



Connections:
The Quarterly Newsletter of ACRL / NY

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Message From the President

Harriet Hagenbruch

As the incoming President of ACRL/NY for the year 2002, I would like to express a warm greeting to the members of our Chapter. Best wishes for a happy, healthy year that brings all of you both personal and professional fulfillment.

This past year was an exciting one for our Chapter, particularly in regard to the 2001 Symposium, *Learning Outcomes Assessment: A Step Forward*. There is no doubt that this Conference was a huge success, drawing a record number of 300 attendees, including some people from beyond the tri-state area. Moreover, the audience seemed to include a number of nonlibrarians (both administrators and faculty from other disciplines). Undoubtedly, this reflects the fact that outcomes assessment is, indeed, a hot topic related as it is to information literacy and, ultimately, to standards for accreditation. As librarians, it behooves us to collaborate with faculty in the various schools and departments at our respective institutions in order to integrate information literacy into all aspects of the curriculum. Therefore, the subject of outcomes assessment assumes particular significance in terms of our profession.

Beyond the meaningful topic, the Symposium Planning Committee had assembled a list of people who were exceptionally well qualified to address the theme from multiple points of view. These speakers included **Oswald Ratteray**, Assistant Director for Constituent Services at the Middle States Commission on Higher Education who provided

introductory remarks and set the stage for both of the keynote speakers and panelists who followed. Since the Middle States Commission is revising *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education*, its standards for accreditation and, in the process, has linked these standards with information literacy, student learning and assessment, Mr. Ratteray's remarks were of special interest.

One of the keynote speakers was **Trudy W. Banta**, Vice Chancellor for Planning and Institutional Improvement, and Professor of Higher Education at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. Dr. Banta is a leading authority on assessing quality in higher education and has presented on this topic at numerous conferences throughout the country and abroad.

The other keynote speaker was **Thomas G. Kirk**, Library Director and Coordinator of Information Services at Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana. Thomas Kirk originally served on the ACRL Task Force on Academic Library Outcomes Assessment and is currently Chair of ACRL's Best Practices in Information Literacy Programming Project as well as on ACRL's Advisory Committee for the Institute for Information Literacy.

In the afternoon, the panelists included **Hannelore Rader**, University Librarian and Dean at the Ekstrom Library, University of Louisville in Kentucky who also served as panel moderator; **Carla List**, a member of the Instruction Services Unit at Plattsburgh State

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Learning Outcomes Assessment: A Step Forward

Symposium 2001

This year's ACRL/NY Symposium, *Learning Outcomes Assessment: A Step Forward*, was held on December 7, 2001 in the Celeste Bartos Forum of the New York Public Library. Summaries of the presentations follow.

Oswald Ratteray, Assistant Director of Constituent Services and Special Programs, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, presented a framework for the Symposium with his introductory

presentation, *Are Students Really Learning? Faculty/Librarian Collaboration for Accreditation*. In conjunction with the eight regional commissions, Middle States is undertaking several initiatives that will change the current accreditation process. By revising the characteristics for excellence to focus on educational effectiveness as well as institutional effectiveness, the fourteen new standards will seek to assess student learning outcomes in addition to university goals and resource allocations. Among the new standards, four that directly relate to information literacy will give librarians and classroom faculty a central, shared responsibility in accreditation.

The shift from the industrial model to one that emphasizes student learning will allow librarians to work collaboratively with instructors to ensure that all members of the college community become information literate for life-long learning. This approach will ensure that the five ACRL IL standards, (know, access, evaluate, use, and ethical/legal) are infused throughout the curriculum at course, general education, continuing education, and institutional levels. Furthermore, Middle States will seek evidence of such collaboration in forthcoming self-study documents. According to Mr. Ratteray, the Commission recognizes the importance of librarians as partners in student learning, and understands the role we will play in furthering its goals.

What questions must be considered in order to effect the necessary changes? Mr. Ratteray posed several that we should all contemplate in preparation for our next site visit. First, how will we verify information literacy among our graduates? Second, do our course outlines, programs, and college-wide objectives contain activities that promote information use? Third, how will we place information literacy outcomes and performance indicators in a comprehensive assessment plan?

To achieve these changes, we must formulate program review so that librarians and faculty are able to determine the manner in which students will receive

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found on the chapter's website:
<http://www.nyu.edu/library/bobst/acrlny/acrlny.html>

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University of New York; **Carole Ann Fabian**, Applied Arts Librarian at the Architecture and Planning Library at the University at Buffalo, and **Kyzyl Fenno-Smith**, an Information Services Librarian at Baruch College's Newman Library.

