



School Public Special Academic

# LIBRARY INSTRUCTION ROUND TABLE NEWS

*The purpose of LIRT is to advocate library instruction as a means for developing competent library and information use as a part of life-long learning.*

**LIRT**

December 2009 volume 32 no. 2 [online edition](#)

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## From The President

By Lisa Williams

**G**reetings from chilly Wilmington, North Carolina. This recent cold weather system should get us in the mood for the 2010 Midwinter Meeting in Boston. With this tight economy, I'm looking forward to exploring some of the free options Boston offers, such as the self-guided iPod tours, tours of the USS Constitution and the nation's first public library, and walking the Freedom Trail. After all of that touring, I will definitely be ready to sit and enjoy the LIRT Discussion Forum on Sunday from 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. I hope you will join me for some interesting conversations! The room location is not available yet, so please check online at the ALA website for more details.

Speaking of free resources, check out two great ways to learn more about LIRT and communicate with other

LIRT members online through "ALA Connect" and "Facebook". These resources are wonderful tools for learn about upcoming LIRT events.

You can find LIRT's Facebook page at:

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=63223076802> and our ALA Connect page at: <http://connect.ala.org/lirt>.



I look forward to seeing you all in Boston — and don't forget to pack a winter coat!

### LIRT Midwinter Meeting Times:

#### Saturday, 8:00 am - 12:00 pm block

8:00 – 9:00 LIRT Executive Committee I Meeting (CLOSED)  
 9:00 – 10:30 LIRT Steering Committee I Meeting  
 10:30 – 12:00 LIRT All Committees I Meeting

#### Sunday, 10:30 am - 12:00 pm block:

10:30 - 12:00 Discussion Forum

#### Monday, 8:00 - 12:00 pm block:

8:00 – 9:00 LIRT All Committees II Meeting  
 9:00 – 10:30 LIRT Steering Committee II Meeting  
 10:30 – 12:00 LIRT Executive Committee II Meeting (CLOSED)



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# Check These Out!

Sharon Ladenson  
Gender Studies and Communications Librarian  
Michigan State University Libraries  
ladenson@msu.edu

**P**roviding library instruction to international patrons provides unique rewards and challenges. What are some effective techniques for communicating with international patrons? How can library staff members develop keen listening skills to facilitate cross-cultural communication? What are some of the key information needs of international students? What teaching programs have librarians implemented abroad? Check these out, and enjoy!

Amsberry, Dawn. "Talking the Talk: Library Classroom Communication and International Students." **The Journal of Academic Librarianship** 34.4 (2008): 354-357.

Amsberry reviews the literature of second language acquisition theory and the library instruction classroom and makes recommendations for teaching librarians who work with international students. The literature indicates that when working with beginning language students, instructors modify their speech in a variety of ways. For example, teachers speak at a slower rate and use shorter sentences with simplified vocabulary. Based on her literature review and analysis, the author makes several recommendations for library instructors, including knowing the language level of students; speaking clearly at a normal rate (using a slower rate can seem patronizing, and some researchers indicate that speaking slowly is not necessarily more effective); avoiding or taking care to explain idioms and cultural references; providing a glossary of library terms; and asking open-ended questions.

Amsberry, Dawn. "Using Effective Listening Skills with International Patrons." **Reference Services Review** 37.1 (2009): 10-19.

Amsberry reviews the literature on the role of the listener in perceiving accents and makes recommendations to library faculty and staff who seek to improve their listening skills when interacting with international patrons. She explains that the experience and the attitude of the listener shape his or her comprehension of accented speech. For example, a person who has substantial experience with international students, such as a seasoned English as a Second Language instructor, generally understands accented speech more easily. The author notes that as attitude shapes the listening comprehension process, staying positive is key to facilitating effective communication. She also notes the importance of listening for meaning, rather than for individual sounds, and of carefully identifying the topic of communication (as context shapes effective comprehension). Libraries should consider implementing training programs that raise awareness about biases and beliefs specific to accented speech. Many listeners may not realize that non-native English speakers who learn the language after puberty maintain their accents, despite extensive practice. Training programs should also focus on practice in listening to accented speech. Amsberry notes that George Mason University's **Speech Accent Archive** (<http://accent.gmu.edu/>) is a good tool for listening practice.



