Kent State University
Stark Campus Library
Annual Report, 06/07

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Highlights

The Stark Campus Library did not experience a great deal of change during the 2006/2007 academic year. It is fair to state that significant changes have occurred over the past several years regarding:

1. how space is utilized
2. the way library instruction is provided
3. ways the library builds and maintains its collection
4. how the library interacts and collaborates with faculty

These changes are all reflected in previous annual reports. However, this past year was more of a time of reflection, absorption, and expansion of these changes. The two key areas addressed will be:

1. Library Space:
   a. Use and Expansion of Public PCs
   b. Personal Laptops
2. Evolution of Library Instruction

Library Space

More faculty decided to bring their classes to the library for the purpose of conducting their class, not just for library instruction (at least not by library staff). The idea that instructors can present a lecture and then incorporate some time during the class session for students to work on research assignments seems to appeal to some faculty. Aside from the few awkward times when conflicts occurred because instructors neglected to inform the library of their visit, faculty using library space to teach their classes have found the experience beneficial. It is anticipated that this practice will continue.

The library once again faced the issue of giving up space for non-library services. Two organizations, Canto and the GED Scholar’s Program needed to be moved from other buildings on campus. Rather than convert users’ space (namely the “first-come, first-served” study rooms on the second floor), the library decided to move out of a room on the first floor that was shared with the Bridges Program. The library was using this space for work related to grants previously received as well as for a student worker to help librarians with some professional support (creation of bibliographies, for example). Those initiatives were moved to an area in the workroom. Eventually, the GED Scholars Program was moved to the Campus Center and the room vacated by the library is now shared between the Bridges Program and Canto. With public institutions of higher education continually faced with challenging economic difficulties, it is natural that valuable space for libraries (and library collections in particular) comes under scrutiny.
One of the reasons for this annual report is to demonstrate and justify how this library uses its facility. Still, reevaluation and reconsideration of how the Stark Campus Library uses the space it occupies will be a major part of its planning efforts.

Use and Expansion of Public PCs

In the past, the library’s public computers were designed purely for research. Applications for writing papers (word processors), class presentations (PowerPoint), etc. were not provided. Last year, the decision was made to convert these computers to fully functioning PCs. The typical computer lab configuration was installed on all library PCs. In addition, the number of PCs available on the first floor more than doubled from 9 to 21. The older workstations lined up in rows with the computers and monitors embedded in them were replaced with 5 pods consisting of 4 PCs clustered together. Wiring to facilitate this change was done over the winter recess. The additional wiring also allows for expansion to 8 pods and a total of 33 computer workstations on the first floor.

Perhaps the biggest issue related to this change was addressing more user technology problems (as opposed to reference questions) than in the past. Various approaches were considered and tried. One was to staff the Help Desk with a student worker who could try to determine the nature of a user’s needs; whether the user needed help with library research (from a librarian) or technical help running a computer application (from Network Services staff). The nature of library work revolves around customer service. As a result, simply sending users to another building with technical problems proved difficult for library staff. Although the library did not envision having to provide computer lab support, it does recognize that the way users collect, process, and create information requires a close integration between what would traditionally have been considered library work and what is now considered computer work. Since it would be impractical to think that libraries will be able to differentiate between the two needs for support by users, the library accepts its role in providing both library and technical (computer) support, while recognizing its need for enhanced training in the area of computer application support.

Personal Laptops

Laptop computers have become increasingly less expensive. More and more students are bringing them on campus for use in class and in the library. Kent State’s FlashZone wireless network was installed a couple of years ago and does allow students to connect to the internet using their personal laptop. The process involves installing a VPN (Virtual Private Network) client onto the student’s laptop and using FlashLine credentials to securely access the network. Library staff spent a great deal of time and effort working with students and various flavors of operating systems (including Apple
Macintosh) in attempts to configure personal laptops for access to the internet. It will be interesting to see how the proliferation of student-owned laptop computers will change how the library (or even the campus in general) provides services. With more mobile devices (such as cell phones) capable of accessing the internet, it may not be just laptops but other, smaller devices that become more popular. It may also be that the library will rely less on providing devices for accessing electronic information but will concentrate more on adapting to new devices and technologies designed for access the internet so that students can use their own equipment.