Hannelore Rader is renowned for her work in the field of information literacy including working with the committee that updated the *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education*. Carla List, in addition to teaching and coordinating a required course in information literacy has served as Chair of the Task Force on the Revision of the Model Statement of Objectives for the Instruction Section of ACRL. Carole Ann Fabian has been very involved in forming partnerships with faculty and administration across the disciplines in the teaching of information literacy and Kyzyl Fenno-Smith has been active in faculty development and information competency programs.

Summaries of these various presentations will appear in this newsletter, and the panelists' PowerPoint presentations are available on the Symposium Home Page: <<http://library.nyctc.cuny.edu/acrlny2001/>>.

It is worth mentioning that for the first time the Symposium had its own web page thanks to the efforts of Monica Berger. The web page is colorful, well organized and truly captures the theme of the conference.

Beyond a significant topic and outstanding speakers, the setting for the Symposium was The New York Public Library's magnificent Celeste Bartos Forum (a first for our Chapter). Therefore, it would seem that all the ingredients for a successful conference were present and as a reflection of this evaluations were, on the whole, extremely positive.

Certainly, the Symposium Planning Committee has much to be proud of since it was truly a team effort. Members of the Symposium Planning Committee for 2001 were Addie Armstrong, Monica Berger, Sheau-yueh Janey Chao, Francie Davis, Madeline Ford, Laurie Lopatin, Anca Meret, Zary Mostashari, Irene Percelli, Irina Poznansky, Susan Robinson, Susan Rubin, Marsha Spiegelman, Paolina Taglienti, Marilyn Rosenthal, Clay Williams, Bellinda Wise, and Tian Xiao Zhang.

Also, during the day's events and in keeping with a tradition established several years ago, the Chapter paid tribute to a beloved Past President, Rochelle Sager by awarding free registration to two local library school students. Each also received a book, *Assessment Essentials: Planning, Implementing and Improving Assessment In Higher Education*. This book, which addresses the theme of the Symposium, was written by Trudy Banta, one of our keynote speakers, along with Catherine Pabomba. This year's recipients were Susan Golding from the Palmer School at the CW Post Campus, LIU and Edward Wall from Queens College Library School.

At the beginning of the day, outgoing president Marilyn Rosenthal presented the *2001 ACRL/NY Year in Review*. Some of the highlights that she mentioned in her report were the fact that both the Symposium Planning Committee and the Executive Board were able to continue their monthly meetings at the Fashion Institute of Technology Library, thanks to Acting Director, Lorraine Weberg. Also, as mandated by ACRL National, the Chapter became incorporated, thereby obtaining tax-exemption as a non-profit organization. This difficult process was facilitated through the efforts of Bellinda Wise and Tian Zhang. From now on, the Chapter will be known as the Greater New York Metropolitan Area Chapter/Association of College and Research Libraries, Inc. In addition, the ACRL/NY web page is being redesigned and now includes such information as the Executive Board members, a registration form, current and past newsletters, upcoming events, job notices, etc. Jennifer Schwartz, an Executive Board member, has started moderating the ACRL/NY Listserv and we are appreciative of her efforts in that regard.

Beyond the work of the Symposium Planning Committee, there were a number of workshops and/or meetings sponsored by both the Geographic Sections as well as the various Special Interest Groups. The Long Island Section headed by Francie Davis and Eloise Bellard hosted a workshop, *Librarian Limbo: Campus Status & Other Joys*, which focused on the issues of faculty status along with the related issues of tenure, promotion and union negotiations. Rebecca Albrecht and Susan Rubin, as Chair and Vice Chair of the Westchester/Lower Hudson Valley Sections, planned programs, as did Tammy Wofsey and Amy Beth, Vice Chair and Chair of the New York City

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PROFILES IN MEMBERSHIP

This is the first in a new series of articles that will highlight individual members of our organization. Look for an interview with a different member in each upcoming newsletter. Thanks to Rebecca Albrecht and Sheri Webber for contributing a wonderful first piece.

In July 2001, Sheri Webber joined the faculty at Purchase College, SUNY. As the outgoing chair of the lower Westchester Hudson Valley section, I thought that Sheri might be interested in getting involved with the chapter. She'll work for the coming year with chair, Gloria Meisel. Here, I ask Sheri to tell me a bit more about herself and her interest in libraries.

