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The Next Major Hurdle
Paul Kobulnicky
Vice Chancellor for Information Services and University Librarian

Research libraries have come a long way in the last five years in their efforts to provide faculty and students with a rich array of information resources in digital formats. Now, most of our major indexes and subject-based abstracts are available on-line for use at any time and from any place. We have made great strides recently in providing on-line access to journal literature and, in the coming months, we will begin to provide access to digital versions of contemporary books. Most importantly, we have moved access to these resources over to a common web interface. And that, ubiquitous web access, is the rub.

"On the Internet," to quote the now famous New Yorker cartoon, "no one knows you’re a dog." As you know, however, Internet addresses are organized into unique network domains. Addresses in the University of Connecticut domain always end in UConn.edu. If you are using any computer attached to UConn’s computer network, other computers will recognize you as emanating from the UConn.edu domain and will give you access only to services that the UConn.edu domain entitles you to use. But suppose you are a UConn student living off campus and connecting to UConn’s digital library services via your new cable modem? Now your domain will be something like "pipeline.com," and the UConn library network, looking for "UConn.edu" may reject your request for services to which you are otherwise entitled.

More and more faculty, staff and students work from off-campus sites, accessing the UConn.edu domain from cable modems, DSL lines, or other advanced on-ramps to the Internet. We will have to find ways to distinguish which requests for our web services are from fully entitled UConn faculty, staff or students as opposed to those requests from other visitors who are entitled to access some, but not all, of our resources. Over the course of the next several years, we will deal with these issues of access and security by developing a single “sign-on” that will, once per session, authenticate each visitor and the services that he or she is authorized to access. Implementing “authentication” is an enormous challenge. There is no solution that we can “just buy,” and getting the process to work will be a major challenge.

The relatively new Office of Undergraduate Education and Instruction has been a catalyst for great change on campus, especially in the lives of incoming freshmen. Northwest Experience, where 900 new students form a community along with their upper-class mentors, began this fall. The Academic Center for Exploratory Students provides guidance and support for the particular needs of students undecided on their major. The First Year Experience seminars, begun in 1996, bring together small groups of students and help them to feel part of the greater community.

Enhancing and improving the quality of the undergraduate experience in higher education has always been important. But it has become a top priority since the 1998 publication of Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America’s Research Universities or “Boyer Report,” <http://notes.ccr.sunybuffalo.edu/Pres/boyer.html>, produced by the National Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research University, and funded by the Carnegie Foundation.

The Homer Babbidge Library has responded to this call for excellence in service to all undergrads. In April 2000, the undergraduate services librarian was added to the roster of UConn librarians. This position includes an exciting array of components, including campus outreach, constituent advocacy, development of a curriculum to ensure that all graduates have the skills needed to be able to supply their future information needs in the outside world, creation of educational web tutorials, and classroom instruction.

In addition, the undergraduate services librarian puts a friendly face on the imposing structure that is Babbidge Library. Libraries can cause anxiety in the heartiest of people. Freshmen, most of whom have used only school or public libraries, can easily feel overwhelmed by Babbidge’s sheer magnitude, its two million books, its seven acres of materials. So, an

It’s a Great Time to Be a UConn Undergrad
Kathy Lahadof
Undergraduate Services Librarian

It’s a great time to be an undergraduate at the University of Connecticut. The last four years have seen tremendous growth in programs that target the development and welfare, both intellectual and physical, of the largest segment of UConn students.

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Apartheid became the law of the land in South Africa in 1950. The law, which legislated separation of the races and categorized its citizens into racial groups, was abolished in 1994. Though legally in existence for only 44 years, apartheid has left a legacy which will take generations to reverse.

In 1999, with grants totalling more than $1 million from several sources, the University of Connecticut established formal partnerships in South Africa to accomplish three projects. The first project, in cooperation with the Dodder Research Center, will archive and make available the papers of the African National Congress (ANC). The second, an oral history project conducted in conjunction with the Center for Oral History, will document the lives of scores of exiled ANC members most closely associated with the struggle to abolish apartheid in South Africa. The third project, supported with a three-year, $460,000 grant from the United Negro College Fund, links UConn with the University of Fort Hare. The goal of this last partnership is to contribute to the internationalization of education by creating opportunities for faculty, staff and student interactions and exchanges between the two institutions.