**Evolution of Library Instruction**

After experiencing the difficulties of putting together a meaningful First Year Information Literacy Program, and recognizing the problems with assessing such initiatives, the library has backed off a little on formal instructional programs and focused more on the actual needs of the students. Fundamentally, the issue is not determining if students retain the concepts behind the 5 standards provided by the ACRL (Association of College and Research Libraries) as articulated on their website:

http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/informationliteracycompetency.cfm

The issue is whether or not students gain the skills needed to find and evaluate the proper resources for completing their research assignments. Therefore, the library has devoted more time and effort in providing hands-on instructional sessions. These sessions typically involve helping students, who have selected a topic of interest to research, with developing search strategies that can be applied to a number of library resources, resulting in the discovery of valuable information the students can use to complete a specific assignment. This approach does involve educating students on some basic information literacy skills. But it also allows students to spend the time during the library session actually working on the assignments they need to complete for a grade.

The librarians providing this type of instruction have had to get used to using laptops, since there is no defined computer lab in the library devoted to library instruction. Laptops actually work better than desktops in that they can be taken to places in the library where other, usually print, resources exist. Still, there is more time needed to prepare for instructional classes, the wireless network is not 100% reliable, and batteries have been know to drain in the middle of sessions, particularly when multiple library sessions are taught back-to-back. The use of laptops for library instruction took hold in the spring, after the library swapped its 8 Sony laptops for 17 HP laptops previously assigned to the Math department. By having extra batteries and power supplies, the library has managed to adapt to the difficulties teaching with laptops creates. Over time the library will have evaluate how the space devoted to library instruction is used and the type of technologies needed to continue providing high quality, hands-on library instruction.
The following includes a description of some specific highlights of library activities for the academic year 06/07:

**ILILE Grant**

After being awarded a grant from the Institute for Library and Information Literacy Education (ILILE), the library developed a program for including information literacy in the Middle Childhood Education course Reading and Writing in Middle Childhood (MCED 40006). The program was designed to make future middle school teachers aware of the need for information literacy education as part of their curricula as well as making them better at understanding information literacy for their own needs. A test was developed to measure their comprehension of information literacy skills. The test was administered before any instruction was offered and then again at the end of the semester (after students were given some information literacy instruction and after they prepared a lesson plan on information literacy for middle school students). While it was difficult to measure success overall, when the 5 standards incorporated by the grant project were evaluated, students performed better on the second test for four of the five standards. Improvements ranged from 5-14%. The only standard (standard #4) that showed no improvement involved an area of information literacy that is generally discarded at the college level. The program is planned again for the coming year. The program will be altered to address some of the issues presented last year. Standard #4 will be excluded from the project and a new set of questions for assessment will be created.

**ILLiad for Interlibrary Loan**

Starting this past year, all interlibrary borrowing was handled by ILLiad, a software interface with OCLC. While there were a few problems uncovered by expanding the service from Kent to the regional campuses, overall this has been a smooth transition. The Stark Campus Library no longer has borrowing statistics for articles—non-returnables—and non-OhioLINK books but also does not have the burden of obtaining materials from other libraries for its users.

