

2011 ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award Program

ENTRY FORM

ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGE AND RESEARCH LIBRARIES
A Division of the American Library Association

The signed entry form and supporting documentation must be electronically submitted to the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award Program. For further information, please visit the Awards section of our Web site at: <http://www.acrl.org>. Faxed entries will not be accepted.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT THE FOLLOWING:

Name of Nominated Library Grinnell College Libraries
Name of Institution Grinnell College
Name of Library Director/Dean Richard Fyffe
Address 1111 6th Ave, Burling Library
City Grinnell State IA Zip Code 50112
Phone (641)269-3351 Fax (641) 269-4283 E-mail fyffe@grinnell.edu
Institution's Mission Please see separate page for institutional mission

TYPE OF LIBRARY (Please Check One):

Carnegie Classifications are available at www.carnegiefoundation.org/classification.

University

- Doctoral/Research Universities-Extensive
 Doctoral/Research Universities-Intensive
 Master's Colleges and Universities I
 Master's Colleges and Universities II

College

- Baccalaureate Colleges-Liberal Arts
 Baccalaureate Colleges-General
 Baccalaureate/Associate's Colleges

Community College

- Associate's Colleges

Submitted by (Full Name/Title): Catherine Rod, Special Collections Librarian

Name of Institution Grinnell College

Name of Library Grinnell College Libraries

Address 1111 6th Ave, Burling Library

City Grinnell State IA Zip Code 50112

Phone (641)269-3364 Fax (641) 269-4283 E-mail rod@grinnell.edu

I understand that applications will be kept in the award pool for three years. If my institution is selected for the Excellence in Academic Libraries Award, I will organize and sponsor a ceremony on campus for the presentation of the award.

Signature of Library Director/Dean of Nominated Institution

Date

(All entries must be received by December 3, 2010. They become the property of ACRL and will not be returned.)

GRINNELL COLLEGE INSTITUTIONAL MISSION

When Grinnell College framed its charter in the Iowa Territory of the United States in 1846, it set forth a mission to educate its students "for the different professions and for the honorable discharge of the duties of life." The College pursues that mission by educating young men and women in the liberal arts through free inquiry and the open exchange of ideas. As a teaching and learning community, the College holds that knowledge is a good to be pursued both for its own sake and for the intellectual, moral, and physical well-being of individuals and of society at large. The College exists to provide a lively academic community of students and teachers of high scholarly qualifications from diverse social and cultural circumstances. The College aims to graduate women and men who can think clearly, who can speak and write persuasively and even eloquently, who can evaluate critically both their own and others' ideas, who can acquire new knowledge, and who are prepared in life and work to use their knowledge and their abilities to serve the common good.

FEBRUARY 2002

<http://www.grinnell.edu/offices/president/missionstatement>

Grinnell College Libraries

A Proposal for the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award

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who can speak and write persuasively and even eloquently,
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Excerpt from the Grinnell College Mission Statement¹

Grinnell College, founded in 1846, is a private, co-educational residential liberal arts college located in central Iowa. Its 1600 students come from all fifty states and as many foreign countries. It has a student faculty ratio of 9:1, and most classes have fewer than twenty students. Grinnell College sees itself as a community of scholars where all students are encouraged to learn by researching questions of their choosing, and many Grinnellians go on to become professional scholars: Grinnell College is in the top 1% of all colleges and universities in sending its graduates on to earn Ph.Ds.



Instead of core requirements, the center of a Grinnell education is intensive mentoring of students. This mentoring begins with the First-Year Tutorial, a one-semester seminar where students work with their tutorial advisor to explore a topic of mutual interest,² and continues through the four years as students work with their academic advisor to shape an individually-crafted liberal arts education.

¹ <http://www.grinnell.edu/offices/president/missionstatement/>

² <http://www.grinnell.edu/offices/studentaffairs/acadadvising/tutorial>

The College's Strategic Plan (2005) highlights another signal aspect of a Grinnell College education, inquiry-based learning. Inquiry-based learning "is experiential and discovery-based; it is grounded in engagement with original sources and evidence; and it challenges students to develop their capacities for collaboration, analysis, creativity, and communication as they learn to participate as members of the broader scholarly community."³ The Grinnell College Libraries play a crucial role in helping students and faculty identify, acquire, and contextualize the primary evidence that is the foundation for inquiry-based learning.

The practices of individualized mentoring and inquiry-based learning permeate all aspects of college life and offer the Grinnell College Libraries opportunities to craft programs and services that enrich the learning and teaching that happen inside and outside of the classroom. Although it also presents a number of challenges and places heavy demands on the libraries' collections and services, we are confident that we are making a difference in students' lives. One indication of this is the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which found that 94 percent of Grinnell first-year students and 85 percent of seniors agree "quite a bit" or "very much" that Grinnell provides "the support you need to help you succeed academically." By comparison, nationwide 85 percent of first-year students and 80 percent of seniors at institutions in our Carnegie classification agreed "quite a bit" or "very much" with that statement.



The narrative below will describe how the Grinnell College Libraries support the College's mission through our information literacy program, our experiential learning opportunities for students, our peer mentoring program, our development of collections and services, and our commitment to enhancing the well-being of our students. We close with reflections on additional ways in which we are

adapting our professional practice to today's needs through deeper collaboration with affiliated units on campus and flexible, responsive organizational structures. We submit this document in support of our application for the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award with pride in our accomplishments, yet with the full knowledge that excellence is a process and not a destination.

³ "Inquiry-Based Learning under Grinnell College's Strategic Plan: Implications for Library and Information Technology Services," 2007, <http://www.lib.grinnell.edu/general/mission-policies/EKLibITVision112007.pdf>

Fostering Information Literacy

Information literacy has been described as “a new liberal art” which involves “critical reflection on the nature of information itself, its technical infrastructure and its social, cultural, and even philosophical context and impact.”⁴ In addition, we would define information literacy as *critical reflection on the methods, norms, and significance of inquiry*. Although there are some basic information skills and competencies common to all research, “information literacy” as we understand it is strongly dependent on disciplinary context, and each department will teach inquiry in a distinct way.⁵ This is the philosophy that underscores our information literacy program.

