes the Libraries to the clinical audience.

Additional information about Library Grand Rounds is available at the Biomedical Libraries Web site <<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~biomed/>>. See "Library Grand Rounds" under "Services."

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