Wang, Jiannan. "Toward Understanding International Students: A Study Conducted at Middle Tennessee State University." **The Southeastern Librarian** 56.3 (2008): 4-10.

Wang developed and distributed a survey to assess the library usage and information competency skills of international students at Middle Tennessee State

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University. The results indicated that while most international students visited the library regularly to find books and journals, not all of them used the online catalog and databases (twenty-three percent of respondents indicated that they never used online databases). Those who did use databases relied heavily on general indexes, such as EBSCO's Academic Search Premier and Gale's General OneFile, rather than subject-specific indexes in their fields. The author also assessed the instruction preferences of international students and found that a higher number preferred one-on-one instruction. While a large number of the respondents (forty-five percent) indicated that they would ask a reference librarian if they needed help, forty-two percent also said that they had never asked questions in the library. The author recommends the development and implementation of additional marketing efforts to international students, including the promotion of subject-specific library instruction. Wang also recommends providing one-on-one research instruction sessions to accommodate the higher percentage of international students who prefer individualized instruction.

Young, Stephen. "Teaching Legal Research: Taking the Show on the Road." *AALL Spectrum*, 13.2 (2008): 14-17, 37.

Young describes a course on American Legal Research that Catholic University law librarians offer to students at the Polish Jagiellonian University. The course covers the use of both fee-based legal databases and free Web resources. In order to engage the Polish students, law librarians elicit discussion about the foreign culture and the lives of law students in the U.S. (such as the obsession with law school rankings). Librarians also extend learning outside of the classroom by showing evening feature films that address an area of legal research and/or the U.S. legal system. Using the films stimulates additional active discussion of topics covered during class. For example, the students watched *Anatomy of a Murder*, which provided a brief illustration of the use of American Law Reports. While Polish students often perceive librarians as strict information gatekeepers, the author hopes that allowing students to see librarians as engaged and enthusiastic instructors has helped to dispel such views.



by Jeff Knapp  
jeff.knapp@psu.edu

## From The Editor

**G**reetings fellow LIRTers!  
In our last issue, I mentioned how we are considering making LIRT News an online-only publication due to the substantial savings we would get by not having to pay printing and shipping costs. I also asked for your feedback on what you think of the idea.

I want to thank those of you who took the time to email me your feelings about it. Many of you have expressed a preference for online only, but there are others who have expressed a preference for a printed issue. In any event, all opinions raised good points and were well-reasoned.

Nothing has been decided at this point, and most likely, nothing will be decided until the Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. this summer. We are just interested in your thoughts for now, and in the meantime, the Newsletter Committee is thinking about ways we could take the newsletter online but still preserve readability and ease of use.

If any of you would still like to let me know how you feel about this, please do! If you would like to see the newsletter go online only, how would you like to see it done? An email full of content and links like the American Libraries Direct emails from ALA? An email with a link to a PDF file hosted online? We're interested in what you think.

A Happy New Year to you all, and I hope to see you in Boston!

Have you created an instruction program or developed a unique classroom strategy?

Please share your experiences with LIRT.  
Send your articles to Jeff Knapp (jeff.knapp@psu.edu)



*Dear Tech Talk* – With so much Web 2.0 technology available today, I believe that my library can use these tools to enhance collaboration in our work. However, others are not so convinced. How do I pursue this idea; what’s available; what are others doing; where should I look? —Convincing Colleagues to Collaborate

*Dear CCC* – Integrating Web 2.0 collaboration tools into the work environment is a great idea. There are a wide variety of tools available and many institutions are moving in this direction.

