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UNO Library Science Education

University of Nebraska at Omaha

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UNO Library Science Programs receive 2007 UNO Chancellor's Strategic Plan Award for Student Focus

The UNO Library Science Education programs have been awarded the prestigious 2007 Chancellor's Strategic Planning Award for Student Focus. Dr. Pasco received the award on behalf of all faculty and students on Thursday, November 15th. Dr. Pasco notes that, "This award is due in large part to the Nebraska library community's steady and enthusiastic support".

Congratulations Dr. Pasco, UNO Library Science faculty, and all students!

ANNOUNCING THE NEMO STUDENT BLOG!!

nemolibrarystudent.blogspot.com

All right, here's the deal: this blog is YOUR spot to get some stuff off your chest. This blog has been created so that all NEMO students have a place to post their announcements, questions, experiences, frustrations, joys and whatever else tickles your fancy! Check out nemolibrarystudent.blogspot.com and post a hello to your fellow classmates. Your friendly Grad Assistant will be monitoring the blog and updating the discussion topics weekly-ish. But don’t feel limited to my chitty-chat. Feel free to post anything that’s on your mind.

This is just one more avenue to help us get to know each other and keep in touch. See you on the blog!

SPRING 2008 COMPS!!

This spring’s comps will take place April 7-15.

If you are planning on graduating in May and you need to take comps, you must contact Amy Adam at SISLT as soon as possible to make sure that you have completed all the necessary paperwork.

Amy Adam: 573-884-1391
adamae@missour.edu

Note: Participating in the review session is very helpful for many students who are taking comps. The review session, on February 8, 2008, 3:00 p.m., is going to be broadcast over LISRadio. Tune in at home at http://lisradio.missouri.edu/ OR attend the review session in room 204 in the UNO library. If you are planning to attend the review in the library, please RSVP to Erica Rose by February 3, 2008.
In your capacity as a professional librarian, what aspects of your job bring you the most joy?

As a branch manager, my main goal is to make sure everything runs smoothly for the customers and staff. This means making sure that staff members have the resources they need to plan and prepare programs; do the collection work; make sure the building is safe and functional; and manage the myriad piles of materials that flow in and out of the branch on a daily basis. The manager’s job is often making sure that money, time, and people are readily available for daily needs as well as special events. A good day occurs when everyone leaves tired but not too stressed.

The ultimate high is getting the right materials into a customer’s hands. This can range from helping someone set up a Yahoo! e-mail account so she can make an online bill payment to finding basic math materials for a customer who needs to “bone up” for an employment test and interview to introducing a young person to Agatha Christie mysteries. The Benson Branch serves a very diverse population which keeps the mind active – at the very least, it makes you aware of the infinite variety of our customers’ needs and wants.

Seeing all the new books, music, dvds, and magazines is a joyful job bonus. My once mountainous “to be read” pile has grown even taller since I’ve been at Benson Branch. I’ve even resorted to creating lists of “must reads” when I reach that mythical place called retirement. By that time, I’ll probably have to resort to Interlibrary Loan to get my hands on them!

Please discuss one personal characteristic that you feel has contributed to your success as an Information Professional.

Flexibility is the word that most readily comes to mind. As my father was fond of telling his seven children (over and over and over), “you need to learn to roll with the punches.” For me, this means being able to change direction quickly when needed; deal with any situation in a calm and rational manner; and not lament losses in a loud voice publicly. Flexibility is also a great asset for reference service – it gives you the mental agility to find the toilet training books the customer really wants when he or she asks for books on child psychology.

Years ago when I was moving from a cataloging position to a public service position, I was very nervous about the transition. My supervisor allayed my new job jitters with these words – “You’re friendly and flexible – you’ll be just fine.” I’ve remembered that exact statement for nearly 25 years – it’s great advice for any librarian.

What one issue should future librarians be prepared to address in the workplace?

The most important issue is the constant need for learning. This is nothing new – Michelangelo is famous for his “I am still learning” quotation. This Renaissance master is said to have favored and often repeated this phrase to those who crossed his path.

