

LSU Libraries
Annual Report
2008/2009

Overview

University research libraries across the country are increasingly considering closing satellite libraries (or have already done so) as more information resources are available electronically. This has also enabled libraries to work within strained budgets. In an era of more and more ability to disseminate information electronically, reducing independent service locations while consolidating collections is also a logical step for university libraries to take. Earlier this decade, LSU Libraries completed the closure of branch libraries, moving collections into Middleton and Hill Memorial Libraries. Middleton contains the general collections with some Special Collections items stored in compact shelving in the basement. Less used items from the general collections are also housed in the compact storage area. Hill Memorial Library contains Special Collections; the building was the original library on the current campus. Two other library collections are historically administered separately from LSU Libraries: the Cartographic Information Center (CIC) and the School of Veterinary Medicine Library. The CIC librarian is part of the Geography and Anthropology Department but holds his faculty rank with LSU Libraries and participates in library faculty matters. The librarian who heads the Veterinary Medicine Library has a positive and close working relationship with LSU Libraries.

Middleton Library opened in 1958 and was dedicated in 1959. It was a model academic library in its day and was often visited by individuals from other campuses who were contemplating constructing new libraries. During FY 2009 we commemorated the 50th anniversary of the dedication with a brief celebration and tours to showcase how the library had changed in 50 years. Some retired staff attended. In the 1980s, the original basement and two floors were expanded with two additional floors. The facility itself has proven to be very flexible as service and staffing patterns have changed over the decades. Service points and collections arrangements have evolved from the 1950s traditional divisional plan of Humanities, Documents, Sciences, and Social Sciences reference and collections floors to today's central reference service point housed on the first floor. Additional reference/service desks are in Documents, Education Resources, and Music Resources. However, the primary reference point serving most of the collections is the one in central reference. An information commons is part of the main reference area with three help desks as well as the library reference desk staffed to provide library assistance. A café was added to the first floor two years ago and as FY 2010 began, a faculty technology support center under ITS was being completed adjacent to the café. The faculty technology support center under ITS provides assistance to faculty in using Moodle and other software and technology such as visualization.

The library staff always looks for ways to improve services, provide new services, and explore new technologies or delivery systems. Following is a summary of selected activities during FY 2009. This is not an inclusive list but illustrates the variety of activities underway within LSU Libraries.

Services

The library staff continues to provide many expected traditional academic library services but also explores new ways to deliver services and incorporates those that are successful into the services provided.

- As mentioned in previous annual reports the LIS 1001 [“Library Research Methods and Research”] one-hour credit course remains popular. This course emphasizes learning to use a research library and the many electronic and print resources available. Many on demand instructional sessions are also provided. A project was undertaken to poll over 2,000 students who have completed the course and are still enrolled at LSU. The purpose of this poll is to measure the lasting impact of the course as students continue in other course work.
- During FY 2008 Reference/Instruction began work on developing an ongoing instructional relationship with the Honors College. This effort continued in FY 2009; discussions were also undertaken with the School of Library and Information Science concerning expanding user instruction offered for credit.
- Library faculty supervised field experiences, independent students, and service projects undertaken by SLIS students. These opportunities provide practical hands-on experiences where the students can apply what they have learned in the classroom as well as enhancing their knowledge through work with practitioners.
- Many of our undergraduates come from small high schools or transfer from smaller colleges/universities. It is essential to reach out to them and familiarize them with the services and collections of a research library. Many of our graduate students also come from different undergraduate environments and need to learn quickly how to use a large research library. Outreach efforts in FY 2009 included participation in Freshman Information Fairs, the Tech Fair, Tiger Day, Graduate Student Orientation, International Student Orientation, LA-STEM Research Scholars Program, the Livestock Show, the Study Abroad Fair, and the Summer Opportunity Program. Presentations were also made to the Freshman Orientation Leaders, the International Cultural Center, the McNair Students, Residential Life, and the Writing Effectively and Study Skills program.
- In FY 2009 we saw an increase in the number of high school and middle school students and instructors who wanted tours of LSU Libraries.
- In order to keep patrons aware of the LSU Libraries, we also advertised in *Legacy*, the *Reveille*, in the football game day program, and on KLSU Radio. The presence of ASIX TV in various campus locations, including two locations in Middleton was capitalized upon by advertising special events within LSU Libraries.
- Updates about LSU Libraries are included in the campus monthly emails to parents.
- Other means to make the library presence known have also been utilized: a Facebook page was created for LSU Libraries; a Twitter account was created; there is a library blog; and podcasts are being used. The library website home page features exhibitions, provides reminders to patrons, and lists changes in hours.
- The Music Librarian began to teach a three-hour credit course on music library resources for music master’s level students during FY 2008. During FY 2009 this continued as a successful venture. This is an example of extending the knowledge of library resources within a specific discipline.
- Special Collections served over 6,000 patrons of which 31% were faculty and 18% out-of-state visitors. This underscores the successful outreach efforts of the Special Collections staff as well as the importance of the holdings in the various collections housed in Hill Memorial Library.
- Hundreds of visitors came to Hill Memorial Library specifically to see the exhibitions. Major exhibitions were: Audubon at Oakley: Louisiana Selections from *Birds of*