Developing a coherent information literacy instruction program when there is no core curriculum presents special challenges. Since 2005 a member of the library faculty has been a permanent member of the Tutorial and Advising Committee, the group responsible for planning the First-Year Tutorial. This has enabled us to weave information literacy into the fabric of the Tutorial in a cohesive way. In June of 2009, we introduced a draft curriculum and supporting materials for Tutorial information literacy instruction to faculty enrolled in the summer workshop for tutors. This curriculum—now called *Doing Research*⁶—presents a research progression meant to guide students’ academic work as well as tutors’ and librarians’ collaborative teaching.

Doing Research models for students and faculty a recursive research process based on a locally customized version of the ACRL information literacy standards. The website presents our campus’s five information literacy learning goals: develop a research question; identify promising search terms and resources; find useful sources; evaluate sources through close, critical examination; and create and share your work so others may learn. Librarians, staff and our student employees can draw from these materials at the reference desk, in instruction sessions, or when collaborating with faculty members. *Doing Research* also directs researchers to helpful examples, discussions, and remedies for a variety of common research challenges and predicaments. It is narrated by Hannah Haines and David Dibble, two virtual Grinnellians trying to make sense of their research and excel in their classes. The goal of the site is not that researchers simply adopt this particular process; rather, our intention is that students and faculty turn to this model at any point in their research for clarification and direction while

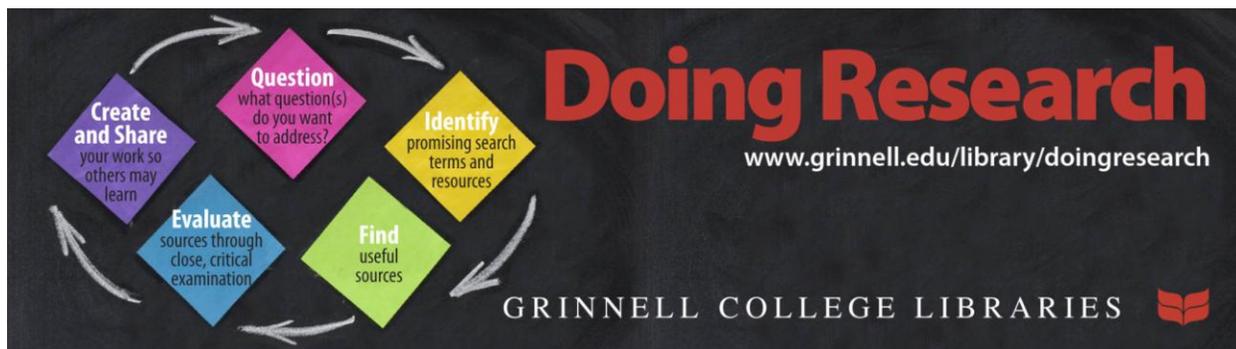
⁴ Jeremy J. Shapiro and Shelley K. Hughes, “Information Literacy as a Liberal Art: Enlightenment Proposals for a New Curriculum.” *Educause Review* 31(2), March/April 1996: (<http://www.educause.edu/pub/er/review/reviewarticles/31231.html>).

⁵ “Information Literacy,” *Critical Inquiry*, and the Mission of Grinnell College: A Proposal

⁶ <http://www.grinnell.edu/library/doingresearch>

crafting their own, successful research progression. Our next step for *Doing Research* will be to add multimedia elements such as screencasts and short videos as alternative forms of instruction.

In the fall of 2009, five teams of tutors and librarians tested some or all of these materials in Tutorials. To gauge its success, we held a lunch discussion in February of 2010 with tutors, students, and colleagues from the other Academic Resource Centers (ARC) on campus. (ARC includes such units as the Writing Lab, Reading Lab, Math Lab, and Science Learning Center.) Discussion made clear that the Tutorial curriculum progression is useful for all levels of researchers. One outcome of this session was a refinement of the Tutorial curriculum. We felt that attempting to address all five learning goals in Tutorial meant that students only got a superficial introduction to the goals. Instead, we identified three elements of the curriculum (identify, find, and evaluate) as most appropriate for Tutorial instruction. This is the approach we took during the fall of 2010.



In its first year, the outcome of this new Tutorial curriculum was positive. Tutorial end-of-course evaluations include questions concerning the effectiveness of the information literacy instruction that librarians and tutors provided to students during the Tutorial. Between 2003 and 2008, 65 percent of first-year students on average rated these sessions as helpful (a rating of five or six on a six-point scale). In 2009, the period in which we tested our new curriculum, 77 percent of first-year students rated their information literacy instruction as effective. We are pleased with this improved rating and we look forward to learning from the 2010 Tutorial course evaluation results (once they are available in the spring of 2011) to continue improving our students' learning and our collaborative teaching with tutors.

During the past two years, Grinnell's librarians have also been working to increase our effectiveness in the disciplinary information literacy sessions we offer across our College's three academic divisions. As a result, we have nearly tripled the number of these disciplinary information literacy sessions, from twelve sessions in the fall of 2008 to thirty-two sessions in

the spring of 2010. We are pleased with the range of faculty colleagues with whom we are collaborating, including members of the following departments:

- In science: biology, chemistry, and psychology.
- In the social sciences: history, education, sociology, economics, and political science.
- In the humanities: English, Spanish, French, Russian, Chinese, classics, religious studies, philosophy, art, theatre, and gender, women's and sexuality studies.

