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Library and Continuing Education

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Library Education: Guiding Principles

Library Continuing Education Challenges

**Emporia State University
Oregon M.L.S. Program**

Fall 1997

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*Oregon Library
Association*

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Library and Continuing Education Opportunities in Oregon

*Theory without practice is empty,
and practice without theory is blind.*

James Robbins Kidd, 1915-1982

This issue of *OLA Quarterly* is devoted to a review of library education opportunities in Oregon and the potential for further development of effective continuing education activities for those who work in or support libraries in the state.

Although numerous opportunities for library education exist in Oregon, more can be done in terms of quantity and quality as well as coordination and communication. Because of challenges created by funding limitations, staffing problems, technology, and the Internet, Oregon libraries need access to convenient, affordable, and high quality educational experiences for their staff members and those who support them. We hope that this review of what exists and what can be done will lead to a common understanding of issues and concerns and a renewal of interest in developing sufficient, appropriate and effective library education experiences.

Gary Jensen, Western Oregon University

Kim Wolfe, Jackson County Library

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I have chosen continuing education for library workers and supporters as the theme for my year as OLA president. After this theme issue of *OLA Quarterly* is published, I will work with OLA's Continuing Education Committee to develop a needs assessment survey for the membership. Based on the results of that survey, a program will be planned for the 1998 Oregon Library Association conference in Eugene. I hope the Continuing Education Committee will present a proposal during that program aimed at developing a structure for and improving the delivery of continuing education activities in the state.

Library Education: Guiding Principles

Gary Jensen, President
Oregon Library Association

That having been said, it is useful to define what we mean by library education. We have sought to develop as broad a definition as possible:

Library education encompasses formal and informal, technical and non-technical educational and

training experiences intended to help a person be more effective and successful, develop professionally, meet degree, licensure and certification requirements, update knowledge and skills, share experiences and concerns, and become acquainted with colleagues and peers. For some library staff, the focus is more on continuing education opportunities; for others, it means certification or a master's degree in library science; and for others, it means learning specific skills and improving technical abilities.

Educational opportunities span a wide variety of activities:

- participation in professional organizations
- workshops on general or specific topics
- training courses and seminars
- conferences and teleconferences
- degree and certificate programs
- listservs and discussion groups
- videotapes and films
- lectures and panel presentations

The target audience for these library education activities includes all staff who work in libraries and individuals who are associated with libraries, such as trustees, friends, and volunteers. These activities may be aimed at individuals, units, groups, or teams within libraries; entire library staffs; or staff from many libraries.

PRINCIPLES OF HIGH-QUALITY DEVELOPMENT FOR LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS


Professional development works best when it is part of a state-wide collective effort to improve and integrate the recruitment, selection, preparation, certification, induction, and ongoing development and support of library staff. Following is a list of principles that will guide development for library profes-

sionals in Oregon and ensure that we satisfy those criteria.

I have adapted and expanded this list from a 1995 publication of the U.S. Department of Education concerning the professional development of educators: *Building Bridges: The Mission & Principles of Professional Development* (ED 1.2:B 76/2). I have also referred to other resources, including communications from the libsup listserv for library support staff hosted at the University of Washington.

Professional development for library staff in Oregon must adhere to these principles.

- It has as its goal the health and success of Oregon libraries of all types.
- It focuses on individual, collegial, and organizational growth and improvement.
- It respects and nurtures the intellectual and leadership capacity of librarians, support staff and others in the library community.
- It reflects the best available research and practice in librarianship and information science.
- It promotes the basic tenets of librarianship including the principles of intellectual freedom and the right to inquire, read and view.
- It provides a rich mix of practical and theoretical learning experiences.
- It facilitates the sharing of experience and expertise.
- It promotes the development, maintenance and enhancement of professional contacts with similar organizations and people.
- It maximizes the potential and effectiveness of employees.
- It enables librarians and support staff to develop further skills and expertise in budgeting, customer service, subject content, teaching and learning strategies, collection development, uses of technologies and online resources, management of information, and other essential elements in providing high-quality library collections and services.
- It promotes continuous inquiry and improvement and life-long learning.
- It is planned collaboratively by those who will participate in and facilitate the developmental activities.
- It requires substantial time and other resources.
- It is driven by a coherent long-term plan.
- It is evaluated ultimately on the basis of its impact on the effectiveness of libraries and those who work in them (and this assessment guides subsequent professional development efforts).

If you are interested in the effort to develop and improve continuing education activities for library workers and supporters, please contact Sue Kopp, chair of the continuing education committee: Sue Kopp, Library, Pacific University, 2043 College Way, Forest Grove, Oregon 97116; telephone: (503) 359-2735; fax: (503) 359-2236; email: koppcs@pacificu.edu 

Purposes of the Oregon Library Association and its Continuing Education Committee

The OLA Procedure Manual lists the following statement of purpose:

The object of the Oregon Library Association shall be to promote and advance library service through public and professional education and cooperation.

The OLA manual lists the following duties for the nine-member Continuing Education Committee:

- To foster in-service training and continuing education internally
- To evaluate needs for continuing education workshops on a local, state, or regional level
- To correlate continuing education with the Oregon State Library, OLA, interested academic institutions in Oregon, and the Washington Library Association
- To publicize continuing education opportunities for Oregon library staff on the OLA web pages

At the annual Oregon Library Association retreat at Silver Falls Conference Center in August, the executive board approved a list of goals for 1997-98. One of the goals was to provide for library education. The following seven activities were identified as worthy objectives (those responsible for carrying out the activity are identified in the parentheses following each item). During the year, other activities will be identified.