**Collection Management Initiatives**

The library completed the following projects last year:

1. The general circulating collection was shifted.
   After moving the collection the previous year following a major weeding project and then again to incorporate displaced serials from the lower level, the entire collection needed to be shifted to facilitate future shelving needs.
2. The oversized collection was weeded.
3. Older videocassettes for major sets in regular use (particularly by faculty showing them in class) were replaced with DVD equivalents for preservation purposes.
First Floor Renovation

During the intersession between the fall and spring semesters the library’s first floor was rewired to allow for eight pods of computer workstations. Each pod would contain 4 computer workstations. In the spring 5 pods were put in place, leaving the remaining three for future expansion. This increased the number of workstations from 9 on the first floor to 21. In addition, all of the workstations were configured as typical lab computers, allowing students to write papers (using Microsoft Word), create presentations (using PowerPoint), as well as other typical computer applications. Although headcount statistics (presented later in this report) did not increase overall, there was an 8% increase in traffic on the first floor. It will be interesting to see how this change and future additions affect headcount statistics.

More Laptops

By the beginning of the spring semester, the library increased the number of laptops available for student use from 8 to 17. With this addition, it was possible to incorporate laptops into library instruction sessions. Still, even though laptops are smaller and lighter than desktop workstations, the library will be looking for even smaller, lighter devices with longer battery lives in the future.

Printing

Starting in the beginning of the fall semester, the library began charging 5 cents per page to print from public workstations. Previously, the library was the only place on campus where users could print for free. Since printing required the use of the Kent State FlashCard, Stark State users were not able to print at all. To resolve this problem, the library established a few generic print cards with about $100 in an account. The cards were checked out to Stark State users, allowing them to print for free. Ultimately, the library will have to figure out a better solution that allows Stark State users to have their own card and charges them the same fee as Kent State users.

Outlook

The university switched employees from using the Flashline email interface to Microsoft Outlook. All staff were required to adapt. One advantage was the ability to create a shared calendar. By the end of the year all staff were using Outlook for email and posting their schedules on the shared calendar.
Staff

The following individuals comprised the library staff for the 06/07 academic year:

- Rob Kairis, Library Director (Associate Professor)
- Judy Kooistra, Collection Development Librarian (Associate Professor)
- Maureen Kilcullen, Reference Librarian (Associate Professor)
- Roger Davis, Serials Librarian (Assistant Professor)
- Mary Birtalan, Cataloging and Interlibrary Loan (Library Associate)
- Jeanne Hawley, Acquisitions (Senior Library Assistant)
- Mary Lou Hester, Circulation/Student Worker Supervisor (Senior Library Assistant)

At the end of the spring 2007 semester, Mary Lou Hester retired after 6 ½ years of faithful service. The library wishes Mary Lou the best and thanks her for her commitment to the job and for making the library a better place to work. In addition, director Rob Kairis applied for promotion and was successful. Starting July 1, 2007 he will be at the rank of Full Professor in Libraries & Media Services.
Interlibrary Borrowing and Lending

After reaching a peak a couple of years ago, interlibrary borrowing has decreased for the second year in a row (nearly 10% fewer items borrowed from last year). Circulation activity has remained fairly static but still below interlibrary borrowing. It is difficult to explain the decline in use of print books, except to assume that students are becoming more inclined to rely on resources found electronically (websites and online databases).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Circulation*</th>
<th>ILL</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98/99</td>
<td>5077</td>
<td>4163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99/00</td>
<td>4087</td>
<td>4735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00/01</td>
<td>4408</td>
<td>4636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/02</td>
<td>4336</td>
<td>5362</td>
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<tr>
<td>02/03</td>
<td>4122</td>
<td>5401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/04</td>
<td>4179</td>
<td>6559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/05</td>
<td>4507</td>
<td>7447</td>
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<td>6936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/07</td>
<td>3942</td>
<td>4957</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These figures exclude course reserve circulation

The borrowing of print materials still occupies a great deal of staff time and account for dozens of transactions daily. The library will want to keep an eye on this trend to see if it levels off at some point. In addition, after the line representing local circulation transactions crossed the line representing interlibrary borrowing transaction in 99/00, the library will want to see if users begin to use local materials more frequently than materials borrowed from other libraries (as they did prior to those lines crossing). It is probably safe to say that, even though ILL borrowing declined, users are comfortable waiting the 2-3 working days it takes to have books delivered. In part, this assumption has lead to collection development changes; the library is relying more and more for “core” materials from the KentLINK and OhioLINK catalogs and building more and more in subjects that represent gaps of coverage in those catalogs or on the fringes of those subject areas represented in those catalogs.