We have noted, and faculty and students have told us, that the complete *Doing Research* progression is well suited for this more advanced, disciplinary information literacy instruction. Accordingly, we are now using this curriculum and the ACRL discipline-specific standards to help departments articulate their information literacy goals. A revamped, evidence-grounded curriculum in the history department offers one very promising opportunity to do this. Another model is the introductory biology course in which students work collaboratively and begin to learn to act, think, and communicate like scientists. The Science Librarian is an active participant in the course, assisting students in identifying information and resources that will help them with their research. We are pleased with our progress with disciplinary information literacy during the past two years and are poised to move ahead.

In addition to teaching information literacy in classroom settings, librarians also teach information literacy skills at the reference desk and in Library Labs, our student-initiated research consultation service. Between 2004 and 2007, librarians held approximately 110 Library Labs each year. However, in 2007 we began actively promoting Library Labs with posters around campus and ads in the student newspaper. As a result, by the 2009-10 academic year we were doing 249 Library Labs annually. We gather student feedback on Library Lab sessions to help gauge the service's effectiveness and to plan improvements. As the responses included below indicate, Library Labs are an instructional option our students value and recommend to their peers:

"It was incredibly helpful. Research papers can be intimidating and tedious, but the help I received looking up the information was great at reducing some of the stress involved and making sure that I found sources that were relevant. Also I am now aware of different ways to navigate the databases and get the results that I am looking for."

"[The librarian] was responsive and had answers to any questions that I had. However, she let me come to my own conclusions and decide whether or not a source would be helpful for my paper. I really appreciated her help."

“I learned a lot about refining my search and the process of where to look for information. This session definitely helped me and set me in the right direction. I would definitely recommend this resource to a friend.”

Peer Mentoring

At Grinnell College we believe that students often can be the best teachers and that lasting learning also happens outside of the classroom. The Grinnell College Libraries’ peer mentoring program is rooted in these beliefs. Our program has two components: the advanced research help provided by Reference Assistants (RAs) at the reference desk, and the basic information service provided by all students working at any of the four public service desks in the Grinnell College Libraries.



Reference Assistants (RAs) provide peer mentoring on topics drawn from our information literacy curriculum. Our program started in order to give Grinnell’s students a peer to turn to at the reference desk. We strive to create desirable, meaningful positions for these student staff members and so, in addition to extending reference service from 10:00 p.m. to midnight five nights a week, each RA works a weekly ninety-minute

afternoon shift in order to come in contact with all the librarians, staff members and students who are in the library during daytime hours. To recruit RAs, librarians asked faculty members to recommend students for a Reference Assistant position. We continue this practice, but as the positions have become more popular, students are continually applying for the limited number of open positions. We believe our program has been a success because we have hired the best candidates from strong applicant pools and mentored them intensively. Our new RAs complete about ten hours of training led by a team of librarians on topics such as reference service, the Libraries’ catalog and website, database selection and searching, and source evaluation; RAs also shadow librarians during a desk shift while in training. Librarians meet weekly with RAs for more training on topics such as finding data, statistics, and primary sources. We have also enjoyed collaborating with our RAs to promote library services through frequent newspaper ads, an active Facebook page, improving the content and design of our homepage, hanging posters around campus highlighting library events and resources, and even

creating a presence on Grinnell PLANS, our own student-developed campus social networking system.⁷

When we began our RA program, we also started training the more than forty students working at the Libraries' four public service desks to help patrons with over a dozen basic information inquiries and to refer them to librarians as needed. We developed a list of information inquiries from a compilation of questions librarians, supervisors, and our student staff members frequently receive. To this we added a few items from our information literacy learning goals. We train these students in an hour-long session and then continue to provide updates and more training materials.

Our reference assistants are providing a valued and important service. During the 2009-2010 academic year, RAs answered 242 reference questions, with each interaction averaging twelve minutes in length. As we began our RA and basic information services in the fall of 2009, we gathered feedback from students who received help from either an RA or another student worker. We learned from this survey that respondents overwhelmingly agreed that they found the peer mentor service helpful and they would return to an RA or a public desk student staff member in the future. We also received the following representative responses on both student mentoring services: "Great - very willing to help and friendly!" "The library assistant was very helpful. He made sure he found the correct books necessary for my projects." "Great service."

We have also taken time to gather our RAs' reflections on how their work helps their fellow students and themselves. Below appear representative comments:

"I believe that my fellow students are more likely to ask for help from a peer and feel comfortable approaching us for advice. As a student, I know the stresses associated with starting research late as well as the frustration that one can encounter when trying to navigate the uncountable resources available to us. As such, RA's can empathize with student patrons and can educate fellow students on doing research in ways they relate to. We know when student patrons feel uncomfortable, and can easily assuage their fears."

"In addition to providing benefits to the students and faculty, training to become an RA and working at the reference desk has taught me a lot of valuable skills. During the summer I worked as a research assistant in a London university, and the skills I learned as an RA were extremely helpful. I knew and had access to

⁷ <http://www.grinnellplans.com/>

many databases that allowed me to find relevant and useful information for the variety of projects I was working on.”

“As an RA, I have sharpened my personal research skills and feel very comfortable searching the library, online databases, and reference information when working on my own projects. I understand the difference between data & statistics, primary & secondary sources, popular & scholarly sources, and many other distinctions that sometimes confuse students. What's more, I do not hesitate to pass on my knowledge to my peers when they need it. Being an RA has boosted my confidence as not only a student, but also as an independent researcher.”