When I was in library school twenty years ago, the latest technology was doing OCLC cataloging on dumb terminals, debating the merits of fiche vs. tape catalogs, and edging into the personal computer world with 5 ½ inch floppy disks, tractor-feed printers, and programs such as WordPerfect, SuperCalc IV, and Dbase. These tools filled entire rooms but we considered them marvels. Now the technology is going digital and shrinking rapidly. This week’s issue of Newsweek features Jeff Bezo holding the Kindle, the I-phone is being promoted as the only digital tool you need to carry, and librarians are debating the merits of open source vs. proprietary software for library automation systems.

Constant learning is needed to keep up with the ever-increasing speed of change in our lives. It’s tempting to believe that once your formal education is finished, that you’re set forever. However, libraries don’t exist in a void – they need to offer the materials and services that their communities want and value. Our customers have lots of virtual and real options for their precious time. It’s up to us to make libraries vital and relevant for that time.

When I’m in the midst of “yet another change” doldrums, I find it helpful to remember that we’re not the only institution undergoing massive change. We no longer shop, bank, learn, or play like we did 15 or 25 years ago. Museums and other arts organizations are also struggling to make their institutions relevant to today’s user.

I always think retail is a good place to watch for trends – stores that don’t figure out what customers want and how they want it delivered don’t stay in business very long. Since retail is so visible, it also sets people’s expectations for hours, collections, and ease of use. Constant learning is a tool that librarians need for viability in today’s workplace.

In our coursework we often discuss the importance of collaboration. Can you share an instance of successful collaboration with a group?

In 1996, Linda Trout (Community Services Manager) and I worked with the Junior League of Omaha on a project called “Read With Me”. Linda brought her PR expertise and I became the liaison/translator as I was a member of both organizations. This project sent readers to daycares and shelters in low-income areas. Each month (September through May), the reader would do a program that consisted of stories and crafts based on a theme (frogs, spring, numbers, etc.). At the end of the session, each child would receive a book to take home.

The Omaha Public Library provided story time training; decided on the monthly themes; purchased and packaged the craft supplies; and selected appropriate books for the monthly theme. The Junior League of Omaha provided the volunteers for each location and raised the money for the supplies. Both organizations worked together on identifying the daycares and shelters.

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The Junior League of Omaha normally does a project for only 3 years. However, this one was so successful (and satisfying), that the group signed on for another 3 years. In June 2003, the Omaha Public Library absorbed this project into its Volunteer Office as an ongoing program.

Ten years later, “Read With Me” is still go-
Advice from the Frontlines Continued...

strong. Three of the original volunteers are still reading at daycares. Additional daycares are added when willing volunteers are trained. Two volunteers pick up their monthly supplies and books at Benson Branch – an original Junior League of Omaha volunteer and a retired Omaha Public Library staff member. We never dreamed this project would have such a “long tail”. You just never know when something will take on a life of its own.

On a lighter note: When the work day is over, what do you read?
I’d classify myself as an eclectic reader – science fiction and fantasy are the only genres I’ve never been able to get into. The two book clubs I belong to insure that I read titles I wouldn’t normally choose. I’ve just finished The Wal-Mart Effect by Charles Fishman (plus The World is Flat by Thomas Friedman) which give both fascinating and terrifying looks at the effects of globalization. I’ve just started The End of the World by Ken Follett which is the sequel to The Pillars of the Earth (currently the Oprah book). I’m also listening to The Drums of Autumn (the fourth title in the Jamie and Claire Frazier time travel opus) by Diana Gabaldon in my car. Finally, I’m working my way through Janet Evanovich’s Stephanie Plum series and Earlene Fowler’s Benni Harper series (both are mysteries). Unlike like many of our customers, I can’t read my way through an entire series without a break.

Thank you for your encouraging words, Theresa. We all hope to someday serve in this profession with your same vitality, compassion, and innovative drive!

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Rebecca Wymer-Systems Librarian, Bellevue University

What is your education/library/professional background?
I have a B.A.E. in Elementary Education from Wayne State College, a B.S. in Biblical Studies from Nebraska Christian College, and a MALS from University of Missouri Columbia. I’ve worked in four libraries: Emmanuel School of Religion (Johnson City, TN), College of St. Mary (as a temp), UNO in Reference (for 14 years), and am currently the Systems Librarian at Bellevue University.