- Preparing an information packet regarding promotion of library legislation and developing a training session to teach all OLA members how to promote library legislation (Legislative Committee)
- Supporting the current Emporia State University Oregon M.L.S. program (Gary Jensen)
- Taking advantage of speakers, consultants, authors, and teachers already in the state and creating library learning opportunities with them (Continuing Education Committee and Gary Jensen)
- Reminding librarians to encourage friends and trustees to attend the annual OLA conference (Continuing Education Committee and Trustees and Friends Division)
- Promoting the statewide distribution of educational programming using a variety of electronic methods (Continuing Education Committee and Gary Jensen)
- Offering programs to raise the knowledge and skill levels of all library staff (Continuing Education Committee)
- Supporting the Trustees and Friends Division's ED-NET series of workshops planned for several sites around the state (Trustees and Friends Division)

Other Resources for Continuing Education Information and Activities

WASHINGTON LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Because the duties of the Continuing Education Committee specifically mention coordination with the Washington Library Association, here is the purpose statement for the Washington Library Association:

The purpose of the Washington Library Association is to promote library services, continuing education and library advocacy on behalf of the people of Washington State.

In 1996-97, WLA established a Continuing Education Council and a coordinator of continuing education. For further information on WLA's programs, visit the organization's web site (www.wla.org/ce.html).

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The American Library Association's Continuing Library Education Network and Exchange Round Table (CLENERT) has the following charge:

(1) To provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and concerns among library and information personnel responsible for continuing library education, training, and staff development; (2) to provide learning activities and material to maintain the competencies of those who provide continuing library education; (3) to provide a force for initiating and supporting programs to increase the availability of quality continuing library education; (4) to create an awareness of, and sense of need for, continuing library education on the part of employees and employers.

CLENERT publishes a quarterly magazine called CLENExchange. For further information, visit the CLENERT web site (ala1.ala.org:70/00/alagophxiv/alagophxivclen/clenert.hb).

ALA chapters face a couple of challenges in providing continuing education for librarians. First, the demand is largely voluntary. Unlike teachers, librarians generally are not required to acquire continuing education units (CEUs) for recertification or promotion. Exceptions exist, such as CEUs for certification of nondegreed library staff in some states, but the bulk of the demand comes from librarians who either need or want to keep up with changes in the profession or seek renewal and reinvigoration of their career.

Chapter Report: Continuing Education Today is Practical and Sexy

by *Christine Watkins*

The second challenge comes in the form of competition. State libraries, library schools, consortia, and other groups routinely offer a range of programs either specifically aimed at librarians or adaptable to library audiences. Finding a niche or strategies that “combine and conquer” seem to be more successful than head-on competition.

Continuing education is almost synonymous with chapter membership. Typically the main component of annual conference programs, it is often the common bond of collaborative programs between ALA and chapters and between chapters and other library organizations. Questions of why do it (rationale), what to do (content), and for whom (marketing) are central to the planning of effective continuing education programs.

While there doesn't seem to be a single clearly articulated philosophy, a number of common themes and practices, as well as some innovations, mark the following programs that range from the bayou to the Bahamas, the Great Lakes to the Lone Star State, from the keyboard to the surfboard, and from Web pages to millage raises.

WHAT'S A CHAPTER TO DO ...

“Teach what isn't being taught,” says Marianne Hartzell, executive director of the Michigan Library Association (MLA). MLA's offerings over the years have ranged from weeklong intensive leadership workshops to hands-on, practical skill sessions. “Most of our programming today is very practical,” Hartzell says. “Participants can take what they've learned, go back to their libraries, and put it to use the next day.”

The “basics” as far as Hartzell is concerned include nuts-and-bolts financial management. “No one should be let out of library school without knowing where money comes from,” she states. Hartzell is something of a guru on the subject, as anyone knows who has attended the Chapter Relations Committee's Presidents-elect Workshop at ALA

Annual Conferences and Midwinter Meetings. Her rapid-fire presentation—a short course in managing a budget, a board, and avoiding typical blunders in nonprofit management—blends common sense, business sense, and a sense of humor.

Along these lines, one of the offerings available from MLA is a workshop on millage and bond issues for library staff and trustees. Participants learn how to get a measure on a ballot and work for its passage. Other workshops, which may focus on topics like technology or even summer reading programs, still contain the basic message that libraries need to support themselves in order to survive.

“As library funding becomes less automatic and more competitive, being able to see libraries as part of a much bigger picture that includes corporations, government, and other organizations will become an increasingly critical skill,” Hartzell believes.

WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

If you want to get high marks on your session evaluations, consider holding your next workshop on a cruise ship. If you really want to lock in those positive comments, add the power of subliminal suggestion by choosing a ship named Ecstasy. Check it out for yourself by signing up for “Sailing into Leadership 2000: Perfecting Personal Skills,” sponsored by the Texas Library Association (TLA) from July 11-14. The four-day cruise includes a six-hour workshop conducted by Sarah Weddington. A former aide to President Carter and the plaintiff's attorney in *Roe v. Wade* before the Supreme Court, Weddington is a nationally known leadership trainer and speaker.

“Our philosophy is to provide continuing education that's unique,” says Pat Smith, TLA executive director, a member of the ALA Executive Board, and a master of understatement. In fact, the cruise is consistent with TLA's focus on continuing education in the leadership vein and certainly seems to be similar to the TLA's emphasis on offering programs that attract an audience among the crowded field of continuing education providers in the state.