Experiential Learning in the Libraries

Research supports the important role libraries have in student success on college campuses. Programs emphasizing experiential learning help students to make personal connections and to



create a feeling of community: two elements crucial to the success of all students, but especially to women and students of color.⁸ To better serve our increasingly diverse student body, we have sought ways to invigorate our learning environment through collaborating with students to provide active learning opportunities in the library. Through student involvement in a regular series of library sponsored events and an ever-growing range of exhibits, librarians have created opportunities for students to engage with the collections and services of the library. In this way, students are able to create and communicate new and meaningful links from the collections and their own creative work to ideas and concepts being discussed on campus or in the wider world. As vital participants in these active learning projects, students find an avenue,

through the library, to add their voices to the scholarly conversation. An ongoing series of events provides opportunities for students to present their creative work to peers and

⁸ Coral Black and Susan Roberts. "Learning the Social Way: Enhancing Learning in a Traditional Setting." *New Review of Academic Librarianship* 12.2 (2006): 83-93; Roberto A. Ibarra, "A Place to Belong: The Library as Prototype for Context Diversity." *Currents and Convergence: Navigating the Rivers of Change: Proceedings of the Twelfth National Conference of the Association of College and Research Libraries. Minneapolis, Minnesota, April 7-12, 2005.*

members of the greater Grinnell community. Library faculty and staff work with student assistants and campus organizations to develop exhibits of library materials. The result is an enriched learning environment and an increasingly strong and vibrant sense of community. This is at the core of the College's mission and offers another example of the individual mentoring that occurs throughout the library and the college.

Wednesday Nights @ Burling highlight student work, faculty research, and community member accomplishments. These programs are held in the libraries' event space, and cookies and tea are provided to attendees. Our programming has developed over the past few years, and now includes a regular alliance with the Craft of Poetry class, providing the opportunity for students to publicly demonstrate their semester's work. We also have regular "open mics" presented in collaboration with the Faulconer Gallery, the campus's art museum. Locating the readings in the Gallery brings students into that space, strengthens the connection between cultural repositories, and creates an opportunity for active participation with those collections. The Gallery and the libraries are currently working on a project with the Advanced Poetry seminar to project poetry, still images, and video around campus, including on the substantial west wall of the library

Programming and exhibits are intertwined. In the fall of 2010, during Native American Indian Heritage Month, we created an exhibit of books that highlight Tlingit and Native American culture. Our *Wednesday Nights @ Burling* program presented first year student Lydia Mills, who talked about growing up within the Tlingit culture and the central place of the bear in her experience and in everyday Tlingit life. She provided fry bread she had prepared in her dorm to the entire audience, demonstrated beading, and led the students, faculty, staff, and community members, young and old, in stitching miniature button blankets.

Wednesday Nights @ Burling are now a tradition and attract a diverse audience including students, faculty, staff, and community members. These events have been covered by both the student and the local newspapers.

The Libraries' exhibit program has grown extensively over the past five years, and there are now exhibition areas located throughout the main floor and lower level of Burling Library. Mini exhibits are being established in locations scattered throughout the upper floors of Burling as well. Exhibits range from small displays of books on a particular topic, to exhibits created in conjunction with campus symposia or visiting authors, to multicultural or historical author exhibits. Recently, students working in our media area (known as the Listening Room) have created exhibits of materials and research posters on a particular topic. This year, students put together posters and materials in recognition of the seventy-fifth anniversary of *Porgy and*

Bess. Posters examined the performers, the controversy, and the history of this uniquely American opera. Two students describe their experience working on the exhibit:

“While working on the *Porgy and Bess* project, I learned about one of the most famous and controversial operas of all time, and also broadened my understanding of the time period as a whole. My project specifically focused on DuBose Heyward (the author of the original novel *Porgy*), the factors that influenced his writing, and the problems and issues involved in transforming the novel into an opera. I chose this topic because I thought it would be interesting to look into where the idea of the novel first originated and the atmosphere surrounding the author, especially with all the controversy associated with the opera. Through my research for this project, I learned more about the specific culture of certain regions in the United States, while also gaining insight into some of the social perceptions and conflicts during this era. This new information and material helped me expand and connect to some of the broader themes discussed in previous courses from my educational experience. “

-Pun Winichakul '13

“This project revealed to me the truly valuable resource that the Listening Room is, and also that even as a student worker here for three semesters now, there is much I have to learn about our fabulous collection. I hope my project allowed patrons to see this value as well.” Kathleen Murphy-Geiss '11.

Close mentoring is an important aspect of student-created exhibits. For example, the Collection Development Librarian works with students on selecting exhibit topics, creating the supporting materials, writing blog entries for the libraries' book review blog, and updating the exhibit page on our website.⁹ Student assistants are often able to explore topics or writers of interest to themselves; sometimes they choose topics that are connected to their academic pursuits, and sometimes they choose topics they have always wanted to know something about but haven't had time to explore. The combination of independence, public display, and recognition while working closely with a library staff member makes students an integral part of the libraries and its services, while providing them with professional-level experience that builds on the information literacy skills and the disciplinary acumen they are developing while at Grinnell College.

Special Collections also offer an important opportunity for experiential learning. Over the past three years, the Special Collections Department has mounted three major exhibitions each

⁹ <http://www.grinnell.edu/library/exhibits>

year, separate from the exhibitions overseen by the Collection Development Librarian. These feature works from our Rare Books Collection, the College Archives, our manuscript collections, and our small collection of artifacts. In 2009, we marked the 150th anniversary of the publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of the Species by Means of Natural Selection* (and the 200th anniversary of Darwin's birth) with an exhibition that showcased our first edition of *The Origin of the Species* along with works which influenced or were influenced by Darwin's theory of evolution. We also hosted a public reading of selections from Darwin's letters. Presenters—including students, faculty, and staff—and listeners passed around our first edition copy of the *Origin*, giving everyone an opportunity to encounter one of the milestones of Western intellectual history as it was encountered by its original readers.

Grinnell is fortunate to have a strong collection of primary materials in the history of the book (complemented by strong online collections), which will be significantly enhanced through a promised bequest of 450 sixteenth- and seventeenth-century printed books from a private collector. We received an initial donation of twenty-five books printed between 1505 and 1695. We mounted an exhibition and prepared a catalog of these books, curated by student assistant Tad Boehmer '12, and hosted a dinner in honor of the donor. The publicity surrounding this donation led to increased interest in our collection of rare books. During the spring semester, classes in three departments (English, French, and history) worked with the books from the exhibit and related material in Special Collections. This was an opportunity for our early-book collections and our information literacy program to converge, giving students a historical perspective on the ways in which knowledge and culture are disseminated and preserved.