What is on your reading list? What are your favorites/your recommended/your want to read lists?
My husband just purchased the last of the Mitford series by Jan Karon for me. I immediately immersed myself in the rich prose for about an hour and the next time I have hour, I’ll read more. I’m enjoying a Bible study I’m in by Beth Moore: The Patriarchs. I enjoy the reading about the beginnings of Islam, Judaism, and the foreshadowing of Christianity. I love murder mysteries because I’m so gullible that the ending always surprises me. Two series that I have enjoyed in the past include the Rabbi series by Harry Kemelman and the Jim Qwilleran mystery series by Lilian Jackson Braun.

What professional journal or article have you read and would recommend? Why?
I have three journals that I like to read: Computers in Libraries, PC World, and Network World. I have found that some of the best information on computers and technology come from those on the “outside.” I value these perceptions as I try to negotiate with vendors and programmers. It helps me “talk tech” with some of my friends in other information fields and gain further insight into potential resources that can benefit our users.

What do you do in your “down time”? Your hobbies/recreation, how do you relax?
I’m not very good at relaxing. I love to do crafts and I’m currently working in craft foam and glitter with my seven year old daughter. We have a blast – and a make mess. I enjoy card making, scrapbooking, and digital photography. I also love to cook and entertain.

What deep dark secret would you like to share?
I’m pretty transparent by nature but once failed a speed reading course. While my reading speed increased dramatically, my comprehension fell through the floor. Visually, I hang on each individual word. The upside of this is that I rarely have to reread anything because it took me so long the first time that I have already comprehended and processed the new information. It also makes me a pretty good proofreader.

Name one of your personal or professional qualities that make you, or will make you, a leader in 21st century library and information centers.
I think it would be my “Let’s do it – together” attitude. As technology is continually evolving, yesterday you may have been the expert but today the rules have changed (you should have seen me with the WindowsXP to Vista conversion!!) There is no sense wasting energy lamenting what is lost. The goal is to figure out the best long range way to address the situation, explore new and developing technologies, and start the plan to accomplish the task. Technology helps to address problems in new and exciting ways and bring talented people from a number of venues together to meet a common goal.

What advice do you have for current Graduate Students?
Develop a strong sense of balance. I learned that I cannot give everything100% and have anything left for myself. As wife, mother of three, and full time employee and graduate student, I had to take a long term view at projects, set priorities, multitask, measure my efforts and reevaluate for maximum effectiveness. All tasks do not deserve equal attention or effort. These were the skills I used immediately in my first professional position, which helped me to quickly become a productive member of our team.

~Continued on p. 4
Alumni Spotlight Continued...

What professional journal or article have you read and would recommend? Why?
Those that have talked to me know I read much more in the way of blogs than journal articles. Some of my favorite blogs are by Karen Schneider (http://freerangelibrarian.com/), T. Scott (http://tscott.typepad.com/tsp/), Lorcan Dempsey (http://orweblog.oclc.org/), Walt Crawford (http://walt.lishost.org/), Stephen Abram (http://stephenslighthouse.sirsidynix.com/), Dorothea Salo (http://cavlec.yarinareth.net/), the Nebraska Library Commission (http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/blogs/NLC/), the Institute for the Future of the Book, (http://www.ifbook.com/blog/) and Jenny Levine (http://www.theshiftedlibrarian.com/). Often I hear about journal articles on the blogs and then go to read them. I read Library Journal and American Libraries when they come out, other journals I usually read when I am looking for something on a specific topic.

What do you do in your “down time”? Your hobbies/recreation, how do you relax?
There are several things I do to relax, when I have time, of course! I like to paint and draw (my bachelors was in painting)- mostly abstracted or non representation stuff, with an occasional landscape. My husband and I like Swing Dancing, and right now we’re taking Lindy hops classes (talk about exhausting!) I’m also a big anime nerd, so I watch a lot of Japanese television. My favorite anime of all time include Fruits Basket, Ouran High School Host Club and Lovely Complex. I like to build things, though I’m not that good at it. I build shelves, work desks, etc. when needed.

What deep dark secret would you like to share?
If anything, I think I tend to share too much, which can be off-putting to some people. I’ve always been like that.

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Name one of your personal or professional qualities that make you, or will make you, a leader in 21st century library and information centers.
I’m excited about the profession and I’m excited about participating. So far, I’ve written an article, given a presentation, attended 4 conferences, including ALA Annual in Washington D.C., and write about library issues in my blog (nirak.net). I hope to do a lot more writing and presenting. Although it’s a lot of work, and it’s time consuming, it’s also a lot of fun, and I love being part of the conversation in the library world.

