

# Library Collaboration Index: Documenting the Reach in Outreach

By Susan Anderson, IPFW

Combining a structured examination of the library's present operations, staff and collections with a professional vision for the library's future, Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne (IPFW) staff completed an Academic Program Review and Self-Study in 2013 (Indiana University - Purdue University Fort Wayne, 2013).

The Program Review's value as an inventory and a roadmap is apparent as we begin implementation of our goals. The goals were defined by library workgroups that included every librarian and staff member with input from students, faculty, and administrators across campus. The result is a strategic plan that calls for examining, redefining and reengineering library services, programs and resources, including materials and staff (Anderson & Truesdell, 2013). With these future-oriented goals, we are envisioning a library staff providing services "where and when needed" (2012-2014 Helmke Library Strategic Plan) and collections that will continue to serve a dynamic university community.

This is a necessity, not a choice, as the university we serve and support is itself confronting the changes that are at play in all of higher education: pressures of recruitment, retention and budget, changing demographics and its effect on potential college enrollees, examining program focus, and cementing the university's relationship to the social, geographic and business community. In this time of organizational change, we want to be a resource for those involved in administration and the business of running a university, functions that are central to the organization, as well as those who support academic success and research.

Our over-arching goal is to move beyond the silo of the library building and collections to be more visible and better integrated into campus activities, priorities and operations, extending the library's support of non-academic departments and business units of the university. We are collaborating with campus partners -- faculty committees, student groups, administrative units, such as admissions and student life-- to provide services that support their efforts to recruit, retain, and graduate students. The traditional library service and support for faculty teaching and research, student coursework and research and our academic program of information literacy is just part of the library's service and support for all university stakeholders.

University administrators, faculty and students understand the traditional role of the library, but not everyone thinks of its services beyond collections, reference, bibliographic instruction and quiet study spaces. Too few recognize the library in its broader role in advancing the mission of the institution through its unique contributions to student enrollment, retention and graduation rates, student learning and success, faculty research and teaching, the scholarly communication of students, staff and faculty, institutional quality overall, and community engagement. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Standards for Libraries in Higher Education address these functions with Principles and Performance Indicators for campus collaborations and messaging about the library and an ambassadorial role for library employees. The ACRL Standards Principles and Performance Indicators urge libraries to engage the campus and broader community. They enumerate multiple strategies to advocate, educate users and promote library value (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2011).

While the library administration has encouraged and supported outreach to all units, we had not systematically documented these activities in a way that could be used to demonstrate library impact and value to the university and community.

## *The Collaboration Index*

Our Program Review included traditional data--circulation, instructional sessions, library hours, reference transactions--which are useful in documenting work performed and comparing ourselves to peer ACRL libraries, but not very effective as indicators of integration into the curriculum and other university activities related to student recruitment, learning, retention and faculty research.

To augment this data, we also sought to capture the library's undocumented contributions to the university students, staff, faculty and administrators, in other words, to capture our activities and contributions "as members of the IPFW community" (Walter E. Helmke Library Mission Statement). Demonstrating the role and involvement of the library in the campus and community outside the library and the classroom is crucial.

This view is also expressed in the ACRL report *Value of Academic Libraries: a Comprehensive Research Review and Report* which explores ways and surrogate measures that libraries can use to demonstrate their value to students, faculty and staff on an academic campus and to the community in general.

We used the ACRL framework to identify and leverage opportunities and partnerships to enhance awareness and use of library resources and services and most importantly, enhance and publicize the varied skills and contributions of the library's staff and librarians. We have worked through various channels to demonstrate and infuse the value of the library across many campus priorities, from student learning to faculty research, from student retention and graduation to community engagement, and from administrative information needs to global recognition of scholarly and creative output.

Using a simple spreadsheet, we are documenting these outreach and collaborative activities as well as librarians' involvement in campus committees and projects in a library Collaboration Index. This data set, which documents the Activity, Audience, Contact Hours and other information, has been used to describe and quantify the library's impact, value and integration with campus activities in ongoing campus budget and prioritization discussions. These outreach and collaborative activities document the reach and involvement of the library in activities which impact student academic success as well as faculty and staff professional success outside traditional in-house services and instructional, classroom-based venues. It augments the typical reported library data--use of library building (gate counts), use of collection (circulation) and use of services (reference and instruction statistics)--and moves toward documenting our penetration in campus activities and initiatives.