The experience of curating a major exhibition offers students an opportunity to think of scholarship in a new way. Sarah J. Purcell, Director of the Rosenfield Program in Public Affairs, International Relations & Human Rights and Associate Professor of History, offers her perspective:

"The opportunity to curate an exhibit offers students a chance to use research and writing skills in a very creative way with an incredibly interactive response. It is such a valuable intellectual challenge that also can enrich our whole campus community, as others can learn directly from the exhibit itself. Curating also offers select students a valuable pre-professional experience, since many of them subsequently pursue careers in archives, museums, and historical collections."

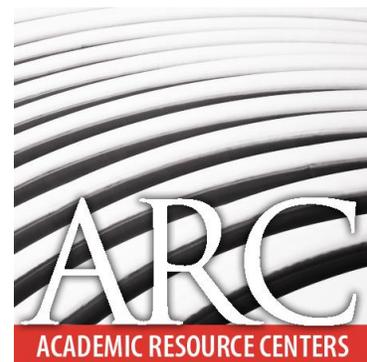
Tad Boehmer described his experience of curating an exhibition in these words:

“I believe that these inquiry-based and ‘hands-on’ methods are more challenging ways to learn, but because of that they are ultimately more fulfilling for students and more stimulating educationally. The material is thoroughly learned from a variety of angles, as opposed to remaining two-dimensional when inquiry, curiosity, and first-hand experience are left out of the equation.”

This is exactly the kind of learning Grinnell values. In fact, Boehmer’s experience was highlighted on the Grinnell College website as an example of student engagement with inquiry-based learning.¹⁰

Paths Forward: Active Collaboration, Deep Listening, and Responsive Organization

Library research—finding and evaluating information—is an integral part of a whole learning experience that also includes writing, quantitative and spatial analysis, and related skills. We believe that the library of the future—the one we are creating today—will be an active collaborator with the centers and professionals that support these skills. The Grinnell College Libraries helped to start and continue to lead the new Academic Resource Centers (ARC) initiative, which encourages collaborative service and outreach on the part of the academic support units.¹¹ ARC sponsors team-taught workshops for faculty and students and assembles interdisciplinary teams to support specific courses. A recent example was the team of a librarian, a curricular technologist, and a writing specialist who worked with a human rights course team-taught by faculty from Political Science and Religious Studies. Through ARC, we have also begun discussing the possibility of expanding the peer mentoring and peer tutoring programs operated by several of the centers into a campus-wide program offering exceptional students the opportunity to become peer mentor fellows.



The newest member of the ARC consortium is the Data Analysis and Social Inquiry Lab.¹² DASIL (pronounced “dazzle”) provides support for the use of data in classroom exercises, student research, and student and faculty research collaborations. The Data Services Librarian is a key member of the DASIL team, helping students and faculty find data and training the student mentors who work in DASIL to help students access data and prepare it for analysis. She also aids faculty and students with preserving and sharing data generated by their research.

¹⁰ <http://www.grinnell.edu/car/dev/pioneerfund/spotlight/boehmer12>

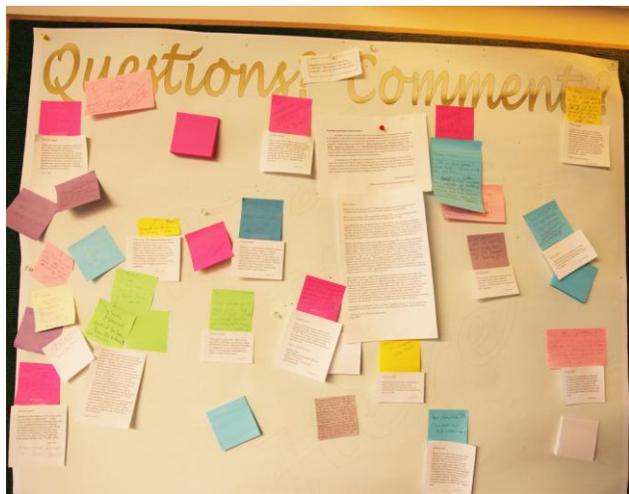
¹¹ <http://www.grinnell.edu/academic/arc>

¹² <http://www.grinnell.edu/academic/dasil>

At this time, Grinnell College does not have a centralized media service. Responsibility for media is shared between Information Technology Services, Curricular Technology, the Audio-Visual Center, and the Libraries. Through our work with ARC, however, we have been active in developing the Creative Media Initiative, the goal of which is to establish an effective collaboration of services related to pedagogical uses of media.¹³ The Listening Room Supervisor is an influential member of this group. As campus planning moves forward, centralized media services is a high priority.

Grinnell College Libraries have been working with other campus groups to bring to light their specialized collections. Several student groups and campus offices have resource collections available for community members to use. Since they are physically located in individual offices, student houses and dormitories, it isn't always obvious to people that these materials are available to them. During the summer of 2010, we added to our catalog the holdings of the Stonewall Resource Center (SRC), which has a small library to support GLBT students. In just a few weeks after adding these holdings, students connected with the SRC reported that they had seen more traffic and that visitors had mentioned seeing the titles they were looking for in the College Libraries' catalog. We are encouraged by this and are now planning to add the collections of the Concerned Black Students and the Career Development Office to our catalog.

Listening to Our Users



The Libraries are interested in gathering feedback from students in a variety of ways. There is a bulletin board located outside the Library Director's office where anyone may post a question and receive a written response from the director. Topics have ranged from suggestions for improvements to the library facilities to a discussion of perceived homophobia in the Library of Congress Classification System. In response to these postings, the Libraries have added bean bag chairs and computer tables to the

second floor lounge, installed a beverage vending machine, and provided contact information at the Library of Congress for making comments on LCCS.