What advice do you have for current Graduate Students?
Network, network, network! Network locally by volunteering, going to local meetings, etc. Network on a state level by going to state conferences and volunteering to serve on boards, divisions and...
roundtables. Network on a national (and international) level through social networking sites and through a blog.

Make sure when someone Googles your name they get good results (Googling my name used to bring up posts I made to Internet boards in 1997. Now it brings up my own website and prominent people that have linked to me.) The best way to do this is to have a site with good content under your own name. If nothing else, start a free blog at wordpress.com and put your school papers up.

Besides having your name give good results in Google, writing in a blog allows you to participate in the conversation about the profession in a much more immediate way than journal articles. It is so exciting to get comments on my blog from people I cite when I write school papers. Plus, reading their blogs gives me something to talk to them about when I see them at conferences.

What do you see as key future trends and challenges in LIS?

Like many other fields, LIS will be dealing with quick changes in technology and the way people access information. The challenge will be to keep up with the changes while retaining our traditional values of access, customer service and privacy.

What do you think will be your legacy in this profession?

Hmmm.... I'm not sure. I have not even decided what kind of library I want to work in yet! I hope that wherever I end up, I can be a positive influence.

Any Last Words?

You can find me online on facebook, flickr, my blog, delicio.us, and twitter. I'm always "Karin Dalziel" or "karindalziel." Please look me up! If you have a blog, I'd love to add it to my reader- I have a category specifically for library students. Also, there's an online network at http://lisstudents.ning.com for library students.

Student Spotlight Continued...

New NEMO News Feature -Hot Topics!

Beginning with this issue, we will feature an article on an Information Science Hot Topic. If you read an article or come across a resource that you think would be good to share with your classmates, email Erica Rose

Laying Down the Law: ALA's Ethics Codes

Thirty years ago a handful of scholarly publications existed on the subject of library ethics, most of them dealing with etiquette. Today nothing much has changed. A recent search of the Library Literature online database yielded only 726 hits on the concept of "ethics," as opposed to more than 2,000 for "selection," 6,000 for "internet," and 7,000 for "service." Perhaps the scant attention paid to library and information ethics -- even by scholars -- stems from the fact that information professionals, unlike attorneys and physicians, lack an enforceable professional code of ethics.

The first six-page, six-section Suggested Code of Ethics was released to ALA members in 1930. Its introduction stated: "The library as an institution exists for the benefit of a given constituency. This maybe the nation, a state, a county, a municipality, a school or college, a special field of research, industry or commerce, or some more limited group." It included a caveat acknowledging that though the outlined principles "may not cover every case that may arise, we believe that if applied intelligently they would make for harmony in staff relations and for the general good of the service."

ALA's first official Code of Ethics for Librarians was adopted in 1939. It included a preamble defining a librarian as "any person who is employed by a library to do work that is recognized to be professional in character according to standards established by the American Library Association." It also stated that the code "is not a declaration of prerogatives, nor a statement of recommended practices in specific situations."


A revised Statement on Professional Ethics was introduced to Council in 1979. It included wording that librarians "should provide competent and complete professional service both to the individual user and to the clientele as a whole," and altered the mandatory "must" concerning the protection of the library user's right to privacy to "should."

CHANGING MORAL VALUES
Laying Down the Law: ALA’s Ethics Codes (continued…)

The statement Council actually adopted in 1981, however, changed the "should" back to "must." It also included a new point requiring librarians to distinguish between their personal and professional ethics. Hauptman claims that this addition perpetuates the myth that personal and professional ethical commitments are incompatible, and is a view that causes many problems that plague information services. The divisive nature of the new point and the statement's failure to insist on individual responsibility for one's actions is his main criticisms.

Guy A. Marco, a former LIS dean at Kent (Ohio) State University wrote in the January 1996 journal of Librarianship and Information Science that the additional language "seems to say that individuals are not supposed to follow the policies of their employing libraries; or at least that they should disagree with those policies when the situation requires it."

ALA adopted what is now called the Code of Professional Ethics in 1995 and it, like its predecessors, is a one-page document lacking commentary or explanation. Its eight provisions, all of which start with the word "we" and avoid the words "must" and "should" focus on three general areas: access issues, rights of authors and creators, and employment issues. For the first time, copyright concerns are addressed with the statement: "We recognize and respect intellectual property rights." This acknowledges that the creators or producers of information are important participants in the library service process and deserve ethical treatment.