The first issue to recognize and accept is that the implementation of collaboration tools at work is akin to the implementation of technology in instruction—just as technology doesn’t improve poor instruction, the implementation of collaboration tools doesn’t magically improve team work; a “culture of collaboration” must exist. Interestingly enough, this culture may actually be antithetical to traditional library work environments. As Hastings points out, “To create a culture of collaboration, policies have to be in place so that collaborating is easy and desirable. Traditional organizations reward the individual; organizations that have a culture of collaboration reward the team.” (7) So, what to do if this culture is missing from your institution? One solution is to begin by fostering that culture within a specific unit, and if successful, use that experience as a model for wider implementation of collaborative ventures.

Assuming that—at some level—a collaborative culture exists, there may be additional issues to work through, such as: administratively blocked access to the tools; policies that prohibit the storage of data with third party vendors; managers’ concerns that employees will be less productive because of on-the-job time spent on the “personal” side of these tools; or employees’ unwillingness to learn how to use these tools. Related to personal use of these tools while at work—if employees use these tools for personal reasons, they are very familiar with the tools and their capabilities; consequently, they can better see the potential for these tools in some work environments and use them effectively in those environments. Likewise, if employees are familiar with one or more of these tools, it is less unlikely they will be reluctant to use them for work and less likely they will be averse to learning to use new tools. For those less familiar with these tools, they can learn to use them informally from knowledgeable peers or in more formal instruction sessions—also led by peers. Consequently, it’s a matter of managers trusting that those they supervise will use these tools responsibly while at work.

Of the issues mentioned above, blocked access and off-site storage of data may be the most challenging ones to overcome. These issues are often controlled by policies and entities that lie outside the library. If communicating a valid need for access to and use of these tools doesn’t yield results, one option is to find alternative tools that are accessible and provide similar functions. Regarding the issue of off-site storage of data, the best argument for permission to do this is to insure that no sensitive data will be hosted by the vendor.

So the environment is conducive to collaboration, and the use of Web 2.0 collaboration tools is viable. The group needs to make decisions on the appropriate tool or tools to use. Because collaboration implies multiple people working together, communication and sharing are essential ingredients for success. Consequently, any tools used to enhance the collaboration environment need to support these two functions.





## Helping High School Students Become 'College Ready'

The LIRT committee, Transitions to College, hosted a brown bag discussion that followed the main LIRT program at the ALA Annual Conference in Chicago. As with all LIRT committees, Transitions encompasses multiple library types: school, public, academic, and special. All of these libraries can be involved in developing the research and information literacy skills of high school students.

One goal of the ALA discussion was to initiate conversations among librarians representing these different library types. The 25 attendees broke into small groups and centered their conversations around four facets of college readiness identified by David T. Conley in "Rethinking College Readiness," an article from the Spring 2008 issue of *The New England Journal of Higher Education*. We were honored to have Dr. David Barr, Founding Director of 21CIF (the 21st Century Information Fluency project in IL), as facilitator.

The consensus was that Conley's facets, cognitive strategies and academic behaviors, directly relate to the

transition of library skills from high school to college. Both librarians and teachers work with students on their time-management and problem-solving skills, as well as helping them develop critical thinking abilities. Attendees voiced the familiar challenges and need for working more closely with teachers and academics.



In addition, collaborations among school, public, special and academic libraries can help students improve their research skills before the transition from high school to college. LIRT Transitions member, Jeanne Swedo, gave us an example. She

initiated a collaboration among 43 schools to open lines of communication between secondary school librarians and higher education librarians in south Orange County, California.

Dr. Barr suggested in his wrap-up that librarians and library organizations have multiple entry points into such collaborations, depending on time and resources. On a local level we can focus on connections with our teachers. Further afield are district, state, national and international levels of collaboration. He cited the American Diploma Project, a network of 35 states working together to make college and career readiness a priority by improving college preparation in their schools. See: <http://www.achieve.org/node/604>

ALA Connect is providing a virtual, collaborative, workspace on a host of topics. Of interest may be the K-16 Information Literacy Community: <http://connect.ala.org/node/75389>

For further communication with the Transitions to College committee, e-mail the co-chairs:  
Judith Arnold: [ay4047@wayne.edu](mailto:ay4047@wayne.edu)  
Paula Garrett: [pgarrett@imsa.edu](mailto:pgarrett@imsa.edu)

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Editor: Jeffrey A. Knapp, Assistant Librarian  
Penn State, Altoona - Robert E. Eiche Library,  
3000 Ivyside Park, Altoona, PA 16601  
[jeff.knapp@psu.edu](mailto:jeff.knapp@psu.edu)

**Contributions to be considered for the March 2010 issue must be sent to the editor by January 15, 2010.**

Send claims to Darlena Davis, HRDR, 800-545-2433, X4281, American Library Association, 50 E. Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611.