¹³ <http://www.grinnell.edu/academic/cmi>

Another important venue for gathering student input is the library's student advisory group. Kathryn Vanney, a current member, describes the work this group does.

"In addition to our work responsibilities, student library employees are able to contribute to the life of the Grinnell College Libraries by serving on the Library SEPC (Student Educational Policy Committee). This group is made up of four elected student workers and two representatives from Grinnell College's Student Government Association. Together, we serve as a link between students and the Libraries. Responsibilities include giving feedback about library services, surveying students about librarians' professional performance for contract reviews, assisting in the interviews of prospective librarians, and planning events. For example, this year's SEPC is working with librarians to organize an informational panel for students interested in library and museum careers. Overall, the Library SEPC facilitates communication between students and library faculty and staff, and gives its members a glimpse into the inner workings of academic libraries."

The Libraries are concerned about students' academic development, but also about their well-being. Finals week is a time of intense pressure, and the campus looks for opportunities to help students respond to this stress in healthy ways. Study breaks are sponsored by a variety of campus groups, but the ones at Burling have become a much-loved tradition.

The Library SEPC selects student groups—from a cappella singers to the campus comedy improv troupe and the swing dance society—to provide entertainment, while the library staff bake cookies and provide milk for students during this high stress period. Well over 100 students come through the library each evening for the cookies and the performances.



Collections and Access

In 2007, the Libraries collaborated with Information Technology Services and the Dean's Office in the development of a short white paper on *Supporting Inquiry-Based Learning Under Grinnell College's Strategic Plan: Implications for Library and Information Technology Services*.¹⁴ It

¹⁴ <http://www.lib.grinnell.edu/general/missionpolicies/EKILibITVision112007.pdf>

highlights, among other points, the importance of providing primary source material appropriate for inquiry in the various disciplines taught at Grinnell. The paper sparked useful conversation with faculty, administration, and trustees and helped to provide new context for the Libraries' ongoing work. As a result, the Libraries met with groups of faculty to identify primary resources that would be high-priority purchases for our collections. Working from that list, and adding to it as new areas of research develop, we have been able to purchase access to resources such as *Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO)*, *Early English Books Online*, *Roper Center Public Opinion Archive*, *Times Digital Archive*, *Pravda Digital Archives* and several other important primary-source collections. For many of these resources we were able to add records to the library catalog, increasing the likelihood of patrons finding and using the resources. For example, students looking for an edition of Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy* will find not only the ECCO digital version, but also the first edition copy in Special Collections. We have used that example in information literacy sessions to highlight the different kinds of information carried by digital facsimiles and physical artifacts—and the particular roles each plays in literary and cultural studies. This provides a rich opportunity for students to begin to discover what is lost in the digital facsimile, while enjoying the greater accessibility that digital versions offer.



To understand primary materials (whether those are historical documents, survey or polling data, or an ecologist's field observations) students also need access to the scholarly literature that develops the questions and methods of disciplinary inquiry. Students often use interlibrary borrowing to supplement the Libraries' excellent collections. Journal articles arrive relatively quickly, often within two days, but books can be slow to come from other libraries, frequently taking more than a week. To help students get access to the books they need when they need them, the Libraries now purchase books that are requested through ILL if the request is available for purchase with overnight shipping and was published within the last five years. Books are rushed to the student requestor immediately on receipt, and usually arrive within three days of the request. Since we initiated the service in late 2007, we have purchased well over 1000 books based on ILL requests. Of these, approximately 40 percent have already been checked out more than once. We believe that this

means of developing our collection increases the likelihood that we have the resources our students need and use for their studies.

Periodic comprehensive reviews of journals, magazines, newspapers, and databases to which the Libraries subscribe help to ensure that we are spending our money in a way that makes the greatest impact on learning and research. Spurred by the economic downturn of 2008, the Libraries initiated a comprehensive review of all our subscriptions. Working closely with departments and concentrations, consulting librarians looked for opportunities to cancel databases and journals that no longer supported our evolving curriculum in order to subscribe to new resources. We also moved many print-based subscriptions to online-only. Over a period of several months, faculty collectively reviewed every journal and database subscription and recommended a large number of changes.

As a result of those changes, the Libraries gained the budget flexibility to add a significant number of new journal and database subscriptions and an additional pay-per-view service with Wiley. (We had previously arranged a pay-per-view option with Elsevier's ScienceDirect database.) All of these new subscriptions and the pay-per-view service were specific requests by individual faculty which were then thoughtfully prioritized at the department or concentration level. To create the budget flexibility we needed to add these new subscriptions, departments and concentrations recommended canceling 145 subscriptions and changing formats for 309. Overall, through a thorough review of our subscriptions, we have created a quality collection that is much more relevant to the current curriculum. This was accomplished without the animosity that often accompanies subscription reviews.

In response to user concerns voiced in our LIBQUAL survey¹⁵ and elsewhere about the speed with which new acquisitions appeared on the shelves, we conducted an analysis of our various workflows in acquisitions, cataloging, and processing, looking for ways to streamline procedures and optimize our use of time-saving techniques. Starting July 1, 2008, Technical Services implemented a new workflow. We designed a new "cataloging slip" to facilitate a different sorting of new receipts, and we developed new procedures to make it possible for student employees to catalog those items that have full-level Library of Congress cataloging records, which comprise at least half of our current receipts. We call this procedure "rapid cataloging." Cataloging staff, supplemented by circulation staff and others, also tackled the backlog of materials that had been received before July 1, completing the Library of Congress copy cataloging (DLC) backlog by early September. The non-DLC backlog has also significantly diminished. New non-rapid cataloging receipts are cataloged on the same day if there is good

¹⁵ Grinnell College Libraries' LibQUAL Survey Results. (<http://www.lib.grinnell.edu/general/LibQUAL/index.html>)

cataloging copy. Other items will not stay in cataloging more than six months. In the time from July 1 to October 31, 2007, we cataloged 4,261 books. In the same time period for 2008 we cataloged 5,233 books. Our long-term goal is to have most materials shelf-ready within one day from the time of receipt. To support this new workflow, we reconfigured the Technical Services work areas to allow for better communication and collaboration among acquisitions, processing, and cataloging. The result of this re-organization is the rapid availability of current research materials to our community.