America; Pathways of Promise; Mariners, Meridians, and Monsters; and 100 years of Standard Oil. The latter exhibition was particularly important to the community since it commemorated Standard Oil [now Exxon] and its role in Baton Rouge. The Audubon exhibition provided an opportunity to highlight the Audubon collection and linking that collection to the fact that John James Audubon did many of his drawings in the St. Francisville area. A recent book published by LSU Press, *A Summer of Birds*, was partially researched by the author using LSU's Special Collections.

- The Louis Braille Bicentennial Traveling Exhibit produced by the National Braille Press was on display in the lobby of Middleton. It generated local and statewide interest. Complementary exhibits/displays relating to library services for patrons with disabilities were mounted in Education Resources, Government Documents, Music Resources, the Printmaking Gallery, Reference, and Special Collections making hosting the Braille Traveling Exhibit a collaborative effort.
- The *Civil War Book Review* online periodical website, received as many as 200,000 visits some months. This is not simply a record of "hits" but rather is a patron actually visiting and reading content on the website. This review is produced under the auspices of LSU Libraries' U.S. Civil War Center. The center has been under the oversight of LSU Libraries for about a decade. Revenue from the center's small endowment funds the production of the online periodical and supports a graduate assistantship.
- The LSU Libraries web site had a peak number of hits in January 2009 of over five million, indicating that patrons are finding the library's online presence.
- The LSU Libraries' interlibrary loan services have the fastest turnaround time in the southeast. This does not mean all requests can be filled but it indicates that for those requests that can be successfully filled, the staff is quick to provide patrons with the services requested. LSU Libraries borrowed and loaned over 15,000 items each. These statistics indicate that we cannot meet all our patrons' needs from our collections and that we have materials in our collections that are needed by other libraries.
- In order to strengthen working relationships with the units of ITS who are housed or work in Middleton, ITS employees took tours of Middleton Library and library staff took tours of the ITS operations. When we have special library promotional events in Middleton, we also alert ITS in case they want to also publicize their services.
- The LSU Writing Center has been offering tutoring assistance in Middleton Library four nights a week for several years. In FY 2010 a tutoring center opens in Middleton for additional subject tutoring.
- The program through which patrons can checkout laptops, digital cameras, video recorders, clickers, and tripods continued to be extremely popular in FY 2009. This program is supported by the Student Technology Fee. There were over 8,000 laptop checkouts in FY 2009, indicating that while many students have their own laptops, many students either do not own computers or prefer to checkout a laptop on campus rather than carrying their own. In FY 2010 ITS has been notified of which devices no longer work so the decision can be made whether to replace them or not.
- The FY 2009 Student Government President requested longer hours in FY 2009, stating that the students wanted such longer hours and would use the library to study. During the month of October 2008 the first floor of Middleton remained open until 2 a.m. During the October 2008 time period, usage ranged from a half hour average of 18 to the highest of 63 during one half hour during midterm week in October 2008. The seating capacity

of the first floor is around 400. During the December 2008 dead week period, the library first floor was open until 2 a.m. The use ranged from average of 28 to 50. During the spring semester for FY 2009, the SG President asked that the first floor again be kept open until 2 a.m. The half hour average ranged from 4 to a high of 76 during the week before Spring Break. During exam week when we were open 24/7 on the first floor, the average half hour high was 116.