Q: What attracted you to working in libraries?

A: Beyond the fact that they are usually gorgeous buildings chock-full of knowledge, they are also the last of a dying breed of noble institutions. With regard to working in academic libraries, I suppose I like the idea of not being tied down to a single research interest. My subject area specialization is the Social Sciences, which allows me to assist students and faculty in a broad spectrum of research. Some examples from this semester were: the media coverage of social protests in the 60's, a comparative analysis of American social welfare reform programs, the current practices of female genital mutilation, a guide to public funding for small businesses, and the changes in the distribution of power between men and women in the domestic sphere. I love the variety. It keeps the work interesting and fresh.

Q: How and when did you first know you wanted to be a librarian?

A: I was a late bloomer. Unable to commit to a topic for dissertation research in Cultural Anthropology, my aunt suggested one Christmas, '94 I think, that I consider a career in Librarianship. She's been an academic librarian for more than 20 years now. I

thought she was absolutely nuts. As much as I loved libraries, there would be no way I could sit at a desk under florescent lights for 8 hours a day. I eventually took her advice and began working part time at the central branch of the Minneapolis Public Library. After only a few days, I realized that Librarianship would be my future. My aunt is a wise woman. I don't even notice the lights any more.

Q: What are your main job duties? Which do you like best?

A: Well, as a member of the reference team, I have desk hours and share in the basic library instruction responsibilities. I'm the liaison to the Social Sciences Division. So, I handle their collection development and teach library skills to the students and faculty. I provide research consultations, which I very much enjoy. Also, I'm temporarily serving as the Library's web liaison.

More than half of my time however, is spent managing our electronic resources. I locate, evaluate and price electronic resources. I provide access to them through an alphabetical database list, as well as an electronic journals title list. I market them to the faculty and provide education to the user communities. I serve as our liaison with vendors and consortia. I maintain the databases' administrative modules and interface preferences, and collect and evaluate usage data.

Surprisingly, I find that this is my favorite part of the work. I'm able to fully utilize the organization and time management skills I've accumulated over the years. And, I've been able to dust off that B.S. in Business Administration and put it to work for me. Managing our Electronic Resources is a challenge and presents me with unlimited opportunities to build my skills professionally.

Q: What do you find to be the biggest challenge in your job?

A: Well, I'm one of those people who believes in

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setting goals, defining objectives, planning and evaluating just about everything I do — both at work and at home. There are several terms used to describe my personality type. Feel free to choose your own descriptor. I'm flexible though, and respond well to a dynamic environment. However, I prefer that all aspects of a project be clearly defined and communicated to ensure smooth implementation. I've come to realize that not all people are as structured and have very different (and effective) means to achieving their goals. So, my biggest challenge has been to work and collaborate with these professionals balancing an appreciation for their approach with my own personal style.

Q: *What attracts you to working with ACRL/NY? What do you hope to accomplish for the chapter and for your local geographic section?*

A: ACRL/NY is an outstanding organization to which every academic librarian in the area should belong. It provides one of the best means of local communication and networking. I'm looking forward to helping enhance the networking aspects of the Westchester/Lower Hudson Valley Section. I think it's important to have physical meetings, formal or informal, to share ideas and concerns, and to find out what your fellow listservers look like. I'd like to explore the possibility of special interest round tables that would meet over dinner or lunch. I also like the idea of a Site Swap, where each person shares with the group their favorite web resource. [Rebecca Albrecht, SUNY Purchase College Library] ■

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appropriate feedback on assignments. Clearly, outreach and training will be essential if we are to engage faculty and administrators in a commitment to information literacy. We have entered a new era in accreditation. Libraries will no longer be judged solely by the number of volumes held, but also by the shared role librarians will play in educating the college community. [Marsha Spiegelman, Nassau Community College]

Our first keynote speaker was **Trudy Banta** whose presentation was entitled *The Importance of Evidence-Based Improvement*. She brought a national perspective on outcomes assessment in higher education and suggested some methods for collecting evidence that can be used to guide improvement. She started with the Evidence of Accountability which is required by consumers, states government, college and university systems and regional and disciplinary accreditors. After defining outcomes assessment, she stated that librarians must assess processes and outcomes in addition to resources. In doing so, they should have goals for

student learning, follow the Information Literacy Standards for Higher Education, and assess the development of each student.