The University of Fort Hare is an institution with a distinguished history as the oldest and most prestigious black university in South Africa. It is the alma mater of Nelson Mandela, where he developed the roots of his activism; of Robert Mugabe, the current president of Zimbabwe; and of the father of Thabo Mbeki, the current president of South Africa. It is where the ANC rallied and recruited students in Freedom Square, and where Marian Makeba sang her protest songs during the 60’s, 70’s, 80’s and 90’s. Under apartheid, the university suffered profoundly, but it is now fully engaged in the process of transformation—restoring itself and 90’s. Under apartheid, the university suffered profoundly, but it is now fully engaged in the process of transformation—restoring itself and

The University of Fort Hare is suffering from reduced student enrollments, as more and more university-bound students opt for technical and trade training to get jobs. Although there has been a slight increase in the past year, the university’s budget is allocated based on enrollments of two years prior, resulting in serious funding issues.

The library, for example, has had to choose either to keep serial subscriptions current or to purchase monographs. It has kept its subscriptions and, as a result, the library has not purchased a book in more than four years. In our discussions with Fort Hare faculty and graduate students, they expressed concern about the impact of this decision on the quality of undergraduate education. They speculated that the impact of this decision on the quality of undergraduate education. They speculated that

Last July, a delegation from the University of Connecticut visited South Africa for ten days. The 12 delegates represented various UConn departments, including Admissions, the University Libraries, and the School of Agriculture. During our stay in South Africa, we met with our counterparts from the University of Fort Hare to listen, learn and share experiences which may make the next steps in the transformation process easier. Under the strong leadership of vice chancellor Derrick Swartz, Fort Hare’s Strategic Planning Committee has prepared a comprehensive strategic plan. The ambitious plan identifies areas of the university needing immediate attention, with the goal of revitalizing its curriculum, making it more relevant for students, the community, and the nation.

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During the past summer, and continuing into the fall semester, the Document Delivery/Interlibrary Loan team has been testing its new Electronic Document Delivery (EDD) service. Currently, more than 250 individuals are participating in EDD, representing all UConn campuses and classifications. The testing has gone successfully, and once hardware upgrades are in place later this fall, we will offer this service system-wide.

In many cases, we’ve calculated turnaround time for delivery of documents. The delivery time for the delivery time for traditional delivery, i.e., pickup at the Babbidge Circulation Desk, campus mail, US Mail, Regional Campus delivery, etc. is less than traditional delivery, i.e., pickup at the Babbidge Circulation Desk, campus mail, US Mail, Regional Campus delivery, etc. Most articles are made available within 48-72 hours; in a few cases, articles have been delivered on the same day they were requested. Once a document has been received by the DD/ILL office, it is processed and made available for the user in just minutes.

Three software applications are supporting the test phase of the EDD service:

- **Ariel** - This Internet fax software delivers black and white documents to us in TIFF format from other libraries or suppliers. Color is not yet supported with Ariel.
- **Prospro** - A TIFF-to-PDF file converter. Prospro captures each page of the TIFF document with minimal resolution loss. True quality resolution, however, rests with the supplier performing the initial copy, so in some cases, we’re at the mercy of the lender’s supplier’s hardware. Prospro converts the document to PDF format, stores it on one of the library’s servers and sends an email message containing retrieval instructions to the user.
- **Adobe Acrobat 4.0** - Occasionally, documents have to be “cleaned up,” cropped, and edited. Acrobat is used to make these modifications after we receive them via Ariel and before Prospro makes them available to users. Not all documents are delivered to us electronically via Ariel. For those documents that come to us via US Mail, fax, etc., we can scan most documents directly into Acrobat 4.0, edit, and then use Prospro to complete the process. We have excellent gray scale resolution and can just about reproduce the quality of the original copied document.

Documents are stored on a library server from which they can be retrieved by users. Each document “magically” disappears after five viewings or the passage of two weeks, whichever occurs first. We plan to increase the two week period to four weeks when the service becomes permanent. We are recommending that participants have Internet connection speeds of at least 56k bps to facilitate smooth and quick retrieval experiences. And we do hope to eventually provide color graphics, as well.
The general education student...knows how knowledge is produced, organized, and disseminated • understands the types of information sources available • recognizes the difference between scholarly periodicals and popular periodicals • differentiates between primary and secondary resources • recognizes that information may need to be constructed from raw data • knows where to find information • knows the information avenues available • understands search systems (catalogs, indexes, Web search tools) • understands that controlled vocabularies may apply • understands that classification systems may apply • knows where to get assistance, i.e. that information experts are available • understands how to assess the quality and quantity of information received • identifies gaps in information received • understands technologies available for information retrieval • understands how to interpret bibliographic records and the importance of their elements • understands how to identify and the differences between authoritative vs. non-authoritative sources • understands issues of censorship, freedom of speech, copyright, intellectual property, and fair-use • understands citation formats, documentation styles, permission notices • respects the integrity of information sources, facilities, and systems.