The “Tall Texans” program, a weeklong intensive mid-career workshop, is a long-standing tradition and typically attracts two to three times the number of nominees that can be accommodated. And a new program this year, the Leadership Development Institute being held in conjunction with ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom in response to an increasing number of censorship calls and questions being received by TLA, had five times the number of applicants anticipated.

Rather than trying to compete with other programs, TLA has adopted a policy of trying to coordinate offerings to everyone's benefit. The latest initiative is TLA's CE Providers Interest Group, intended to get

See Chapter Report page 12

Library Continuing Education Challenges: Beyond the Summit

by Mary Ginnane

Group Leader, Leader Development
Oregon State Library

Addressing the subject of library continuing education challenges in Oregon presents the chance to look back and summarize a recent effort to focus attention on the state of continuing education and to look forward to advancing continuing education opportunities into the new century. This article will review the Oregon Library Association's effort to concentrate on continuing education challenges begun at the "Continuing Education (C.E.) Summit" in 1994, recap the findings from the summit, update the list of challenges developed at the summit, and attempt to climb past the summit by offering recommendations for planning library continuing education in the future.

THE C.E. SUMMIT

On April 9, 1994, the Oregon Library Association convened the C.E. Summit at its annual conference in Sunriver. Participants included providers of library education programs in Oregon, library managers with staff development needs in mind, staff members seeking more continuing education opportunities, OLA committee members, the State Library, and other interested persons or organizational representatives. A motivating force for the summit was the knowledge that the continuing education grant for library personnel, funded through the Library-Services-and-Construction-Act and administered by the Division of Continuing Education at Western Oregon State College (now the Division of Extended and Summer Studies at Western Oregon University), was in its third and final year. OLA wanted to consider the possibilities for coordinated continuing education beyond that grant.

FINDINGS

Library education service providers presented evidence that more library education opportunities of different types existed in the state than typically thought. The 49 participants at the summit identified what was missing:

- a shared mission and vision for library continuing education
- a coordinated process for content input regarding future offerings from Western's Division of Continuing Education library personnel education program and into other courses and workshops from education providers (This includes a lack of

a process for addressing affordability and access issues statewide.)

- statewide calendar to publicize all C.E. opportunities

At the continuing education summit, the State Library committed to scheduling a follow-up meeting. The OLA Continuing Education Committee actively helped in planning the agenda. Invitations were sent, and the meeting publicized. February 13, 1995 dawned to wild weather that caused unsafe traveling conditions. All parties agreed to postpone the meeting. Timing and conditions never came together, and the various parties never gathered for Part 2 of the C.E. Summit.

THE CHALLENGES UPDATED

The findings from the C.E. Summit remain as current challenges, and they can be expanded from today's perspective.

Shared Mission for Library Continuing Education

Updating the list of library education providers from the C.E. Summit still leads to the conclusion that ample opportunities for library education exist in Oregon. Following is a list of library education providers, each followed by abbreviations for the type of education that each typically provides (C.E.: continuing education; D.P.: degree program; B.L.S.: basic librarianship skills):

- Library professional organization conferences and workshops like those of the OLA and the Oregon or Pacific Northwest chapters of national library organizations, such as the Medical Library Association and the Special Libraries Association (C.E.)
- Workshops offered by regional library organizations such as the Southern Oregon Library Federation or the Eastern Oregon Library Association (C.E.)
- Staff development activities planned by individual libraries (C.E.; B.L.S.)
- Western Oregon University (D.P.; C.E.)
- Portland State University (D.P.; C.E.)
- Portland Community College (D.P.; C.E.)
- Marylhurst College's Library Information Management Program (C.E.)
- Oregon State Library (C.E.; B.L.S.)
- Oregon State System of Higher Education's Online NW conference (C.E.)
- Public Library Director's retreat (C.E.)
- Community College Library Director's retreat (C.E.)
- Valley Link, PORTALS, Orbis, Chemeketa Cooperative Regional Library Service, and other consortia (C.E.)
- Emporia State University's School of Librarianship and Information Management (D.P.)
- Oregon Educational Media Association (C.E.; B.L.S.)
- Clackamas Conference (C.E.)

No single Oregon library organization, agency, or institution holds the responsibility to coordinate con-

tinuing education. Would continuing education in Oregon be more effective if all of the above educational opportunity sponsors carried out their planning with the guidance of a shared mission and vision statement? The necessary research to answer that question has not been carried out. Many library organizations are undergoing organizational change because of property tax limitations or the desire for improvements. Trends in organizational change include building team-based organizations, implementing quality initiatives, and creating continuous learning organizations. These efforts must be supported by readily available educational opportunities as the organizations strive to provide just-in-time training for staff, a key success indicator. Responding to these trends in organizational change can be suggested as a reason to continue on the path

toward coordinating library continuing education and creating a shared vision for it.

Coordinated Input Process

All how-to guides for training adult learners stress the importance of input from potential learners in developing course or workshop content. The C.E. Summit participants felt that a coordinated method of providing such input would improve the quality of presentations and workshops in the state. They also identified a need for a method of suggesting ideas to be developed into workshops by some service providers.

This mechanism must work well enough in advance so that continuing education providers have time to develop courses and advertise. At the same time, the mechanism must anticipate urgent information needs, particularly as demanded by technology, with some quick-response predeveloped workshops lined up.