The key results of individual assessment are that the faculty can assign grades, students learn their own strength and weaknesses, and students become self assessors.

Group Assessment activities are useful as they can be used to produce program improvement, to be used in institutional and or state peer review, and regional and/or national accreditation. For the assessment to be successful, the faculty has to be involved. However, there are barriers to overcome in the academy as the current system encourages individual, specialized work. To overcome these barriers, strong leadership is needed to establish strategies to encourage collaboration.

She offered methods of collecting evidence and offered ways to make a difference such as strong leadership, relationship to goals people value, and commitment to improvement.

She predicted that in the future, the need for evidence of accountability will increase, more faculty will recognize benefits of assessment, more electronic assessment methods will be developed, more sharing

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of assessment methods will take place and that the faculty will learn more about learning, and student learning will improve. [Zary Mostashari, Long Island University/Brooklyn Campus]

Thomas Kirk is the Library Director and Coordinator of Information Services at Lilly Library, Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana. His keynote address was entitled, *Information Literacy – What's All the Fuss About?* In it he presented an overview of information literacy, referring to the ACRL definition from the *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education*: <<http://www.ala.org/acrl/ilintro.html>>.

ACRL defines information literacy as “a set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information.”

Mr. Kirk sees information literacy as a new paradigm but also as part of an evolutionary process. He stated that the term “information literacy” co-opted “bibliographic instruction” adding several components to it to make its meaning broader. Those additional components include: economic, legal, and social issues concerning the use of information, and collaboration between librarians and classroom faculty, who share a role in information literacy.

ACRL’s “Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education,” include five standards for the “information literate student,” listing performance indicators and outcomes.

Mr. Kirk is chair of ACRL’s Best Practices in Information Literacy Programming Project. This initiative, which is still in development, includes characteristics of the best practices of information literacy programs. One potential use of the initiative is as a guide for institutions to evaluate their information literacy programs.

Mr. Kirk raised several cautions and concerns about information literacy and outcomes assessment. Because students learn at different rates, it is important to ask what we are assessing and when. He recommended that librarians be more involved in designing the school curriculum and in matching the curriculum to the information literacy standards. He stressed the importance of using assessment as a tool

in the effective teaching of information literacy, and not something that should be undertaken once every ten years for accreditation.

In conclusion, Mr. Kirk challenged librarians to become full partners in the academic community by incorporating information literacy into general education. [Laurie Lopatin, Hofstra University Library]

Hannelore Rader began the afternoon session as the panel moderator with an informative talk entitled, *Assessing Information Literacy Outcomes in Higher Education*. As part of the ACRL taskforce that developed the five new outcome standards listed in the *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education Standards, Performance Indicators and Outcomes*, Ms. Rader was eminently qualified to explain them to the audience. First, she provided a brief overview of the assessments, refreshing the audience’s memory from the morning session. She then provided specific examples of outcomes to help them digest the meaning of the standards.

She advised her listeners to focus on eliciting faculty interest and involvement. She believes that successful information literacy programs must have library/faculty collaboration. The teaching faculty’s role is important to link literacy to the curricula for many institutions.

While assessment tools may vary, she shared the University of Louisville’s method. They used an off-campus assessment firm to develop the individual student survey for the university, only a small part of which focused on information literacy of students. This is a recent development and will follow students through the program. [Paolina Taglienti, Long Island University/Brooklyn Campus]

Carla List, in her panel presentation, *Plan Twice, Measure Once, Fitting Objectives to Standards*, discussed her experiences with Information Literacy Standards from two different perspectives. First, as Chair of the Model Statement of Objectives Task Force (1998-2001) which defined objectives for the ACRL information literacy standards, she described the difficulties of attaching IL Standards to the practice of day-to-day teaching. Second, she discussed the many lessons she learned as the author of *An Introduction to Information Research*, and how she

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was able to apply them to her experience teaching the required research course at SUNY Plattsburgh.

The presence of a librarian so experienced with administrative and pedagogical intricacies was certainly appreciated by an audience filled with practitioners.