As we began populating the Collaboration Index, it has become a visual representation of the extent of library penetration into the activities of the campus and community. While the main purpose was to demonstrate the value of library services and resources to the university administration, it also illustrated to library staff the power of their combined individual efforts and inspired further ideas for involvement.

*Entries: The Collaboration Index*

We arranged the entries into two broad categories: Community and Campus. Some of the significant entries include:

#### **Community:**

- An ALA/NEH grant for the Muslim Journeys project which supported a campus/community reading and discussion group involving campus faculty, members of the community as well as community religious leaders; the Allen County Public Library was a local partner in the grant.

- An array of digital project collaborations with community partners including the Fort Wayne History Center, Northeast Indiana Diversity Library (LGBT collection), and the Allen County government; the Helmke Library has created several local digital collections housed in mDon (mastodon DIGITAL OBJECT NETWORK ) <http://mdon.library.ipfw.edu/>

- Hosting of community/campus events such as the Remnant Trust Exhibit and programs (2009 and 2013-14), Featured Faculty lecture series, FAME (The Foundation for Art and Music in Education) exhibit and the Appleseed Writing Project

- Library staff service in community organizations and on non-profit boards such as the League for the Blind and Disabled, Ontulili Literacy and Resource Center, and Sophia's Portico

- The library's close ties with its university parent institutions include consortial collaborations for resource-sharing, access to the collections, group purchasing arrangements and collaborations with peers across the system. IPFW has benefitted from collaboration with IU and Purdue University libraries' government documents light archive stewardship, Purdue Library Scholars Grant program, access to copyright and intellectual property expertise, and open access and scholarly communication efforts. The library is also a member of the Academic Libraries of Indiana (ALI) and other consortia.

#### **Campus:**

*Work with Students: Undergraduate, Graduate, Student Groups, High School students*

- Inclusion of new Honors Program Center in Library Learning Commons

#### **Support of undergraduate and graduate student research:**

- Two librarians are members of the organizing committee of the annual Student Research and Creative Endeavor Symposium, spotlighting undergraduate and graduate research and faculty mentors. The Symposium is cosponsored by the Library, Honors Program Council and Office of Research, Engagement, and Sponsored Programs. In addition to hosting the poster symposium in the library's Learning Commons, the library offers workshops on developing poster content, using technology to create a compelling poster and providing research assistance to student participants. The Symposium's new poster format (initiated a year ago by the new Student Symposium organizing committee) is growing exponentially each year. With permission, student posters are included in their entirety in Opus [http://opus.ipfw.edu/student\\_research/](http://opus.ipfw.edu/student_research/).

This involvement in student research is part of the library's collaboration and engagement in high-impact educational practices (Kuh, 2008).

- The library is actively pursuing other undergraduate and graduate research design projects, presentations and posters, from departments across campus for inclusion in Opus, e.g. Undergraduate History Conference, Engineering, Technology, and Computer Science Senior Design Projects, Engineering Conference and Bachelor of Fine Arts Senior Exhibits. For students in particular, inclusion in Opus is an excellent introduction to open access and provides a permanent, cite-able repository to the beginning of their scholarly output. Student work in Opus also provides an institutional advantage of highlighting the significant research and co-publishing opportunities for undergraduates at IPFW.
- Librarians are part of Summit Scholars competition day, freshman Honors and Summit Scholars seminar and other campus events.
- We have forged a productive collaboration with IPFW's Student Government (IPSGA) which holds its meeting in the library's Learning Commons and has been a consistent and generous supporter of the library with funding for 24/7 library hours during study and finals weeks, laptops and iPads to be loaned, and new furniture for the Learning Commons.
- The library initiated involvement in Collegiate Connection, the IPFW dual-credit initiative which enables high school students to be enrolled in college courses. Working with IPFW Enrollment Management, the library has made a concerted effort to reach not only the high-school students but also their teachers, counselors and the high school librarians who refer dual-credit students to IPFW resources including the library (see Adkins, Anderson, Skekloff article in this issue).

#### **Work with Faculty and University committees:**

##### *Curriculum and Classroom*

- The liaison librarians are involved in a pilot program of information literacy instruction assessment within the new Indiana General Education Outcomes Standards.
- Staff are actively seeking and cultivating collaborative opportunities to share expertise and personnel and joint project management, such as partnering with the Department of Communication's for the graduate special project to locate and digitize documents related to the motion picture entertainment activities in the Fort Wayne area during the pre-WW II years.