Another effect of this shift in collection development priorities (as mentioned in previous reports) is that the library is seeing increases in the lending of its print materials to other KentLINK and OhioLINK libraries, since the materials the library is acquiring are in fewer supply in those catalogs. The chart below demonstrates that the trend appears to be heading towards an intersection of borrowing and lending. Given the size of the population the Stark Campus Library serves, this would be considered quite unique. Smaller sized libraries (in terms of print collection) normally borrow more for its users than it lends to other libraries.
Of course it is important to note that the reason these lines are close to intersection is not so much the level of lending (which only increased by 5%) but the decrease (already described) in borrowing (down 32%).

**Books**

*Borrowing*

As previously noted, book borrowing decreased significantly for the second year in a row (27% lower than last year, which was also down from the previous year). This is an important statistic to keep tracking, so the library will have to see if the trend continues or if book borrowing stabilizes over the next few years.

*Lending*

Since devoting more of its energies to collecting books not as highly duplicated in the KentLINK and OhioLINK catalogs, the library has seen an increase in the lending of those materials. Although there was a slight dip last year in lending from the previous year, 06/07 saw an 8% increase in book lending. As approval plan slips are regularly checked for duplication in OhioLINK (to ensure that the Stark Campus Library is not buying materials readily available for borrowing from other OhioLINK libraries) and as
the library solicits purchasing requests from faculty with unique teaching and research interests, it is likely that lending will continue to increase over time.

**Articles**

*Borrowing*

While it is obvious from the chart below that Stark users are borrowing articles at a much lower than than in the past, it needs to be explained that the way interlibrary borrowing is handled has changed significantly. For articles and books not part of the KentLINK and OhioLINK systems, all requests are now made through Iliad, a system moderated by the Kent Campus. So Stark users must now sign up for an Iliad account when they need an article or book from out of state and have the request filled by Kent Campus library staff. As a result, we have no statistics on how many requests in Iliad were for Stark Campus users.

*Lending*

There is little doubt that article lending activity is nearly non-existent. The chart below defines a trend that marks an 83% decline from last year alone. With only 22 requests all year, it is hardly worth noting at all in this report.
Information Literacy

Last year’s report noted a rather sharp decline in library instructional classes. It was noted that the First Year Information Literacy program was phased out. Results from SAILS (Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills) showed no statistical difference between the various categories of students taking the test; even those given no instruction scored the same as those given significant levels of instruction. So the decline was a natural result of scheduling fewer of the College English II courses targeted by the program. However, this past year saw a dramatic increase in library instruction sessions.

![Graph showing the number of classes given library instruction from 1995/96 to 2006/07]

The chart above shows that the number of classes given library instruction increased by more than a third (34%). In fact, aside from the 03/04 academic year (when the First Year Information Literacy program was in full swing), last year’s numbers are the highest recorded for the library.

A couple of factors are likely contributors to this increase. First, Stark State has shown much more interest in bringing classes into the library for instruction. They recently engaged in some strategic planning efforts that included an action project for enhancing the use of the library by their students. This has resulted in nearly doubling the number of classes taught by the library (up from 27 taught in 05/06 to 53 last year). Another contributor is the addition of a session on plagiarism that is now taught to nearly all sections of the University Orientation course (now named First Year Colloquium).
Collection Development

Spending for library materials stayed relatively flat last year. Overall spending went up by 8%, but was still less than spending a couple of years ago. It is hard to explain the spiking of spending every other year starting in 02/03. Most of the variability seems to be with library spending. Faculty spending has been fairly steady, although it has declined over the past two years.