The July 25, 1997, Intellectual Freedom workshop sponsored by the OLA Intellectual Freedom Committee provides a good example of workshop content development. The committee has been working on a train-the-trainers approach for intellectual freedom continuing education and public relations presentations. Potential trainers, called together by the committee, gave input at a meeting on a first draft of the training tool kit (handouts and overheads). Based on comments from librarians who would actually use the materials in the field, the committee revised the materials and presented the improved tool kit to essentially the same group of potential trainers in a workshop format on July 25. The committee invited a panel of library and legal experts on intellectual freedom to answer questions, further enhancing the educational opportunity. Finally, the panel of experts presented a second workshop in the afternoon, focusing on current topics in library intellectual freedom. The committee gave input to the panel about hot topics to cover, but serendipity also played a role in affecting workshop content. The date of the workshop (set months ago) occurred one month after the Supreme Court declared the Communications Decency Act unconstitutional and less than one month after the American Library Association passed a resolution against Internet filters in libraries. What topics could be hotter?

Access and Affordability

The circumstances that prevented the second C.E. Summit from taking place are representative of logistical challenges faced in presenting continuing education in this state: gathering people together across long distances; the effect of weather on planning and implementation; and scheduling issues—what else is happening on any given day, week, or month? Library Development staff at the State Library recently asked the last question over the LIBS-OR listserv. There were eight responses that provided a mixed bag of best- and worst-day suggestions. Three preferred not to meet on Mondays, but two indi-

From the Front Lines of Library Education

OLA Library Support Services Round Table:

"I'd say the biggest challenge for continuing education is funding and employers releasing staff from work duties for educational purposes."

Maresa Kirk, Hatfield Library, Willamette University

Eastern Oregon Information Network, Oregon Reference LINK:

"Eastern Oregon has a very low per capita rate of M.L.S. librarians, and ability levels among library staff are extremely varied. Some are quite savvy about research techniques, and some have no experience with the reference process. When that is the case, designing effective instructional programs is very difficult."

Leah Starr, Pierce Library, Eastern Oregon University

Marylhurst College, Library Information Management Program:

"Marylhurst College will begin the fall 1997 academic year with a full program of continuing education courses for librarians, staff, and trustees, several of them new course offerings. Shoen Library at Marylhurst has a newly-designed and upgraded pc computer lab ready to accommodate many electronics-oriented courses, and the College has also entered the online course offerings arena with one (so far) in the Library Information Management (LIM) Program. Courses will be announced on LIBS-OR, and individuals who would like to be on the LIM mailing list should contact Kirk Howard at 503-699-6261, ext. 3375. Non-credit costs for courses at Marylhurst are low, between \$70 and \$120."

Jan Fortier, Shoen Library, Marylhurst College

Valley Link:

"I have most recently been involved with providing continuing education for Valley Link, a multi-type group of libraries in the middle of the state. An issue which we on the Valley Link C.E. Subcommittee felt was most important was paying a stipend to librarians for the research and delivery time they put into their presentations. All of the Valley Link libraries concurred and contribute annually to the C.E. fund. Each speaker is now paid.

See Front Lines page 8

cated Mondays were better. Four indicated Fridays as preferred days, but two clearly did not prefer Fridays. One response indicated all days are difficult because of tight staff scheduling. Obviously, the final choice of a specific day for continuing education will not please everyone!

Ed-Net workshops, other distance education teleconferences, video training, and Internet online courses are more common types of continuing education in 1997. They alleviate many of the logistical challenges in library continuing education while presenting other issues. Can effective learning be provided by a "talking head?" Should discussion leaders onsite at downlink locations be a given? What is the quickest way for an institution to identify co-sponsors to host an expensive teleconference? What is a streamlined way to notify the library community that certain satellite offerings can be downlinked by any interested Ed-Net site?


Costs for library continuing education in Oregon range from free to high, with some level of cost recovery common. Some level of subsidy is usually a factor when costs are lower. For example, the State Library has used federal funds to keep workshops free or low-cost; a regional library or consortium may use operating funds to sponsor a workshop, not expecting full cost recovery from other participants. The 1997 update on costs is intertwined with the recent property tax limitation. Will libraries still be able to sponsor staff development days, co-sponsor teleconferences, and plan needed conferences? Library Information Network of Clackamas County's decision to postpone its Network Conference (see sidebar on page 8) may be an early indicator of a decline in locally planned continuing education activities. In addition, property tax limitation threatens already slim travel and training budgets and discourages library staff from attending any workshop that requires a registration fee.

COORDINATION OF A CALENDAR

Marketing library education opportunities is a continual challenge, but it is necessary to guarantee that learners will attend. Identifying the target audience, describing the workshop content fully and accurately, and getting this information into the hands of potential participants are basic components of the activity. In 1994, C.E. Summit participants felt that a coordinated calendar was critical. A noticeable gap in information then was widespread knowledge of the course offerings from the degree programs in the state (Western Oregon University, Portland State University, Portland Community College). An improvement since 1994 is that more and more libraries are connected to the Internet, and we are reaching a critical mass on the Oregon library listserv, LIBS-OR. Savvy workshop planners are posting continuing education opportunities to that listserv. Between May 20 and June 25, alone, I noted six messages about library conferences and workshops posted to LIBS-OR.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Setting forth continuing education challenges after the C.E. Summit without offering solutions calls to mind the myth of Sisyphus. Rather than making the effort of getting to the summit only to repeatedly roll backwards, I offer suggestions that may generate discussion and action for advancing library continuing education in the future:

- Reactivate efforts to call together key library education providers to create a shared vision and mission for library continuing education.
- As preparation for such a meeting, compile a list of all known library education opportunities during the coming year. Identify gaps in that curriculum. Ask education providers to fill in the gaps. This effort should be repeated annually.
- Develop a means of communicating with library education providers so that urgently-needed training can be provided quickly, especially training related to technological changes or current library issues.
- Develop a means of facilitating focus groups that provide content input to workshop presenters. The method should be widely communicated and used.
- Research distance education techniques (teleconferences and online courses via the Internet) thoroughly and report recommendations widely so that such educational opportunities are as effective as possible. Develop a means of communicating with a network of education providers and library organizations to streamline communications about sponsoring and co-sponsoring teleconferences.
- Use partnerships and subsidies if possible to keep continuing education affordable. Publicize information about scholarship opportunities widely.
- Create a virtual calendar for continuing education:
 - 1) Continuing education planners post announcements of all opportunities and activities on the LIBS-OR listserv.
 - 2) Each library designates a person to forward the messages on his or her own network, print out these announcements to route to co-workers, and post them in a C.E. notebook or on a bulletin board.
 - 3) Online and print newsletter editors copy email announcements to include in their newsletter calendars.
 - 4) Workshop planners back up email announcements with a printed brochure or program announcement as can be afforded. A different sort of interest in a workshop can be raised through well-designed hard copy. Use the listserv for quick reminder announcements as the date approaches.
 - 5) The OLA Continuing Education Committee coordinates contact with education service providers to obtain course offerings in machine-readable format to publicize on the listserv. Differing lead times for planning at each institution would have to be accommodated for this effort to be successful. 

Front Lines

(continued from page 6)

Despite the fact that the stipend is not large, the professionalism and the contribution of the presenter is recognized."

Paula Hamilton, Mount Angel Abbey Library

Library Information Network of Clackamas County:

"Clackamas County (through its cooperative Library Network) has made a commitment to providing continuing education for library staff for 15 years. The annual 'Clackamas Conference' has been an inexpensive one-day conference that has always been aimed primarily at paraprofessional staff. Attendance at the conference has varied over the years but is generally around 300 attendees.

"Unfortunately, the Clackamas Conference will not be held in FY 1997-98. Budget cuts triggered by Measure 47/50 have eliminated all administrative clerical support in the LINCC Network office and the staff person used to provide all of the administrative functions for the conference. If alternative volunteer support from area libraries can be recruited (a la the OLA Conference Committee), then the conference could return.

"The tremendous success of the LSSRT conference has both confirmed an ongoing need for a continuing education event directed at paraprofessional staff and removed some of the necessity for our conference. It remains to be seen if the energy will be there to re-create the Clackamas Conference next year. One of the program changes that has occurred in the last few years of the Clackamas Conference has been an increasing focus on technology workshops, especially Dynix-related training since the great majority of attendees use that system in their libraries. Certain topics such as dealing with difficult patrons and basic Internet-related training seem to be popular every year, so long as the approach is slightly different.

"The cost of this conference has been kept at around \$25 for a full day, which just about covers the luncheon and printing expenses, with a little left over for small speaker honorariums. The heavy labor subsidy provided by LINCC also kept the costs low. But it was the low cost that was particularly attractive to many folks who often paid for the LINCC conference out of their own pockets."

Joanna Rood, LINCC

Southern Oregon Library Federation:

"Librarians in the Southern Oregon Library Federation region (Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, Klamath, and Lake counties) find that the continuing education offerings in our region are infrequent, and our perception is that most are held in other parts of the state, particularly in the Willamette Valley and the greater Portland region. In this era of tight budgets, particularly travel budgets, it's difficult for many librarians here to take advantage of workshops in Eugene or Portland.

"The Southern Oregon Library Federation presented an Internet workshop led by U of O's Sara Brownmiller in June as part of a regional C.E. effort. It was very popular and well-received. SOLF also sponsored two scholarships for the July 18 LSSRT conference in Portland.

"We will try to offer workshops at least once or twice a year, in an effort to improve workshop access in our region. The challenge for our group will be to maintain adequate funds for these much-needed C.E. projects in our region."

Gary Sharp, North Bend Public Library

Douglas County Library System:

"One of the issues I see facing the Oregon library community is continuing education for library support staff. Much of the continuing education in this state is targeted to the degreed staff, and many libraries plan to send degreed staff to training but not always the support staff. Support staff needs vary, and I see that workshops for public services could easily incorporate support staff. Many support staff have very specific training needs such as acquisitions, which are harder to do because of the small number of potential staff who would be interested. I'd like to see workshop organizers plan workshops for the broader audience of both degreed librarians and support staff. I'd like to see a broader scope of workshops for all areas of the library instead of the workshops on public services issues."

Carol McGeehon

Central Oregon Community College:

"Winter travel for C.E. or other work issues may have to allow for two nights' lodging to allow day-time travel on winter roads—the night prior and the night after meetings. That is mighty expensive and certainly limits options with travel budgets shrinking and the cost of motels increasing."