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It’s a Great Time to Be a UConn Undergrad

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important part of the job is to help undergrads understand the organization of the materials and to encourage them to utilize their most valuable resource, the librarians.

But perhaps the most dramatic part of this position is participating in the change from traditional teacher-centered bibliographic instruction to a dynamic, user-focused concept of information literacy. The American Library Association’s Report of the Presidential Committee on Information Literacy (<www.ala.org/acrl/nili/nili.html>) defines the term this way: “To be information literate, a person must be able to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information. It then goes on to say: “Producing such a citizenry will require that schools and colleges appreciate and integrate the concept of information literacy into their learning programs and that they play a leadership role in equipping individuals and institutions to take advantage of the opportunities inherent within the information society. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) has established standards for information literacy competencies. Although created by a library association and concerned with information, a logical domain of the library, the accomplishment of the objectives can only be assured by a cooperative effort among faculty, administration, and information specialists. For students to reap the full benefits of information literacy, responsibilities must be shared across the spectrum of university service providers and integrated into the curriculum. This fall, over forty First Year Experience seminars have scheduled library sessions. In the library’s electronic classrooms, freshmen have engaged in interactive, hands-on research using online databases. Activities involve developing a search string using subject keywords, Boolean operators, truncation, and wildcards—universal search string using subject keywords, Boolean operators, truncation, and wildcards—universal database tools and strategies. A Native American proverb says, “Tell me and I’ll forget. Show me, and I may not remember. Involve me, and I’ll understand.” If understand- ing is the goal and involvement the path, effort must come from both sides, teacher and student. From the start, undergrads at UConn must accept responsibility for their own education and future. Their years as undergraduates can fly past, especially for students who passively wait the arrival of knowledge. They need actively to involve themselves in the learning experience, questioning, challenging, seeking, reflecting, learning how to learn. Learning in this manner is a co-operative effort, not a contest or power struggle, but a win-win situation.

The University Libraries is a natural extension of the library’s efforts to bring resources to the user. Focusing on online database use during the first library session is a necessity. With this experience, students will more successfully access and utilize the hun- dreds of electronic databases made accessible to them over the network at home, dorm, or lab. During the next few months, regular reference hours will be set up at several computer clusters on campus to provide additional assistance. Continuance will depend on usage by the students. Asynchronous outreach via the Web, including the Library Information Literacy Tutorial (<www.lib.uconn.edu/LILT>) and the library’s Information POWER! modules on WebCT (<http://webct.uconn.edu>), will con- tinue to evolve with the changing information needs of users.

Babbihade Library has been transformed both as a place and as a service. As a place, the building invites use. Even though only 9% of the freshmen in the FYE seminars had come to the library for a previous class, fully 70% had come for their own purposes during the past month. Constant change brings with it anxious excitement, sitting on the edge of your seat. What next? It’s a great time to be the undergraduate services librarian at the University of Connecticut.

Online Access to Westlaw

The University Libraries has recently subscribed to Westlaw, the most comprehen- sive online access to legal resources currently available. The staff of the Librar- ies will be working with WestGroup to improve access by academic users to the database, originally designed for lawyers and law students. As we do so, we are seeking assistance from faculty and students who use legal resources on a regular basis. If you are having problems with the new legal database, or wish to work with librarians in helping to improve the service, please contact Ellen Embardo, at 486-1262; or ellen.embardo@uconn.edu.

General Education and Information Literacy

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Peggy Seiden et al demonstrate, in “Undergraduate students in the digital library: information seeking behavior in an heterogeneous environment,” that critical information literacy skills are best learned through activity-based instruction within academic courses (<www.alaa.org/acrl/ paperhtml/226.html>). The University Libraries is currently engaged in defining an information literacy curriculum with information literacy components that can be introduced effectively and mastered at the appropriate stages of the undergraduate career.

• Basic competencies under the purview of the undergraduate services librarian, and essen- tially the same for all undergraduate students, will be taught during Summer Orientation; First Year Experience; and Freshman Writing

The public image of the work of librarians is embodied in our traditional collections-based mission statement—select, acquire, organize, preserve, and provide access to collections. But that statement no longer accurately describes the world in which we labor or the future that is before us. Increasingly, our focus is not so much on building collections—we know how to do that effectively and methodically—rather, it is on preparing an environment that supports and fosters research and learning, on seeing that every student acquires the requisite skills to take advantage of the materials and services the library offers. To put it more boldly, our mission is to develop whatever services are necessary to create the most robust information learning arena we can afford.

UConn and the University of Fort Hare

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enrollments will continue to decline unless this policy is reversed, as students may choose to continue their education elsewhere. They also noted that the policy of apartheid, which defined the nation’s “official” history for many years, also has resulted in glaring gaps in the collections.