One trend that has been reversed is the number of items purchased by faculty compared to the number ordered by library staff. Traditionally, library staff have done the majority of ordering. However, with the introduction of an approval plan about 5 years ago, faculty began ordering more. In 03/04, the number of items selected by faculty (with help from the approval plan) actually exceeded items selected by library staff. This trend continued until last year. In fact, a steady decline in the number of faculty selections has been observed for the past two years. The likely reason is that the approval plan needs a little revitalization. When it was new, faculty were more aware of the process and were more aware of the issues surrounding the purchasing of books. They are likely more comfortable with the approval plan and giving it less attention than a couple of years ago.

The library plans to reengage various faculty members. First, an analysis of the purchasing habits of each approval plan selector will be conducted. Those receiving lots of slips but ordering only a relative few will be identified. Meetings will be held with those faculty or departments to encourage them to consider placing more orders. Second, a mechanism to more closely track approval plan orders will be put in place next year to continuously stimulate faculty purchases.
The library took a new approach to spending the $5,000 allocation provided by the Kent Campus to each regional campus. In the past, the money was assigned to a particular faculty member with instructions to build the collection for their program. Emphasis was placed on selecting titles important to the program and ones likely to be used by students enrolled in that program. Last year, the decision was made to offer the allocation to a faculty member with a unique research interest. As a result, Dr. Thomas Norton-Smith was given part of the allocation to spend on Native American philosophy books. The titles he selected were not only unique to the Stark Campus Library collection, but unique to the state-wide OhioLINK collection. Next year, a more junior faculty member in the humanities will be selected to spend the allocation.
Library Usage

This section on usage focuses on four areas:

1. Head Count
2. Reference Statistics
3. Circulation
4. KentLINK Searches

Another area that the library regularly tracks usage for is database searching. This is a bit more complicated in that the library has access to about 100 licensed databases, some available through OhioLINK, some through Kent Campus licenses, and some only available on the Stark Campus. Not all OhioLINK databases break down usage by campus. So getting statistics about Stark Campus users is not possible. As a result, the library selectively lists the databases it tracks on its website at the bottom of the About the Library page (under the heading Statistics):

http://www.stark.kent.edu/Library/AboutTheLibrary.cfm

Head Count

The library continued its practice of physically counting the number of people in the building every hour (on the half hour). In the past, most libraries simply counted the number of times people entered or left the library (through gate counters). More and more libraries are taking head counts of people in the library in different locations to get a more detailed picture of usage throughout the day broken down by the type of activities users are engaged in (a practice the Stark Campus Library began over ten years ago). In the past it was more important to delineate head count usage because the building also included the Testing Center and Student Development Center. Since those operations no longer exist in the library, the breakdown serves mainly to determine whether or not people in the building are doing library work or engaged in non-library activities. With the addition of Math labs/classrooms on the lower level (described in detail in the Highlights section of last year’s report), the library has simply stopped counting students when they are in the lower level of the library.
The chart below shows that overall attendance in the library went down by nearly 14%:

![Library Attendance Chart]

This decline does not reflect actual library activity. Last year the library excluded the number of people occupying the lower level from its headcount statistics (a practice it will continue). Historically, counting people in the lower level accounted for nearly 30% of the total headcount figure. So a decrease of only 14% could suggest that more people visited the upper two floors than in the past. Still, when measuring the number of visitors in the library actually using library services compared to the number not using library services, a slight decline was noticed.

![Library vs. Non-Library Use Chart]
Reference Statistics

The library has always found it difficult to count the number of times users need reference assistance. Over the past few years an effort has been made to encourage librarians to accurately record each time they assist a user. Initially, this effort resulted in fewer recorded transactions. That was largely due to the fact that the numbers were regularly padded to help reflect the number of times staff and students also helped users. Once the padding was removed, the numbers went down significantly. However, probably due to increased awareness of the need to have a more complete picture of reference transactions, the numbers went back up last year:

![Reference Stats Graph](image)

It is important to note that regardless of how these figures are presented, having an accurate picture of the type of help users need is not included. Only a single hash mark defines a reference transaction, whether the librarian spent 5 minutes with the users or an hour. In addition, with more desktops available for use with expanded capabilities, more users are needing general computer help, not related to library activities. So while there was an increase (the number nearly doubled), it is impossible to know how much of that activity reflects non-library type questions. The library will need to consider ways to more accurately reflect the type of question asked by users as well as the time investment for each inquiry, to get a better picture of the significance of these numbers.

