



Library Link

Van Wagenen Library, State University of New York at Cobleskill

It's Migration Time!

We've been talking about it for five years, preparing for it for three years, and now the time is finally here—the Library will be migrating to a new automated system this year! As you may recall from the Spring 2004 newsletter, we are moving from MultiLIS (which we've been using since 1990) to the Aleph 500 library management system.

This is an exciting move but getting there will impose some hardships on the Library and our users. The migration process will eat up considerable amounts of staff time for about seven months. We are taking steps to minimize any impact on our services but some problems may occur. To give yourself the best chance of getting what you want when you want it—plan ahead.

We feel that, in the end, the benefits of the new Aleph 500 system will make the difficulties of changing over worthwhile. Once the new system is up and running, patrons will have the ability to check their own borrowing records, renew materials, place holds on items currently checked-out and, eventually, borrow directly from any other SUNY library—all online!

From the Library's side of things, Aleph offers a more efficient Windows interface and fully integrates core library

functions such as circulation, serials, acquisitions, authority control, interlibrary loan, and cataloging into a single package. Some of the features we're particularly excited about are being able to include "on order" materials in the catalog, send overdue notices via email, and customize public interfaces.

To see some of the different ways the Aleph system can look and function, take a look at the catalogs of some of the libraries that have already migrated. Some examples: Albany (<http://p8992-libms1.albany.edu.libproxy.albany.edu/F/>); Binghamton (<http://catalog.binghamton.edu:4505/F/>); and Morrisville (<http://oswlib.library.oswego.edu:4600/F/>). Three libraries—three different looks. The screen layouts, which fields are searched, which fields are indexed (and how), even the way results are displayed can be changed to suit the individual library and its community.

We're looking forward to Aleph 500 and the capability to better serve our users' needs. At the same time, we do expect a bit of stress during the process so please be patient with us. And if you see us having an especially tough day—remember that chocolate will make almost anything better!

Instruction Program

Library instruction, research instruction, bibliographic instruction... what name do you know it by? We are starting our 6th year of collaborative instruction on this campus. The

old methods, like having the librarian drop-in or herding students through the building, just don't work. Cobleskill caught on to that notion before many others in academia. What we do here is now recognized as best practice. Recent guidelines from Middle States point out the effectiveness of blending information literacy into regular coursework. Regardless of the term you use, what it boils down to is that information literacy is a curriculum issue, not a library issue.

Our integrated approach means that we teach to the most relevant needs of instructors and students. Instruction Librarian Fran Apollo meets with classroom faculty to determine what their students need. Together, Fran and the primary instructor may teach a broad overview. They may present instruction on a very specific database or a portion thereof. They might also incorporate a template assignment or even create a new one to meet the instructor's need.

Further collaboration among the faculty takes place when each library liaison presents material to their respective divisions in meetings. Classroom faculty may make an appointment with Fran or their division liaison (see pg. 2 for current liaison assignments) to learn about new databases,

get some assistance with research, or work out the kinks in a new project.

The *Faculty Handbook for Integrating Information Literacy & Library Skills* has been created for three areas. The Early Childhood Division, the campus leaders in this collaboration, was the first on board and now has a revised edition. They recognized the need to embed this instruction in their coursework. These instructors can tell you from long experience that students don't absorb information presented to them until it is immediately relevant to them. The Culinary Arts program began using their handbook last August and this semester will be the first for the Agriculture and Natural Resources Division.

Additional tools are provided on the faculty section of the Library's website (www.cobleskill.edu/library) to assist instructors in their information literacy efforts. From the home page, go to Resource Guides/for faculty to access these and many other resources. Faculty may contact Fran Apollo to make a request for team-teaching. They may refer individual students to Fran for specialized assistance as well. Also, the Library produces many handouts to help students with the research process. Handouts are available on the website and at the Library.

We're on the right track. Let's keep going!

Library Hours for Fall 2004	
Monday-Thursday	8:00 am-10:00 pm
Friday	8:00 am-5:00 pm
Saturday	11:00 am-3:00 pm
Sunday	2:00 pm-10:00 pm

Ahead of the curve—integrated instruction is best practice!