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The authors of an EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative (ELI) report identify four traits of good collaboration tools:

- Promotion of communication
- Sharing of diagrams, photographs, or similar objects
- Provision of natural interactions
- Ease of use and adaptation (Lomas 4)

Fichter elaborates, suggesting that communication involves: frequency of communication, asynchronous communication (non-simultaneous) vs. synchronous communication (simultaneous), text vs. audio vs. video, and access to archived communication; suggests that sharing involves real time sharing vs. repository access, creation/editing/approval roles, simple vs. complex approval processes, and version control needs; and suggests that management involves how many users and degrees of standardization. (50)

Fichter also suggests that knowing the environment is essential when selecting collaborative tools:

- What tools are already available?
- What resources (financial and human) are available to provide support?
- How willing are others to invest in learning something new?
- How supportive are the stakeholders and administrators? (50)

Last, in selecting collaborative tools, the group must have a thorough understanding of their needs and the desired end result(s). A full-blown groupware solution may not be necessary if the desired outcome is a policies and procedures wiki. An online conferencing tool may not be appropriate if all the group members can easily meet or if e-mail effectively meets their communication and sharing needs.

Before looking at specific tools, an examination of advantages and disadvantages is in order. Not surprisingly, the advantages are many, especially in the right circumstances. Web 2.0 collaboration tools:

- Are easily accessible and often free or relatively inexpensive
- Are familiar to many staff, which results in low learning curves and allows the transfer of skills from one tool to other tools
- Enable collaboration with colleagues at a distance
- May support both synchronous and asynchronous communication
- Increase the process of creating, editing, reviewing documents
- Simplify the management of projects and workflows
- Provide a single source of information and documents related to projects
- May provide RSS feeds for update notifications



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Because most of these tools are hosted by third party vendors, many of the same issues associated with “cloud computing” apply when using these tools—issues such as:

- What can the third party vendor do with the content they host, particularly as it relates to privacy and sharing of content?
- Does the vendor provide any data back-up services?
- A few of these web-based tools have offline capabilities, but for the most part, access is dependent on an Internet connection.
- Most of these services—although available at no cost—require the establishment of an account and many times all members of the team must also have accounts.
- The free accounts may only provide a limited set of functions or they may have restrictions on file sizes and/or storage capacity.

Ultimately, the advantages seem to outweigh the disadvantages because library staff are using Web 2.0 collaboration tools to improve their productivity and efficiency. For example, at the Baylor University Libraries:

- Staff in the digitization unit use dotProject to manage digitization projects. Additionally, each project includes a link to a detailed Google Docs spreadsheet in which student workers record the completion of steps in complex digitization procedures. Staff in the digitization unit use these spreadsheets to see the current status of any one project and also to gather statistical information from each of the projects.
- Metadata staff established a wiki to record the amount of time spent on each step of processing electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs). By reviewing the information in this wiki, the metadata staff identified changes to make in the ETD processes that will result in more efficient processing of ETDs.
- Staff organizing a multi-day event that required volunteer “hosts” used a single Google Docs document to enable staff volunteers to sign-up for a time slots during that event.
- The library website uses a Google calendar to display library hours for all the Baylor Libraries, which has significantly reduced the amount of time needed to maintain this information for 7 libraries.