- The effort to include records for electronic products into the online catalog for ease of access continues. A to Z resource links are also maintained for ease of access.
- Again in FY 2009, LSU Libraries had a successful presence at the Louisiana Book Festival. People stopping by the booth were encouraged to register for drawings for “prizes”. The drawings for a framed photograph from the collections and a LSU tiger were conducted after the book festival. Being a participant at the book festival helps introduce non-university people to the vast offerings of LSU Libraries, promotes the importance to the state of a research library, and presents a positive presence on behalf of the university. Many Louisiana citizens do not realize they can come to LSU Libraries and use the collections on site and benefit from what the libraries collect. Being present at the book festival (which attracts thousands of attendees) is an exceptionally low cost way to publicize LSU and the LSU Libraries.
- The second floor print gallery in Middleton continues to be the setting for the printmaking students in the School of Art to display their work. Elsewhere in Middleton other student and faculty art are also on display. This is handled entirely by the School of Art but utilizes the “gallery” space designed into Middleton Library when it was built in the 1950s.
- During FY 2009 a service was set up whereby an authorized student can check out items for professors. This facilitates faculty use of the collections.

Collections

- Library faculty and staff continue to promote the library collections as a blend of various formats: print, microform, and electronic.
- A two-year project to convert the manuscript catalog was completed, thus making online records for collections previously only listed in our local catalog widely available.
- We were able to add several new electronic resource purchases, electronic journal backfiles, new database or journal package subscriptions, and a number of new single title journal subscriptions. A number of other additional special purchases were made for the general collections. These additions were possible to some extent by cancelling existing subscriptions. Use data is reviewed in making cancellation decisions.
- In preparation for budgetary lean times, a serials review was undertaken so data will be available as additional reductions are necessary.
- The ongoing goal is to review 20% of the collection each year to determine what can be weeded. There was also a focused weeding and consolidation of the reference collection in order to remove some stacks to make room for the tutoring center and to relocate or weed reference materials that have been replaced by online resources.
- Disciplines routinely seek library assistance when they are undergoing program reviews or are facing accreditation visits. Thanks to technology and the knowledge of the subject specialist library faculty, library faculty and staff can compile the needed information fairly quickly.

- A cache of Huey Long's *Every Man a King* became available thanks to the granddaughter of Governor/Senator Long. LSU Libraries will be working with the other Louisiana academic libraries during FY 2010 to distribute copies of this first edition of Long's book to as many libraries as want a copy. The State Library will also be distributing copies to public library collections.
- Since LSU is a regional Federal depository, the LSU Government Documents librarian works with the selective depositories and their collections in the LSU selective group. The depository system is undergoing a lot of scrutiny and changes may eventually be instituted, specifically aimed at the duplicative nature of depositories during a time when libraries are facing space, facility, and budgetary problems. Depositories are also exploring ways to have collaborative collections within the existing rules governing depositories. The number of regional depositories is declining; some regionals are changing their status to selective depository as resources and space shrink and more government materials become available electronically.
- More books in the Young People's and the children's collections have been shifted to the historical collection. This is an ongoing project and is intended to bring together important historical non-adult materials as a research collection and to protect them for future users.
- The kit/realia collection was inventoried and the online records updated.
- Gift books not needed in Education Resources were offered to Baton Rouge Community College and Southern University.
- Special Collections continues to digitize materials in the collection with more than 73,000 items being digitized in FY 2009. Digitization provides convenient access while also protecting the often fragile originals. Among the items digitized were LSU university archive photos.
- Additions to Special Collections included papers from Huey Long's law partner; and the papers of Carl Brasseaux of the Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Piccadilly, Inc. also made arrangements for their records to be deposited with LSU Libraries Special Collections.
- The T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History continues to interview individuals who have in depth knowledge of Louisiana and LSU. These interviews are transcribed and the tapes and the transcriptions become a part of the collections.
- The Sheet Music Database has been overhauled, increasing availability to those resources.
- The Cartographic Information Center received a large donation of 25,000 daily weather maps. During hurricane season, the CIC is often called upon for cartographic assistance.

Access/Technology

- Better directional signage continues to be needed in Middleton and that project is well underway and implemented in phases.
- Security cameras in both library facilities help provide a safer environment and the cameras can be monitored on and off campus. More need to be added as funds are available.
- Public computers in Music Resources were replaced.