Adapting to new expectations

The needs of our community change, and we need to be able to respond to them effectively. Burling Library was built in 1959, and although it underwent a significant remodel in 1982, it remains a mid-twentieth century building trying to accommodate the needs of a 21st century community. Responding to those needs requires a good deal of creativity.

Based on feedback from faculty, staff, and students, we have made modest changes to Burling Library. We created a new computer commons with individual and group spaces adjacent to our re-designed reference desk where individual and small group consultations take place. We developed a cozy “living room” on the main floor, which includes a tea cart with free tea for students, along with comfortable seating and a selection of recently added books for browsing.



New, more flexible furnishings encourage students to redesign their study spaces as needed. The event area has been enlarged and outfitted with more tables for relaxation, group conversation, and more comfortable seating for our *Wednesday Nights @ Burling* series. In the fall of 2010, two semi-private consultation spaces were constructed on Burling's first floor to accommodate small groups, allow

faculty to meet with students in the library, and facilitate peer-to-peer mentoring. Each accommodates up to five people around a table, with power and data. Faculty, staff, and students are able to schedule these spaces for one-on-one or small-group meetings, and they are available for student group study on a first-come, first-served basis when not reserved. In the Kistle Science Library a group study was fitted with a computer and ceiling-mounted projector to provide a convenient spot for small groups of students who need to practice presentations or have other audiovisual needs.

We are also aware that we must continually examine our policies to assure that they are aligned with the needs and goals of our community. At the request of faculty and students, we began opening both Burling and Kistle libraries weekday mornings at 7:45 a.m., rather than 8:00 a.m., so that faculty members and students could check out books and media before their early classes. This has been a welcome change; we have received positive feedback from students and faculty and, on average, over fourteen items are checked out before 8:00 a.m. every week when classes are in session. As a result of a student initiative requesting extended hours, Kistle Science Library now remains open until 1:00 a.m. five nights a week. Over the years, we have extended the hours and increased the ability to borrow material from our AV collection (the Listening Room). Once a non-circulating collection, now nearly everything circulates. We have continued to increase the length of time and number of materials that can be borrowed.

Reorganizing for the 21st century

The work of the Libraries is varied and requires a significant commitment from all staff. We are highly collaborative, but collaborative organizations can take time to reach consensus, and that can impede the flexibility and responsiveness that is needed in today's library world. To help us implement the changes that we identified in our recent self study and external review¹⁶ we

adopted a new organizational structure. Four "clusters" of related services and functions are intended to encourage close coordination while remaining flexible and minimizing operational barriers. These clusters are Technology Services; Outreach, Instruction, and Access Services; Collections Services; and Administrative Services. The "cluster" concept is



intended to encourage greater collaboration among librarians and staff and to provide each librarian-manager with at least one colleague for sharing knowledge, exploring ideas, etc. Within each cluster, two or more librarians share leadership and management responsibility for the services and functions of that cluster, including planning, goal setting, and reporting. In addition, staff representatives add their voice to the cluster management. The cluster

¹⁶ Grinnell College Libraries Self Study, 2008-2010 (<http://www.grinnell.edu/library/libselfstudy>)

managers are members of the Libraries' Management Council, the key policy-making group in the libraries.

This new organization has allowed us to move more quickly to implement projects and services. The Tutorial curriculum was developed by a sub-group of the Outreach, Instruction, and Access Cluster, discussed within the cluster, and then presented to the Management Council for final approval. The Collections Cluster led the recent successful subscription review. We are still in the early stages of this organizational structure, but it is one that we believe is best able to help us meet the challenges ahead.

Excellent libraries are more than services, collections, and policies. They are made up of creative, active, and dedicated people. Grinnell College Libraries has a remarkable staff,¹⁷ the members of which are well-integrated into the campus community and the broader library world. In 2007, the Library Systems Support Specialist was elected president of the Iowa Library Association, the first paraprofessional to serve in that position. The Library Assistant in cataloging was granted a leave to help establish a library in Kenya. Staff members have served on the campus Support Staff Relations Committee, the Staff Handbook Revision Committee (one of the only staff representatives on this campus committee), the campus Disability Awareness Committee, and the library Annual Planning Committee. Staff members have also been active in supporting the



local public library; for instance, many helped with the recent move from the old building to the new library. They are active in local and regional library organizations, attend continuing education workshops and conferences, and provide consistently excellent service to all users.

Librarians at Grinnell are faculty members, and thus each combines an active research agenda¹⁸ with campus committee responsibilities and leadership roles. Librarians have served on and been elected chair of the campus Instructional Support Committee, Faculty Organization Committee, Committee for Public Events, Convocation Committee, Campus Benefits Committee, and the Cultural Films Committee, to name a few examples. Last fall, a librarian

¹⁷ See Appendix II

¹⁸ See Appendix I

was appointed Interim Director of the Center for Prairie Studies, one of the distinguished programs at the college. Librarians have also served in state and national leadership roles, serving on the ACRL College Library Section board, the Ethnic Materials and Information Exchange Round Table, the Iowa Conservation and Preservation Committee board, the Center for Research Libraries board, and as president of the Iowa chapter of ACRL.