List warned institutions that they must appreciate the various aspects of their constituency. For example, by focusing on first-year students, a school might let transfer students slip through the cracks, and these students often represent a large part of the graduating class. This is just one common example of how academic institutions have attempted to correct legitimate problems without considering all of the aspects. [Clay Williams, *Hunter College Libraries*]

Carole Ann Fabian, Applied Arts Librarian at the University of Buffalo's Architecture and Planning Library, spoke on *Partnering with Faculty: Advancing Curriculum-Integrated Information Literacy Instruction*. She discussed the collaboration of librarians and faculty to integrate information literacy into the curriculum, working with standards such as the ACRL Information Literacy Standards and the "Teaching Goals Inventory." Ms. Fabian stressed the importance of developing and maintaining relationships with students and faculty, and she suggested that librarians should be on faculty committees in order to promote the library agenda. She discussed issues involved in working with faculty members, such as determining whether the outcomes of instruction can be measured. Ms. Fabian stated that the assessment of information literacy continues throughout a student's undergraduate career.

To demonstrate models for instruction and assessment, Ms. Fabian described two courses she and faculty members designed. In "World Civilizations: Oral History Project," a required course for incoming freshmen, students developed research skills. Multiple assessments were used for the course, including performance-based (analyzing research papers and oral presentations using grades) and attitudinal (through student surveys and interviews with the instructors and librarians).

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Section. Also, the Education/Curriculum Materials Group met twice, once at Teachers College, Columbia University and once at Hofstra University. The Access Services Special Interest Group met a number of times and there are plans to reinstate an Information Literacy Discussion Group as well.

Furthermore, I would like to welcome the new Board members or at least former Board members who are assuming new positions. They are: Francie Davis and Eloise Bellard, Vice Presidents/Presidents Elect (former Chair and Vice-Chair of the Long Island Section respectively, they have agreed to share this demanding role); Deborah Dolan, Chair of the Long Island Section; Addie Armstrong, Vice Chair of the New York City Section; Gloria Meisel, Chair, Westchester/Lower Hudson Valley Section; Sheri Webber, Vice Chair of the Westchester/Lower Hudson Valley Section; Dona McDermott, Chair of the Information Literacy Interest Group, and Susan Rubin (former Vice Chair, Westchester/Lower Hudson Valley), Legislative Liaison. Continuing members are: Laurie Lopatin, Secretary; Bellinda Wise, Treasurer; Amy Beth, Chair, New York Section as well as Chair of the Access Services Interest Group; Marsha Spiegelman, Membership Secretary; Jennifer Schwartz, Newsletter Editor; Constantia Constantinou, Webmaster; Lois Cherepon, Archives Coordinator; Jennifer Govan, Chair of the Education/Curriculum Materials Center Group; Irina Poznansky, Chair of the Education/Curriculum Materials Center Group.

As the incoming President, I look forward to working with all of these Executive Board members. I also want to recognize the achievements of retiring Board members Tian Zhang, Rebecca Albrecht, Tammy Wofsey and Ree DeDonato. All of these people have worked conscientiously on behalf of ACRL/NY and will be sorely missed.

Finally, I wish to especially acknowledge Marilyn Rosenthal, 2001 President of ACRL/NY. Marilyn truly acted as my mentor as I chaired the Symposium Planning Committee. She was there every step of the way and I owe her a debt of gratitude. ■

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Area
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The second course was “Planning Concepts and Controversies,” for first semester graduate students in the School of Architecture and Planning. Students were introduced to the research process, to print and online library resources in their field of study, and to information ethics, such as issues of copyright and fair use. As in the World Civilization course, the assessments were both performance-based and attitudinal. Performance-based assessments for this course included search strategy worksheets and skills and concept mastery. Attitudinal assessments included student responses to faculty and librarians, and librarian’s self-assessment.

In conclusion, Ms. Fabian stated that to include information literacy in the curriculum, it is important to develop a broad base of partnerships, to consistently assess the outcomes of the instruction, and to evaluate the assessments. [*Laurie Lopatin,*

Hofstra University Library]

Kyzyl Fenno-Smith, Information Services Librarian at Baruch College’s Newman Library, gave an outstanding presentation at our ACRL/NY Symposium entitled *Assessment as Learning: Self, Peer, and Classroom Assessment Strategies for Information Competency Curricula*. She discussed the process of developing a curriculum using information competency (IC) principles. She stressed writing learning objectives and designing instruction based on the learning objectives.

Kyzyl’s primary emphasis was on teaching and assessing IC learning objectives. She discussed a variety of techniques including peer assessment, reflective writing, portfolio self-assessment, and developing a synthesis of learning/teaching/assessment in the classroom. [*Susan Rubin, ACRL/NY Legislative Liaison*] ■