- For many years, the first floor of Middleton has been open 24/7 during exam week. This provides a secure place for students to study individually or in groups. In FY 2010 we will add parts of the second floor to this 24/7 exam period.
- NACO [Name Authority Cooperative Program] headings project is surpassing requirements for contributions and is another way to provide better access while participating in a national project.
- Instant messaging service and other electronic communications provide alternative ways to have access to reference assistance. Virtual Reference methods and appropriate scheduling of the service continue to be explored.
- A project is underway [see grants section for more details] to digitize Louisiana newspapers.
- The self check out machine has proven popular. Patrons checked out more than 11,000 items and renewed them more than 5,000 times.

Development

- The national campaign cabinet members were changed during FY 2008; the new campaign members have taken an interest in library events, including making a six-figure donation to LSU Libraries for the creation of an unrestricted endowment.
- “Library Partners” newsletter was revived in FY 2008. This newsletter goes to donors and includes a donation envelope which has led to recipients sending donations to the LSU Libraries.
- Another new donor service is a monthly email update to donors to help them remain in touch with and informed about LSU Libraries.
- A corporate donation of servers valued at \$27,000 was greatly appreciated.

Infrastructure/Support/Facilities

The LSU Libraries could not function without an infrastructure to support the day-to-day operation. Facilities are an important part of this infrastructure; the business operation is also critical.

- The only renovation project during FY 2009 was planning to create a tutorial center in a corner of reference. This center will be run by the Center for Academic Success.
- The patron counter system and the voice activation alarm system are important means by which we can monitor facilities, and track patron count as we experiment with variations in hours.
- The age and condition of Middleton and Hill Memorial continue to be challenges.
- More paperless accounting and personnel functions are either in place, partially in place, or on the horizon.

Personnel/Staff

Having talented multi-tasking staff is essential in enabling the LSU Libraries to meet patron needs.

- An online staff newsletter is issued as news accumulates. The revival of this newsletter in FY 2008 helps individuals be aware of various activities within LSU Libraries.
- The university ombudsperson working with the Personnel Coordinator held a conflict management workshop.
- Thirteen new faculty and staff joined LSU Libraries during FY 2009.
- The mentoring committee and the mentoring program have been in place for more than ten years. The program began with tenured mentors being paired with tenure track library faculty to provide guidance as the tenure track faculty worked toward reappointment and promotion/tenure. In more recent years, the mentoring committee has added a component of partnering current library faculty with newly appointed library faculty with the library faculty serving as peer mentors to the newly hired faculty. This is an effort to assist the new faculty in learning his/her way around campus, the area, and learning the library organization. These two mentoring programs have proven beneficial and other areas within the university have looked to these programs for guidance.
- During FY 2009 faculty were busy conducting research, writing articles and books, and making presentations.

Grants

LSU Libraries regularly writes grant proposals and successfully receives and completes grants. The FY 2009 grants ranged in size and have a variety of subjects:

- The Metropolitan Center for Far Eastern Art Studies, \$4990. This grant funded the purchase of Asian Art History books. Sigrid Kelsey and Michelle Wang (LSU Art) were the primary investigators.
- National Endowment for the Humanities, \$351,380. This project is to digitize 100,000 pages of Louisiana newspapers published from 1860 through 1922. This is a two-year grant available through the Library of Congress's "Chronicling America" website.
- 100 Books for Understanding Contemporary Japan Project, 45 donated books. This presented an opportunity to add non-Western materials to the collection. These books were provided by the Nippon Foundation. Michelle Wang also assisted with this addition to the collection.
- Coypu Foundation, \$31,500. This award will support a major exhibition of ornithological books from the E.A. McIlhenny Natural History Collection as well as the publication of a catalog. This exhibition will be mounted in spring 2011.
- Coypu Foundation, \$99,000. This funded conservation treatment of the "Elephant Folio" edition of John James Audubon's *Birds of America*. This edition was acquired in the 1960s and funded by a donation. Over the years this popular addition to the collections had deteriorated. The conservation of this edition will make it possible to once again share it publicly with patrons.

The Coypu Foundation was created and funded by the late John McIlhenny, a member of the family that produces Tabasco hot sauce. During his lifetime, Mr. McIlhenny funded a number of

purchases for the LSU Libraries; a reading room in Hill Memorial Library was named for the family; and proceeds from his estate sale funds a library endowment. The Coypu Foundation has been generous in supporting library projects.

LSU Libraries takes its mission of supporting the curriculum and research of the LSU community very seriously. It is also conscious of the evolving nature of libraries with more emphasis on electronic delivery of information and instructional needs. Primary challenges of the LSU Libraries are: (1) funding; and (2) space/facilities.