In our self study completed early in 2009,¹⁹ we envisioned a library "that is responsive to the teaching and learning needs of Grinnell students and faculty, and alert to the scholarly, cultural, and technological trends that shape those needs; a contributor to the intellectual program of the College, engaged in the College's teaching program through a conceptually sophisticated, discipline-sensitive information literacy program; a catalyst for scholarly and creative exchange of ideas; and a gateway to the data, scholarly literature, cultural texts, and other records needed for teaching, learning, and intellectual life at Grinnell." Visions are aspirations, of course, and not final destinations, but we are proud of the Libraries' deep integration in the life of the College, the contributions we are making to student and faculty learning, and the commitment and ambition demonstrated by staff every working day.

¹⁹ <http://www.grinnell.edu/library/about/selfstudy>

Appendix I
Selection of Scholarship by Grinnell College Library Faculty Members

Publications

Bauder, Julia. "Reprography in Libraries," in Marcia J. Bates, and Mary Niles Maack, eds., *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2010.

Engel, Kevin and Henry Walker. "Research Exercises: Immersion Experiences to Promote Information Literacy." *Journal of Computing Sciences in Colleges* vol. 21, no. 4 (April 2006): 61-68.

Fyffe, Richard and Beth Forrest Warner. "Where the Giants Stand: Protecting the Public Domain in Digitization Contracts with Commercial Publishers." *Journal of Library Administration* 42:3/4 (May 2005). Available: <http://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/dspace/handle/1808/139>.

Jones, Phillip. "The Mission of Little Star: Juana Manrique de Lara's Contribution's to Mexican Librarianship." *Libraries and the Cultural Record*. 45:4 (2010). 469-490.

Knight, Cecilia. "Buying Time: The Leveraged Use of a Library Storage Facility" in *Technical Services Quarterly* (Vol. 24, no. 4, 2007), p. 29-42.

Rod, Catherine and Rebecca Stuhr. "Using Web-based Instruction Guides to Teach Information Literacy Concepts to First-Year Students at Grinnell College." In *The Role of the Library in the First College Year*. Larry L. Hardesty, editor. Columbia, SC: National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition, University of South Carolina, 2007.

Stuhr, Rebecca. *Reading Khaled Hosseini*. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood Press, 2009. 140 pages.

Presentations

Bauder, Julia. "Folksonomies, Wikipedia, and the Semantic Web: Facilitating Culturally Appropriate Subject Access to Information on the Web." Presented at The Ethics of Information Organization, Milwaukee, WI, May 22, 2009.

Bonath, Gail, DeeAnn Allison, and Wayne Twitchell. "First Looks: Integrating Blackboard with Library Services." Presentation at Innovative Users Group, Denver Colorado, Sunday, May 21, 2006.

Engel, Kevin and Amy Roberson. "Incorporating E-Readers into the Classroom: An Experiment." Presentation at the ILA/ACRL Spring Conference 2010. Kirkwood Community College, Cedar Rapids, IA. April 23, 2010.

Fyffe, Richard and Gail Bonath: "The Quest for Balance in Providing Digital Materials for Teaching and Learning at Grinnell College," NITLE Copyright Workshop, Claremont Colleges, 9 January 2007.

Jones, Phil and Karla Erickson. "Learned Novices: The Value of Collaborative, 'Basic' Research Instruction for Students, Faculty and Librarians." ILA/ACRL Spring Conference, Grinnell, IA, 23 March 2007.

Knight, Cecilia and Catherine Rod. "Recruitment through mentoring in the Liberal Arts College Library" at the ACRL 13th National Conference in Baltimore. MD, March 30, 2007.

Rod, Catherine, Rebecca Stuhr and Phillip Jones. "The Life of a Library Text: Grinnell College's Black Library." Library History Seminar XII: "Libraries in the History of Print Culture," University of Wisconsin-Madison, September 10-12, 2010.

Rod, Catherine and Phil Jones. "'Wow--I Can Touch That?' Using Special Collections to Expand Information Literacy." 38th Annual LOEX (Library Orientation Exchange) Conference, Dearborn, MI, April 29-May 1, 2010.

Stuhr, Rebecca. "African American Autobiography: Illuminating History." Paper presented at the *Joint Conference for Librarians of Color*, Dallas, TX, October 13, 2006. To be included in the JCLC conference proceedings.

Appendix II
Grinnell College Libraries Faculty and Staff

Lisa Adkins	Library Assistant (Interlibrary Services - Lending)
Julia Bauder	Data Services Librarian and Assistant Professor
Sheryl Bissen	Library Systems Support Specialist
Beth Bohstedt	Manager of Access Services
Gail Bonath	Systems Librarian and Associate Professor
Nancy Cadmus	Library Assistant (Serials)
Sharon Clayton	Administrative Assistant to the Librarian of the College
Kevin Engel	Science Librarian and Associate Professor
Richard Fyffe	Rosenthal Librarian of the College and Associate Professor
Leslie Gardner	Library Assistant (Interlibrary Services Coordinator)
Chris Gaunt	Desk Supervisor (Evenings/Weekends)
Kim Gilbert	Library Assistant (Acquisitions)
Lauren Hester	Desk Supervisor (Evenings/Weekends) & Library Assistant (Serials)
Donna Hoeksema	Library Assistant (Cataloging)
Chris Jones	Library Assistant (Special Collections)
Phil Jones	Reader Services Librarian and Associate Professor
Randy Jones	Listening Room Supervisor
R. Cecilia Knight	Associate Librarian of the College and Associate Professor
Karla Landers	Library Assistant (Acquisitions & Government Documents)
Christopher McKee	Senior Faculty
Kathy Peterson	Library Assistant (Serials)
Jean Reavis	Library Assistant (Cataloging)
Catherine Rod	Special Collections Librarian & Archivist of the College, Associate Professor
Sherry Shults	Desk Supervisor (Days)
Shealey Sieck	Library Assistant (Cataloging)
Rebecca Stuhr	Collection Development & Preservation Librarian and Associate Professor

December 2010