The digitization projects and partnerships which the library has initiated directly contribute to the University's mission of community-building and contributing to the culture, education, society, and history to northeast Indiana.

##### *Opus, open access, and copyright management*

- The library is home to Opus, the IPFW open-access scholarly repository of faculty and student research and creative endeavor. The library is spearheading the campus conversation on scholarly communication and open access. The IPFW Senate Library Subcommittee has unanimously passed a resolution in support of Open Access and has endorsed an Open Access policy which will be brought before the faculty Senate body in fall 2014.

##### *New faculty orientation, Promotion & Tenure workshops, writing workshops, CELT (Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching) and SoTL (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning)*

- The library is on the roster of invited speakers for new faculty orientations where the library emphasizes not only our information literacy curriculum but also our services and expertise for faculty research and publishing, citation analysis, altmetrics, publishing and copyright. For faculty promotion and tenure workshops, we have designed and taught a growing number of sessions on writing, publishing and copyright/intellectual property. Librarians also support the SoTL (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning) faculty group.
- Librarians are involved on school-level and campus-wide committees which has increased collegial recognition and awareness of our unique contributions and expertise. Librarians are actively participating on Faculty Senate Committees and other groups appointed by VCAA and other administrative units, such as General Education Committee, Honors Program Council, Curriculum Review Committee, University Budget Committee

#### **Work with other campus units:**

- We are increasing contact with campus professionals who have contact with students and who, like the library, are directly engaged in supporting student academic success, e.g. Student Life, the Writing Center, the Center for Academic Support and Advancement, student organizations, TRIO Student Support Services, the Office of Military Support Services, International Student Services, Career Services, New Student and Housing RA orientations, the Admissions Office first-year experience, the Honors Program, Chapman Scholars, returning and online students and the campus health fair.

- With the development of the Learning Commons in the library, we partnered with the campus Writing Center, campus IT Services and Studio M, a high performance multimedia production studio, to provide a one-stop shop for students by connecting research and writing with technology support.
- The library is an internship site for IPFW Career Services and has hosted two interns; we are also involved in career-information classes.

### Conclusion

A simple spreadsheet, the Collaboration Index, describes and tracks the library's integration with campus and community activities outside the classroom. By documenting these outreach and collaboration efforts, we can assess future directions and strategic contacts, successes, challenges and areas that need attention and where we are over- or under-committed. Having the documentation will allow us to assess the effort expended and the "return on investment" of time and staff.

Our goal is to reach campus units in a scalable, appropriate manner and to build meaningful assessment into our activities outside the classroom.

We have achieved some very positive qualitative outcomes in terms of campus awareness, involvement and interest. Equally important, we are prepared with concrete examples of our contributions to use in campus conversations involving prioritization and "a shared understanding about the diverse and multiple ways that the library contributes to the institution's mission" (Association of College and Research Libraries. *Connect, Collaborate, and Communicate: A Report from the Value of Academic Libraries Summits*, 2012).

### References

- Indiana University - Purdue University Fort Wayne (2013). Program Review Walter E. Helmke Library. Retrieved from [http://opus.ipfw.edu/lib\\_documents/1](http://opus.ipfw.edu/lib_documents/1)
- Anderson, S.M. & Truesdell, C.B. (2013) Superheroes Revealed: Library Program Review. Retrieved from [http://works.bepress.com/susan\\_anderson/8](http://works.bepress.com/susan_anderson/8)
- 2012-2014 Helmke Library Strategic Plan. Retrieved from <http://library.ipfw.edu/dotAsset/40a46732-553e-4615-88c9-3a700b5f0a02.pdf>
- Association of College and Research Libraries. (2011) Standards for Libraries in Higher Education. Chicago, IL: Association of College and Research Libraries. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/standardslibraries>

Walter E. Helmke Library. Library Profile: Mission Statement. Retrieved from <http://library.ipfw.edu/about/library-profile.html>

Association of College and Research Libraries. (2010) Value of Academic Libraries: A Comprehensive Research Review and Report. Researched by Megan Oakleaf. Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries. Retrieved from [http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/issues/value/val\\_report.pdf](http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/issues/value/val_report.pdf)

Kuh, G.D. (2008) *High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Association of College and Research Libraries. (2012) *Connect, Collaborate, and Communicate: A Report from the Value of Academic Libraries Summits*. Prepared by Karen Brown and Kara J. Malenfant. Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries. Retrieved from [http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/issues/value/val\\_summit.pdf](http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/issues/value/val_summit.pdf)