

ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award  
Application 2018

# The College of Western Idaho Library



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Attached: Letters of Support

## Introduction

“The library staff has been so helpful. CWI librarians are rockstars! I always get the articles and advice I need—even when I don’t know that I need it! The staff is super proactive, supportive, enthusiastic & encouraging. Great job! Keep being awesome.”

—*Student Comment, CWI Library Student Survey 2018*

Less than a decade old, the College of Western Idaho (CWI) is a higher educational institution that operates on the backs of a passionate, motivated staff and faculty that put students at the center of our mission. One can perhaps best understand life at CWI by understanding what it is not: it is not your average, established, adequately funded community college. The College owns only one building at our main (Nampa) campus and leases a smattering of facilities across the Boise metropolitan area. Our college is funded at a tax rate that is approximately ten percent of the tax rate that supports other institutions in our region, and our leadership continues to seek avenues through which to build facilities and infrastructure to support the more than thirty thousand students who now depend upon the opportunities we provide.



Likewise, one can perhaps best understand the College of Western Idaho Library by understanding what we do not have: we do not have a building; we have small spaces within leased buildings at our two main college campus locations. Our total square footage at two leased facilities is less than 7,000 square feet, which we supplement with an off-site location for additional materials. We do not have funds: the Library’s entire budget for the 2018 fiscal year, including staffing and benefits, was just over \$900,000. We do not have expertise: nearly all of our staff came to CWI Library for their first professional position and have had to learn and invent their job from scratch.

Yet even in a poverty of resources, we excel. Our seven full-time and twenty part-time staff members reflect the ultimate in student-centrism, flexibility, and enthusiasm; through these qualities we achieve a level of service and a breadth of resources that would otherwise be impossible. We are creative and agile in the ways that corporate startups have taught us are successful: we approach our work with a willingness to try and fail, knowing that those failures bring us closer to greater success. We launch new services when we see a need, adjust policy

to accommodate exceptions, drop old projects that never did what we had hoped, and approach colleagues on campus with collaborative eagerness.

It's working. We know it's working because we can see our positive impact on everyday life for the tens of thousands of people from endlessly diverse backgrounds who come to us to improve their lives through education. We invite you, through this report, to experience the way we work and serve our community here at the College of Western Idaho.

## About the College of Western Idaho

The College of Western Idaho is a comprehensive community college founded in 2007 serving over 31,000 students annually in the Boise metropolitan area and beyond. CWI offers a full range of academic and career-technical courses leading to an Associate of Arts or Science degree, Associate of Applied Science degrees, continuing education, and certificates. CWI also offers Basic Skills Education, Dual Credit for high school students, and fast-track career training for working professionals. Classes are offered at a variety of locations throughout the Treasure Valley or online during the day, evening, and weekends. Ninety percent of CWI's students are part-time. For more information, see CWI's [Facts at a Glance](#).

A young institution, CWI began offering academic classes in 2009 under a Memorandum of Agreement with the College of Southern Idaho, CSI, which provided accreditation oversight as CWI pursued independent accreditation. CWI experienced explosive growth from day one, with enrollment leaping by the thousands each year. College faculty and staff sprinted to build programs, services, spaces, and resources that could sustain the community's appetite for affordable higher education. In 2012 CWI was granted candidacy for accreditation by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, NWCCU, and in 2016 received independent accreditation.

CWI functions according to the following mission, vision, and core themes:

**Mission:** The College of Western Idaho expands learning and life opportunities, encourages individual advancement, contributes to Idaho's economic growth, strengthens community prosperity, and develops leaders.

**Vision:** By 2040, the College of Western Idaho will be a best-in-class, comprehensive community college that will influence individual advancement and the intellectual and economic prosperity of Western Idaho. By providing a broad range of highly accessible learning opportunities, this Vision will be realized through the College's Presence, Practice, and Impact.