David Bilyeu

Emporia State University Oregon M.L.S. Program

by *Kim Wolfe*
Jackson County Library

THE SLIM DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAM

The School of Library and Information Management (SLIM) Distance Education program was born out of the need for library education in states where the Master of Library Science (M.L.S.) degree was not offered by local post-secondary institutions. SLIM developed an out-of-state delivery system at the request of state library and higher education representatives in Iowa. In Fall semester of 1988, 45 students began weekend classes in Sioux City, more than 200 miles from their home campus in Emporia, Kansas. Since then, SLIM has delivered library education in seven Midwestern and Western states. More than 400 students have earned the ALA-accredited degree in the distance program since then. SLIM Programs are now offered in Nebraska, Colorado, Utah, and Oregon.

The distance education program includes a combination of face-to-face classes, Internet courses and courses that utilize a combination of instructional technologies. However, most classes are face to face with the faculty and students meeting in one location. Faculty from Kansas and adjunct faculty from all over the United States fly out to teach classes held in an intensive weekend format. Regional coordinators administer the site and logistics for both ESU and the regional site. The total degree program is 42 credits taught over eight semesters, requiring approximately three years to complete.

People are the primary focus of the SLIM curriculum. In response to our rapidly changing technological society, the curriculum focuses on how to best fulfill the information needs of individuals, local groups, and global communities. Theory classes lay a strong foundation, drawing from primary concepts of the Information Transfer Model, the psychology of information use, diffusion of information, organizing and accessing information, and managing information systems. Tools classes equip the student with the tools of the trade, including reference, cataloging, online searching, and organizing information. Application courses provide an opportunity to apply the concepts, theory, and tools to experience. Electives include courses in current issues in the profession and allow students to focus on a specific area of interest.

Designed with the non-traditional adult learner in mind, distance education classes follow an intensive weekend format, Friday from 6 to 9 p.m., Saturday

from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 8 a.m. to noon. Classes are held approximately once a month or sixteen weekends per year, depending on the semester schedule. The typical SLIM student has family and employment obligations that limit the amount of time available for a traditional college schedule. Many are already working in libraries or library-related businesses. One of the advantages of the distance program is that students are admitted only in the beginning of a program cycle rather than each semester. Going through the entire program as a cohort creates strong bonds and builds an excellent professional network.

Each regional site has an on-site coordinator dedicated to meeting the needs of the students at the distance site. The regional coordinator serves as faculty advisor to students enrolled at that site and also serves as site administrator and liaison between ESU and the state library and higher education organizations. Time is set aside during class weekends to meet with the student group or with individuals for administrative and advising needs. A listserv, web site, and Watts line are dedicated to each distance site. Since each site is unique and each cohort has a distinct personality, site arrangements vary from state to state. SLIM strives to meet the unique needs of each regional site. The ESU/SLIM Distance Education Program was honored by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) in October with the 1997 NACADA/ACT Outstanding Institutional Advising Program Award. The national award is given in recognition of innovative or exemplary practices that have resulted in the improvement of academic advising services.

THE OREGON PROGRAM

The Oregon M.L.S. Program began in Fall 1994 after representatives from the Oregon State Library, Oregon Library Association (OLA) and the Oregon State System of Higher Education (OSSHE) determined the need for an M.L.S. program in Oregon. After a review of the available distance education programs, ESU was chosen and asked to deliver the program to Oregon. The Oregon M.L.S. Planning Committee wrote a proposal for an LSCA start-up grant to subsidize student tuition, contribute toward technology costs for classes, and enable development of classes using two-way interactive video.

Oregon's program is unique for SLIM in its partnership with OSSHE schools. In this partnership, two Oregon schools, Portland State University (PSU), and Western Oregon University (WOU), offer courses to SLIM students. Three required courses were taught by PSU and WOU faculty, and Oregon SLIM students enrolled at either school to take classes. Additionally, several PSU and WOU courses are approved by SLIM for transfer credit toward the M.L.S. degree. Furthermore, ESU students may transfer an additional six semester credits from Oregon graduate schools toward their degrees. Another unique aspect of the Oregon partnership is the OSSHE Interinstitutional Library Council's policy to provide OSSHE

library cards to ESU students, enabling them to use any of the eight OSSHE libraries.

The admissions process in Oregon began in Spring 1994. Eighty-six students were admitted to the Oregon program from all over the state. Students and faculty met in September 1994 for orientation and the first M.L.S. course. Two sections of all required classes were offered. The majority of classes in Ore-

gon have been held at the PSU campus. To meet the needs of the many students living in the Willamette Valley or traveling from the south, a number of classes have been held at the University of Oregon campus in Eugene, and one class has been offered in five locations statewide through WOU via two-way interactive video.

Students have a variety of elective courses to choose from, including on-site, Internet and graduate transfer classes from Oregon graduate schools. Several electives are offered entirely over the Internet. Many students choose to take independent study courses with a faculty member in order to focus on an area of interest. A practicum option is also available. Practicums involve 120 hours (three semester credits). Students develop a proposal, meet with a site representative and SLIM representative for approval of a practicum project and submit a log and product at the end of the semester. Ten practicums have been completed in Oregon libraries. The practicum is especially successful for students without prior library experience or students seeking experience in areas other than their current expertise. The practicum is a mutually beneficial opportunity for the student and the site library. Projects have included development of library web pages, development of bibliographic instruction modules, systems analysis, evaluation, and recommendations for new or existing services.

Sixty-four students have graduated from the first cohort of the Oregon M.L.S. Program. Students were joyful as they participated in the 1997 summer commencement exercises held in Portland on July 26 with an audience of 400 friends and family. ESU President Robert E. Glennen, SLIM Dean Faye Vowell, and ESU faculty and distance coordinators; Jim Scheppeke, Deborah Jacobs, Jon Root and members of the Oregon M.L.S. Planning Committee; Oregon faculty and many OLA and OSSHE representatives joined in the celebration. Students have been successful in finding professional positions in Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Idaho, California, and Minnesota. Others are being promoted by their current employers.