**Other uses of Web 2.0 collaborative tools by library staff include using:**

- A Google form to collect responses from multiple member libraries regarding their willingness to accept individual terms of a consortium license agreement
- Wikis to manage and implement new services or systems
- Blogs to provide library renovation updates
- Wikis for collaborative grant writing, strategic plans, and library policies and procedures (Lombardo 135-139)
- Wikis to maintain answers to frequently asked and/or difficult reference questions

Additionally, Hastings provides several examples (31-33), including: the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga Library Building Project wiki ([http://wiki.lib.utc.edu/index.php/Library\\_Building\\_Project](http://wiki.lib.utc.edu/index.php/Library_Building_Project)); and the Drexel Engineering Information Resources Awareness Campaign (<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=4327909570>).

To move forward in the use of collaborative tools, it’s helpful to see some of the options available. Hastings provides a broad overview using the categories: Calendars, Social Networking Sites, Bookmarking, Wikis, Documents, and Blogs. (19-27) Using some of Hastings’s categories and adding additional ones, a variety of

collaboration tools are listed below. Most of these are web based, freely available or have free options that provide limited functionality.

### **Calendars**

- Google Calendar (<http://calendar.google.com>)
- 30 Boxes (<http://30boxes.com>)

### **Brainstorming . . .**

- Bubbl.us (<http://www.bubbl.us>)
- MindMeister (<http://www.mindmeister.com>)

### **Flow Charts/Floor Plans**

- Gliffy (<http://www.gliffy.com>)
- Lovely Chart (<http://www.lovelycharts.com>)

### **Document Creation/Sharing**

- Google Docs (<http://docs.google.com>)
- Glide (<http://glideos.com>)
- Scribd (<http://www.scribd.com>) – a “social publishing” company
- Slideshare (<http://www.slideshare.net>)
- ThinkFree (<http://member.thinkfree.com/>)
- Writeboard (<http://writeboard.com>)
- Zoho (<http://www.zoho.com>) – actually comprises 20 separate modules

### **Online Meetings**

- Dimdim (<http://www.dimdim.com>)
- LearnCentral (<http://www.learncentral.org/user/vroomreg>) -- a free, limited version of Elluminate
- TalkShoe (<http://www.talkshoe.com/>)
- Twiddla (<http://www.twiddla.com>)
- Vyew (<http://vyew.com>)
- Yugma (<http://www.yugma.com>)

### **Project Management**

- Basecamp (<http://basecamphq.com>)
  - dotProject (<http://www.dotproject.net>)
  - “Get Stuff Done” (<http://apps.new.facebook.com/getstuffdone/project.php?id=86820>) – a Facebook application
  - Project2Manage (<http://www.project2manage.com/>)
  - Zoho Projects (<http://www.zoho.com/projects>)
- Groupware – “a suite of applications that can be found on their own, but are put together into a groupware package for the convenience of the collaborative team” (Hastings 28)
- Google Groups (<http://groups.google.com/>)
  - Grou.ps (<http://grou.ps>)
  - ALA Connect (<http://connect.ala.org/>) – provided by ALA to support ALA-related committee work and online networking among ALA members . . .
  - SharePoint (<http://tinyurl.com/ygkkyd>) – may be available as part of an institution’s Microsoft agreement



## Others

- Drop.io (<http://drop.io>) – a private, file-sharing service
- FriendFeed (<http://www.friendfeed.com>) – a “lifestreaming” tool, which pulls together multiple Web 2.0 applications, displays all of the activity on those applications in one spot, and provides a single FriendFeed URL that contains all of the updates from a group in one place. (Hastings 27)
- Google Wave (<http://wave.google.com>) – an online communication and collaboration tool that presents seamless real-time interactions
- Jing (<http://www.jingproject.com>) – adds visuals to online conversations
- UStream (<http://www.ustream.tv>) – a live, interactive video broadcast platform

A special note regarding Google Wave--at this time (October), Google Wave is a new service from Google that is still in limited release. There is a lot of “buzz” about Google Wave!! Created by the Google Maps developers, Google Wave uses real-time collaboration (blending e-mail, IM, and wikis), provides a “play back” feature (which enhances asynchronous communication), and--most importantly--provides a variety of APIs which will extend the capabilities of Google Wave as developers work with the APIs in different environments--in the same way developers have used Google Maps APIs to incorporate Google Maps in different environments. According to Harris, Google Wave represents “a true paradigm shift that will reinvent how we communicate and collaborate online.” (12) Google Wave has interesting potential and bears further study. To gain a better understanding of the significant changes presented in Google Wave, watch the video of the Google Wave announcement and demonstration which was recorded at Google I|O in May 2009 (<http://wave.google.com/help/wave/about.html>).