Staff News

The Library is pleased to welcome two new staff members this fall. Peter Barvoets has come aboard as Serials and Automation Librarian. Peter worked as a librarian for Schenectady County Community College and The College of St. Rose prior to coming to Cobleskill. Peter will be playing a central role in our system migration this coming year. Alissa Jones will be joining us as an Adjunct Reference Librarian. Alissa has extensive public library experience and is looking forward to being in an academic setting. Welcome, Peter and Alissa! Another addition to the Library staff is on the way; we are in the process of hiring a new librarian for Circulation and Interlibrary Loan as well. This new person will hopefully be starting mid-semester.

In addition to receiving the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Librarianship in May, Francine Apollo has accepted an

invitation to serve on the editorial board of *Public Services Quarterly* (published by Haworth Press). The initial appointment is for a three-year term starting with this fall semester. Congratulations, Fran!

April Davies, along with Dayton Maxwell from the Ag Business department, recently completed the latest edition of the Information Literacy Handbook. Faculty in the Agriculture and Natural Resources division will now have a strong, customized resource to help them bring information literacy skills into their curriculum.

In August, Nancy Van Deusen and April Davies finished an 8-month long series of workshops on Continuous Assessment and Continuous Improvement for libraries. One of the early results that you may notice is the introduction of comment cards to elicit feedback from users. A display area for responses has been added as well.

Decisions Are Made By Those Who Show Up

In this political season we can't, and won't, tell you how to vote but we want to encourage you to participate in the electoral process. Part of being a member of this democracy is exercising our right and responsibility to vote.

Need to make up your mind about candidates or issues? Try the following websites:

League of Women Voters	www.lwv.org
Project Vote Smart	www.vote-smart.org
Annenberg Political Fact Check	factcheck.org
Official Bush Re-Election Site	www.georgewbush.com
John Kerry for President Site	www.johnkerry.com
DemocracyNet	www.dnet.org

Not yet registered to vote? Visit *Voting in NY State* at www.elections.state.ny.us/voting/voting.htm. Or, just stop by the Library, we have plenty of paper forms on hand. Not a resident of New York? DemocracyNet (noted above) has a separate secure online registration site for the whole country available at register.votenet.com/dnet. Be a part of the process—register, read up, and vote!

Gale Virtual Reference Collection

Among the many valuable online tools that the Library has made available, Gale's Virtual Reference Collection stands out. This resource provides access to dozens of quality reference books in a highly-searchable format. 24/7, from campus or home, they're just a few clicks away. Simply go to the Library's website (www.cobleskill.edu/library) and choose Research a Subject/find books/Virtual Reference and you are there.

You see, I don't believe that libraries should be drab places where people sit in silence, and that's been the main reason for our policy of employing wild animals as librarians.

—Monty Python skit

Recommended Reading

Salt: a world history
by Mark Kurlansky

The measure of her powers: an M.F.K. Fisher reader
ed. by Dominique Gioia

The raw and the cooked: adventures of a roving gourmand by Jim Harrison

The law of similars: a novel
by Chris Bohjalian

Calle 10: a novel
by Danny Romero

Crash: nostalgia for the absence of cyberspace
ed. by Robert Reynolds & Thomas Zimmer

The happy isles of Oceania: paddling the Pacific
by Paul Theroux

Faculty Loans

Starting this semester, the Library is implementing two important changes with regard to faculty loans.

First, the loan period for books will now be 30 days. If the due date is coming up and you know you'll need to hang on to the item for awhile—renewal is only a phone call away. Simply call the Circulation desk (5841) before the due date and we will be happy to renew the loan. The reason for this change? Many faculty members complained that the previous, 90 day, loan period was too long.

The second big change is financial. Any items (books, videos, etc.) that are not returned in a reasonable amount of time will be declared lost and faculty members will be billed for replacement costs. If the bill doesn't get paid, and the item still doesn't come back, the money will eventually be deducted directly from the person's paycheck. The reason for this change? Too many faculty members are keeping expensive materials for years at a time, thus preventing students and others from using them. Our finances are stretched too thin to let this continue without some sort of response.

Library Liaisons

Each academic division is assigned a librarian to serve as liaison between the Library and the division. Liaisons work to keep communication flowing while helping to track down resources, design assignments, and generally assist with anything library-related.

The current liaison assignments are as follows: Nancy Van Deusen—Early Childhood; Fran Apollo—Liberal Arts and Sciences; April Davies—Agriculture and Natural Resources; and Peter Barvoets—Culinary Arts, Hospitality and Tourism. Business and Computer Technologies has not been left out; we are in the process of hiring a new person who will be assigned to this division.