And the future? Because of the program's success and the growing number of individuals on the interest list, the Oregon M.L.S. Planning Committee, OSSHE, and the Oregon Educational Policy and Planning Department approved a second Oregon Program. Sixty students attended the first Oregon II class held September 5.

It has been an opportunity and challenge to develop the Oregon M.L.S. Program and a pleasure to work with Oregon library and higher education representatives in offering this unique program to students in Oregon. The program has been a successful venture for all involved. Recent graduate, Althea Pribyl, sums it up: "Besides a shiny new diploma, I've gained a network of friends and professional contacts throughout the area and a set of cutting-edge skills, knowledge, and values ... that will serve me well whatever I do in the future." **Q**



M.L.S. Program Graduates

Anderson-Torgrimson, Paige

Barclay, Kevin

Bryk, Katinka

Cain, Bridget

Chapman, Greta

Chess, Jon

Ciscell, Joanne

Cordero, Ann

Corry, (Patricia) Jane

DeShazo, Kristina

Drengson, Julie

Dunham, Kathy

Elteto, Sharon

Feinman, Todd

Ford, Peter Conner

Frederiksen, Linda

Gibson, Daniel

Gies, Berneeta

Griffin, Andrea

Guidinger, Jayne

Hadid, Peggy

Hall, Madelyn G. P.

Hausauer, Carol

Hirsch, Bonnie

Hodge, Angela A.

Hoogesteger, Theresa

Hoven, Nancy

Huffine, Beth Anne

Jenkins, Susan

Kasimor, Kathryn

Kern, Kristen

Kunkel, Marita

Kunz, Karen

Lambert, Linda

Larsen, Thomas

Lewis, Johndy

Macomber, Jeanne

McCulley, Carol

Martin, May

Nordgren, Karen L.

North, Pamela

Ostertag-Holtkamp, Barbara J.

Parpart, Jerrie

Pashak, Laura Sani

Pribyl, Althea

Rasmussen, Frances Northup

Reed, Donna

Rhodes, Glenna

Richards, Georgia

Roberts, Shirley

Schrifer, Beverly

Sexton, John

Skogseth, Kelly

Smith, Kathy

Straube, Karen

Townes, Jean

Truman, Rob

Valentine, Friday

White, James T.

Wise, Mary Frances

Worsham, Daphne

Wykoff, Carla

Student Reflections On The Oregon M.L.S. Program

"The SLIM experience has been the opportunity of a lifetime. Library school has provided entrance into a profession which fulfills my service orientation needs. The ESU/SLIM program has also helped me realize the goal of being the first person in my family to receive a Master's degree. Between full-time work and school, it has been a tough three years filled with constant change, but if I had to do it all over again I certainly would. The program has opened my eyes to the many opportunities in the information professions, and I would definitely recommend it to others."

Friday Valentine, Blackwell North America

"We entered the Emporia State University M.L.S. Program as strangers; we are graduating as friends. For me, the best thing about this distance learning adventure was the network of friends and colleagues you amass. These individuals become your support group, study group, resources, and later, part of your invisible college."

Madelyn Hall, Southwest Washington Medical Center Library

"The M.L.S. program helped me to understand the basic philosophy of librarianship and the importance of the user perspective in the services we provide wherever we are employed. It gave me a chance to learn more about how other types of libraries function—what their issues and concerns are, what their roles are in their communities. In particular it gave me the opportunity to appreciate the way an academic library meets the needs of its core users, the students and faculty, as well as the community at large from a perspective beyond the constraints of my work as a cataloger. The best part of the distance program was the developing of the invisible college of fellow students that offer a network of resources, support, and friendship all over the state."

Kris Kern, Portland State University Library

"The greatest benefit for me of getting an ALA-accredited M.L.S. degree through Emporia State University was that all course work was done without disrupting my work schedule or family commitments. The weekend intensive format allowed me to continue working in my job at the community college library. I frequently used my library as a living laboratory for course assignments and discussions. Doing so gave me a far better understanding not only of how my library operated but how other academic libraries operate as well. Elective classes allowed me to focus my studies on areas that were of interest to me. A practicum at Washington State University at Vancouver gave me instructional experience that I was immediately able to put to use when working with students at Clark College. Although I hope to find professional

work in an academic setting, the Emporia program gave me a strong theoretical framework for library and information management that I feel I could carry successfully to non-academic environments."

Linda Frederiksen, Clark Community College

"For me some of the most valuable parts of the SLIM program were the experiences of learning with and from my classmates. Because we were unremittingly with the same people, we got to know each other very well. Working in small groups and experiencing them progress from ego-filled individual ideas to finished products was inspiring, thrilling, and sometimes scary."

Jane Corry, Multnomah County Library System

"They say ignorance is bliss, but if I had known then how much this program would take over my life for the next two and half years, I might not have applied. The SLIM program turned out to be a great, possibly life-changing experience, though. Library science is quite different from my original hazy notions, especially now since librarians are becoming a bridge between the information technologies and the users.