Circulation

After a five-year trend of increased circulation statistics, year after year, last year reflected a 13% decline in circulation activity:
As noted in the Interlibrary Borrowing and Lending section, although users were still getting more of their materials from other libraries than the Stark Campus library, the gap between borrowed materials and locally owned materials narrowed:

For the past several years, the ratio of materials borrowed from other libraries to materials borrowed locally was generally about 60:40. Last year the ratio was 55:45. It will be interesting to see if this trend continues.
KentLINK Searches

Gathering KentLINK usage statistics has been a problem for many years. With a change from the text-based interface to a Windows and web environment for management information purposes, data was inaccessible or lost for 04/05. The library was able to extract statistics for last year, showing that overall searching went down by about 8%:

![KentLINK Searches graph]

It is unfortunate, but gathering these statistics is extremely complicated. The numbers must be extracted at specific times during the academic year. If the window of opportunity is missed or the statistics system is not available during that window, the numbers are lost. Therefore, it is not anticipated that this report will include KentLINK search statistics in the future.
Academic Year 07/08

New Initiatives

During the summer, the library staff began planning some new initiatives for the coming academic year. Most revolved around enhancing the library’s website, articulating important services offered by the library.

1. A new page devoted to promoting the library’s various collections will created. The page will feature physical displays, allowing users to suggest bestsellers for the library to purchase, or providing reviews of current bestsellers for others to read, highlighting specific titles owned by the library.
2. An Information Literacy page will replace the Library Instruction page and will describe various ways the library offers instruction as well as providing access to various tools for helping students use the library’s online resources.
3. The library will revitalize the Approval Plan by analyzing selections during the previous year. Meetings will be set up with those faculty receiving approval slips but not ordering from them. The approval plan profile will be reviewed for possible modifications.

Cooperative Collection Development

The regional campus libraries of Kent State University have had a desire to find ways to more effectively cooperate with regards to collection development. At a time when OhioLINK is looking for new ways to cooperate and collaborate, particularly for print book purchases, the time is ripe for KSU libraries to get together and establish a plan of action. The Regional Campus Library Directors Council plans on placing cooperative collection development at the top of its agenda for the coming academic year.

Printing

Since the library began charging for printing, the biggest problem was finding a way to allow Stark State users to print. The Pharos system requires the use of a FlashCard and only Kent State users have individualized FlashCards. The current solution is to maintain a few generic FlashCards at the circulation desk and to check them out to Stark State users when they need to print. This is a difficult method for providing printing services for Stark State users. New methods for printing will be explored that make the process more efficient, while also having Stark State users pay themselves for the service.
Serials Cancellations
The library will once again review its print serials subscriptions to see if they are duplicated online. The process will involve:

1. determining if the title is stored in a permanent repository (such as the OhioLINK Electronic Journal Center or JSTOR)
2. determining if the title exists in any of the licensed databases (which do not allow for permanent access—if the database goes away so does the serials title)
3. counting the usage of both bound volumes of the title and current issues (KentLINK is used to count the number of times a bound volume is used and another web-based program allows the library to count the number of times current issues are used)
4. deciding, based on the factors above as well as the annual cost of the subscription, whether or not continuing a print subscription is necessary
5. providing input from faculty on any decision to cancel any title

Another alternative to simply canceling print serials, if there is a desire to continue maintaining the subscription, is to investigate the possibility of establishing online subscriptions that could be plugged into Olinks, an OhioLINK application that redirects users from an online citation to the full text of the article. This would allow access to the serials when articles in it are found within one of the library’s licensed databases.