WHAT SHOULD THE FUTURE HOLD?

1. Should the code be kept? Yes, Codes pose problems and are not panaceas, but well-written ones reveal the tension among the various values that the profession represents. Because of the diversity between public, school, academic, and other kinds of information centers, it is impossible to write a code applicable to them all. If nothing else, codes provide educational and paradigmatic guidance. It is unnecessary for them to anticipate every possible dilemma. A specific and revisable code, however, is a necessity in our rapidly changing information age.

2. Should the code be made enforceable? No. Since ALA adopted the first code, critics have cited its unenforceability as a major weakness, but none of them has explained what a practicable enforceability scheme might look like. If they had, then maybe examples from law and medicine -- two professions with enforceable ethics codes -- might have been used. Historically, the ethical conduct of attorneys and physicians has been heavily regulated by individual states and informed by national associations, most notably the American Bar Association and the American Medical Association. For example, attorneys charged with violating stated codes can face investigation, censure, and even disbarment -- because a practicable enforcement mechanism exists.

ALA, however, lacks any such mechanism. Although the Association could copy what the legal profession has instituted, doing so would require a dramatic break with tradition and diversion of limited resources, especially in the areas of licensing and disciplining. Enforceable ethics codes for attorneys and physicians makes sense because these professionals regularly enter into legally recognized relationships with clients and patients that involve life-and-death matters or opportunities to steal large sums of money. On the other hand, information seekers do not need the same kind of protection as do persons seeking legal or medical services.

3. Should the code be revised? Yes. The information profession is vibrant and dynamic, and the code should reflect this by undergoing revisions, when necessary. It should not be viewed as a document with a fixed meaning for all time. A code is not a constitution. Since its last revision, two major world events have impacted librarianship; the rise of the internet and the aftermath of September 11, 2003. Historically, the code has always championed privacy and confidentiality when it comes to patron records. No mention is made about whether librarians should uphold the law, but it ought to be clear that the code does not and should not trump the law.

4. Should information professionals care about the code? Yes. Codes can be, among other things, a way of enhancing the profession's reputation and professional trust, and of defining and sensitizing persons to other things, a way of enhancing the profession's reputation and professional trust, and of defining and sensitizing persons to
DO YOU NEED TO TAKE THE GRE? SEE NeBRASKA Test INFORMATION BELOW.

Test Locations:
Columbus
Grand Island
Kearney
Lincoln
Omaha

Most locations offer the test multiple times per week. For more information on test preparation, registration, and scheduling a test visit the GRE website at www.ets.org/. Once on the site select GRE and then REGISTER FOR TEST. This will provide you with information on locations and test times. The site also contains information about acquiring preparatory materials, as well as links practice tests (see Test Takers—Prepare for the Test-GRE-GRE Practice General Test).

Email Erica Rose at nemogradassistant@gmail.com with questions.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

It’s important for all of our students to keep up with the current library job postings. You never know when your “perfect” job might come along. We regularly send out an email with the current postings. Please read these! Even if you’re not looking for a job, you may see something that you want to pass on to a classmate or colleague. In addition to reading these emails, take the initiative to check the website periodically. We only send out Nebraska postings, but you can view regional postings by accessing the website. So set aside 5 minutes every week to visit http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/nowhiring/jobsandcareers.asp and check out who is looking to hire here in Nebraska and in other states as well.

Directions: Once you access this link, select “view by location”, pick your state and then hit “GO”. This site provides access to postings in Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming.

“You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.”
~ Kahlil Gibran
The world of books is the most remarkable creation of man. Nothing else that he builds ever lasts. Monuments fall, nations perish, civilizations grow old and die out, and after an era new races build others. But in the world of books are volumes that have seen this happen again and again and yet live on, still young, still as fresh as the day they were written, still telling men's hearts of the hearts of men centuries dead.

- Clarence Day

FINAL THOUGHTS

Congratulations on another semester well done!
May each of you be filled with peace, love, and joy this wintry season.
Wishing you all the very best.
Happy Holidays!

Photo taken from http://www.tnpsc.com/images2/WinterScenes.jpg