Our classes were held mostly at Portland State, and teachers would fly in from Kansas or elsewhere to teach us from Friday evening to Sunday noon. They're not called weekend intensives for nothing! There were also several electives taught via internet, using web pages and listservs, but the majority were traditional college courses, so everyone in the cohort got to know and work with each other at some time during the program. The cooperative aspects were probably the best things about this program. Though we were from widely scattered areas of Oregon and Washington, a bond developed among our cohort that I have never experienced in a traditional college. Their ideas, generosity and moral support made the classes less daunting and often truly exciting learning experiences.

And the results? Besides a shiny new diploma, I've gained a network of friends and professional contacts throughout the area and a set of cutting-edge skills, knowledge and values, including that of critical thinking, that will serve me well whatever I do in the future."

Althea Pribyl, Blackwell North America

"I have really benefited from my time in the ESU/SLIM program. My level of service to the public and dedication to the profession have greatly increased in intensity and quality since entering the program in September 1994. I am really looking

See Student Reflections page 12

For more info ...

For more information regarding the Emporia State University School of Library and Information Management call 800-552-4770 or consult the web page at www.emporia.edu/S/www/slim/slim.htm.

Other M.L.S. degrees offered by distance delivery:

Syracuse University

Syracuse has eleven independent study degree programs, one of which is the Master of Library Science from the School of Information Studies. The degree program combines short on-campus residencies and self-paced study completed at home. The M.L.S. is a 26 credit program stressing both theory and practice of library science. For more information call (315) 443-1713 or 1-800-442-0501, e-mail SUCEIST@UC.SYR.EDU, or visit istweb.syr.edu.

University of Arizona

The School of Library Science has developed a program for teaching courses entirely over the internet utilizing the world wide web, listservs, e-mail, and FTP. For further information call the School of Library Science at (520) 621-3565 or visit www.sir.arizona.edu.

For more information on ALA-Accredited Library Schools call ALA at 1-800-545-2433 ext. 2153 or visit www.ala.org/alaorg/oa/uslis.html.

Student Reflections

(continued from page 11)

forward to contributing to our field as a professional in all senses of the word. An extra, unexpected bonus was the bonding between the members of the Oregon cohort. The mutual respect and support we give one another has been vital to me during the program, and I hope will continue long after the graduation ceremony."

Karen Nordgren, Portland State University Library

"One of the unexpected benefits of driving the five hours from Southern Oregon to Portland for the MLS classes was spending some of that time on the road discussing theories and models and considering them in the context of our own work and personal situations. Each trip became a part of the weekend process: both as an opportunity to share our understanding of the readings and projects we'd done since the last class, and to recognize on our return trip what we'd accomplished during the weekend. It didn't keep us from counting down the number of remaining trips, or figuring how far around the globe we could've driven in those hours, but it was certainly a big part of our distance learning.

Additionally, the emphasis on presentations enabled us to become adept at speaking before the group. To me, that was a major success for everyone."

*John Sexton
Jackson County Library System*

Chapter Report


(continued from page 4)

other players to the table to support, rather than detract from, each other's efforts.

SOLD-OUT SESSIONS

Lillian Gassie, chair of the Louisiana Library Association (LLA) Continuing Education Committee, pursued a similar strategy in publishing the inaugural issue of its *CE Newsletter* this fall. The online newsletter touts LLA's own series of computer workshops, as well as providing a listing and registration information for programs offered by other organizations. The computer workshops—which covered topics such as basic operating systems, troubleshooting, and desktop publishing—were all over-subscribed in advance of the registration deadline. Based on the success of this initial offering, LLA hopes to be able to expand offerings in other parts of the state.

Like many chapter programs, these workshops were offered on a cost-recovery basis. The success story resulted from a combination of offering the right product and making sure the word got out. Members were surveyed for program preferences, and disseminating registration information via an attractive, accessible form not only resulted in full sessions, but in the beginnings of an ongoing information network. An online survey is being used to build a CE database for use statewide.

You don't have to take my word for it. See for yourself at www.ucl.usl.edu/~wxw9898/ce.html. 

Christine Watkins is a freelance writer and project consultant in Chicago. This article is reprinted by permission from American Libraries, Jan. 1997, p.11.

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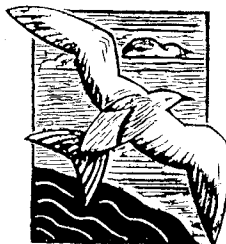
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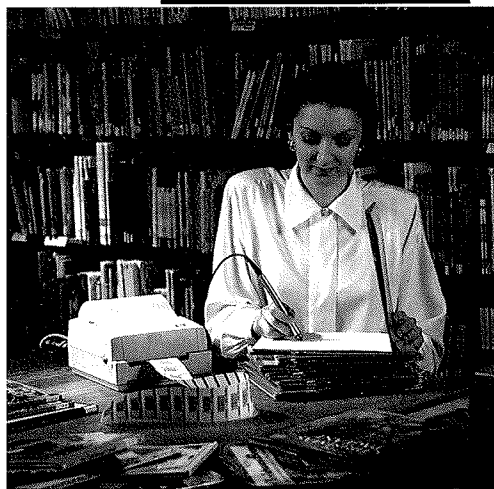
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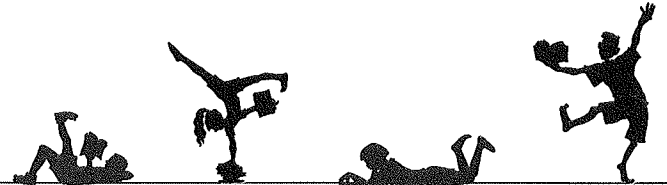
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