At the end of our visit, the recommendations of the UConn librarians were shared with the Strategic Planning Committee of the University of Fort Hare. In addition, representatives from UConn committed to providing on-going assistance and expertise to the University of Fort Hare in every area represented by the delega- tion. While Fort Hare faculty focused on re- sources—funding—as the most pressing library issue, library staff saw some of their intangible needs as equally important. The critical need for training in technology and information literacy, customer service, work ethic, and similar, job-related issues. UConn library staff have reviewed these requests and made commit- ments to be equipped in several areas. As the University of Fort Hare transforms itself, the country also is in the process of changing. The goal has always been to create a society which is truly inclusive, and the Univer- sity of Connecticut has stepped up to support the nation in its endeavor.
WinterFest 2000

Exhibit & Sale of Fine Crafts to Benefit the Library

Join us in celebrating the joys of the holiday season and the pleasures of fine crafts. WinterFest 2000 presents the work of seventeen distinguished craftpeople from Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York and Vermont. This invitational exhibit and sale highlights the quality of contemporary crafts being created in our region of the country. A variety of affordable work in clay, cloth, metal, paper, and wood will spark your imagination and offer an abundance of gift-giving ideas.

Participants include: Ceramics—Anne Elliot, Robbie Lobell, Kathy Hanson, John Macomber, Louise Harter, Richard Palan Cloth—Susan Cryan, Metal—Anne Behringer, Jafar Shoja, Dan Dustin, Judy Tripp. Information about each participant, and his or her work, is available at the exhibit.

The exhibitors are donating a portion of their proceeds to benefit the University Libraries’ art and exhibits programs. Enjoy the beauty and quality of the work. Purchase presents for your family and friends—and perhaps, for yourself. Lend your support to our ongoing effort to make the library a very special place on the beautiful, new UConn campus.

Items in the exhibit are available for “open case” inspection and sale at the following times: Saturday November 18, 1-3 PM; Wednesday November 29, 4-6 PM; Saturday December 9, 1-3 PM; and Wednesday November 29, 4-6 PM; Friday December 22, 3-5 PM. At other times, purchasers may fill out a purchase form, and the object will be held for later pick-up. 

Babbidge Library, Gallery on the Plaza

The Givers

As is the case with many of the Libraries’ finest collections, the Northeast Children’s Literature Collection relies to a great degree upon donations of books and related materials. The library is fortunate to have a group of munificent individuals who are dedicated to the development of this collection. Year after year, they send email to: maiser@lib.uconn.edu and type in the text area: 

The Givers highlights some of the extraordinary books donated by this special group of people. It is a tribute to their generosity and to their ongoing support for the collection and the library.

Dodd Research Center Gallery

Receive Exhibit Announcements by Email

The Homer Babbidge Library and the Thomas Dodd Research Center present fifteen to twenty exhibits each year. If you would like to be notified about new exhibits by email, please subscribe to Exhibit Announcements as follows:

To subscribe to Exhibit Announcements send email to: maiser@lib.uconn.edu and type in the text area:

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To unsubscribe from Exhibit Announcements send email to: maiser@lib.uconn.edu and type in the text area:

unsubscribe Exhibit A email

Ancient Burial Grounds of the Mansfield Area

This exhibit celebrates our earliest colonial American art form. It is our hope that the photographs, rubbings, historic documents and stone fragments on display will serve to inspire and educate the viewer as to the historic importance of our ancient “places of sleep.”

Every community has its own “bookmarks of time”—a tangible census of their predecessors, and a significant manifest of its heritage. Early burial grounds and old cemeteries are not only rich in examples of art styles from the past, but also provide us with insight into almost every discipline of study imaginable, from the obvious history and genealogy, to English literature and statistics.

Let us introduce you to our stone pages, share some of their stories, interpret some of their symbols and tell you about the men who carved these works of art and why this rapidly fading part of our heritage needs to be recognized and protected. We promise you’ll make new discoveries and never look at an old burial ground in the same way again.

Items for this exhibit have been acquired with the support and labors of the members of the Connecticut Gravestone Network and other volunteers.

Homer Babbidge Library, Stevens Gallery

An Art for Remembrance

18th & 19th Century Connecticut Gravestones

November 2000

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UConn Libraries
Yes, I want to be a Friend!

I want to make a tax-deductible contribution to support the University of Connecticut Libraries in the amount of level of:

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Please make checks payable to The UConn Foundation and mail to:

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If you wish to discuss annual giving opportunities, long term commitments, or your interest in a special project or specific area, please contact Linda Perrone at linda.perrone@uconn.edu or (860) 486-0451.