In conclusion, look at your environment--if a culture of collaboration exists or is being nurtured, if you need to work with colleagues at a distance, if you have easy access to Web 2.0 collaboration tools and policies that enable their use, then leverage existing collaboration tools to enhance the productivity of collaborative work and monitor developing tools for the potential they provide. Like much emerging technology, the use of Web 2.0 collaboration tools is limited only by the imagination of those who work with them.

## Additional Resources

Bejune, Matthew, and Jana Ronan. **Social Software in Libraries**. Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries, 2008.

Bell, Mary Ann, and Tricia Kuon. "Home Alone! Still Collaborating." **Knowledge Quest** 37.4 (2009): 52-55.

Chu, Samuel Kai-Wah. "Using Wikis in Academic Libraries." **Journal of Academic Librarianship** 35.2 (2009): 170-76.

Collaboration Services (125 sites) : Web 2.0 Directory : eConsultant <<http://web2.econsultant.com/collaboration-groups-teams-services.html>>

Fichter, Darlene. "The Many Forms of E-Collaboration: Blogs, Wikis, Portals, Groupware, Discussion Boards, and Instant Messaging." **Online** 29.4 (2005): 48-50.

Fredrick, Kathy. "A Gaggle of Goodies from Google." **School Library Media Activities Monthly** 25.4 (2008): 44-46.

---. "An Open Book: Life Online." **School Library Media Activities Monthly** 25.4 (2008): 57-58.

Google Directory: Computers > Software > Groupware > Open Source <[http://www.google.com/Top/Computers/Software/Groupware/Open\\_Source/](http://www.google.com/Top/Computers/Software/Groupware/Open_Source/)>

Google Directory: Computers > Software > Project Management > Web Based > Open Source <[http://www.google.com/Top/Computers/Software/Project\\_Management/Web\\_Based/Open\\_Source/](http://www.google.com/Top/Computers/Software/Project_Management/Web_Based/Open_Source/)>

Google Docs in Scribd <<http://tinyurl.com/ykmbkag>>

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Gube, Jacob. Six Revisions: 15 Free Tools for Web-Based Collaboration. 2009 <<http://sixrevisions.com/tools/15-free-tools-for-web-based-collaboration/>>

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Lomas, Cyprien, Michael Burke, and Carie L. Page. Collaboration Tools. ELI Paper 2 Vol. EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative,





## STANDING COMMITTEES

### **Adult Learners**

This committee is charged with assisting library professionals to more effectively serve adult learners.

### **Conference Program**

This committee shall be responsible for annual program preparation and presentation.

### **Liaison**

This committee shall initiate and maintain communication with groups within the American Library Association dealing with issues relevant to library instruction and shall disseminate information about these groups' activities.

### **Membership**

This committee shall be responsible for publicizing the Round Table's purposes, activities and image; and for promoting membership in the Round Table.

### **Newsletter**

The committee shall be responsible for soliciting articles, and preparing and distributing LIRT News.

### **Organization and Planning**

This committee shall be responsible for long-range planning and making recommendations to guide the future direction of LIRT.

### **Teaching, Learning, and Technology**

This committee will be responsible for identifying and promoting the use of technology in library instruction.

### **Top 20**

This committee shall be responsible for monitoring the library instruction literature and identifying high quality library-instruction related articles from all types of libraries.

### **Transitions to College**

This committee builds and supports partnerships between school, public, and academic librarians to assist students in their transition to the academic library environment.

### **Web Advisory**

This committee shall provide oversight and overall direction for the LIRT Web site.

*Please see our online  
committee volunteer form at  
<http://fleetwood.baylor.edu/lirt/volform.php>*



Library Instruction Round Table News  
c/o Darlena Davis  
American Library Association  
50 E. Huron Street  
Chicago, IL 60611