**Core Themes:**

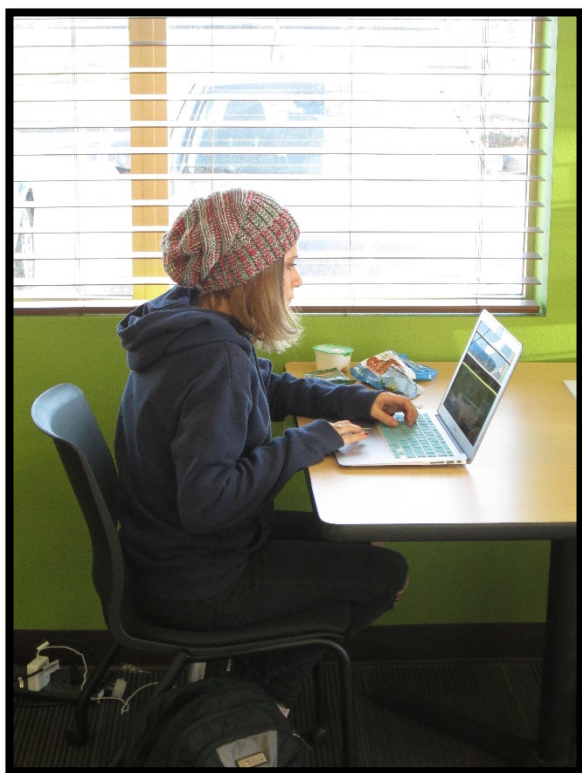
- *Student Success.* CWI values its students and is committed to supporting their success in reaching their educational and career goals.
- *Instructional Excellence.* CWI will provide the highest quality instructional programs, which help learners achieve their goals and that also help the community and region to prosper.
- *Community Connections.* CWI will bring the College into the communities it serves in meaningful ways by providing a variety of educational and enrichment programs including partnerships for economic development and general community connections.
- *Organizational Stewardship.* CWI finds strength through its people and viability in its operations and infrastructure; therefore, the College will continually evaluate its organizational and financial health to ensure sustainability. This Core Theme addresses resources and organizational processes that enable the other Core Themes.
- *Inclusive Excellence.* CWI will embrace the strengths created through diversity and will adopt and promote inclusiveness in its practices.

## CWI Library Overview

“I think the CWI library is absolutely amazing! The librarians respond to e-mails quickly, answer questions effectively, and the entire system is easy to use. I'm very pleased with the library at CWI, which isn't something I can say about other schools or universities!”

—*Student Comment, CWI Library Student Survey 2018*

Like most of the College, CWI Library did not exist ten years ago. By 2011, the Library was housed in a single large classroom of roughly one thousand square feet with slightly more than 2,000 physical books, an OPAC whose most common results page announced “No results,” a one-page website that primarily redirected patrons to partner institutions’ resources, and two



permanent staff: the director and a library assistant, neither of whom held an advanced degree. As the first visit of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities neared, however, College leaders began to realize the importance of a building a strong academic library to support the curriculum and community. The first library director stepped down and a new director with an MLS was hired. The NWCCU report granting the College initial accreditation, “Comprehensive Initial Candidacy Peer-Evaluation Report Fall 2011,” listed five “Recommendations” for the College, or areas requiring immediate attention and improvement. Item #4 read as follows:

“While the College of Western Idaho has made admirable progress toward acquisition of library materials and enhancing the library’s virtual presence, the committee did not find evidence of sufficient library infrastructure, staffing, or holdings to achieve the learning

outcomes of CWI’s rapidly expanding academic programs. Accordingly, the committee recommends immediate action to increase library services, staffing, and materials to adequately support programs at all campus locations.”

The directive was clear. With new leadership in place and the support of the College’s accrediting body, CWI Library’s trajectory skyrocketed into a dramatic transformation. Between 2012 and 2016, CWI Library grew from an immature, underdeveloped organization into a leading community college library focused on student learning and innovation. In those five years, for example, the Library:

- Migrated from SirsiDynix to Worldshare Management Systems and WorldCat Local

- Selected a full suite of over sixty databases and online resources appropriate to the CWI curriculum, including ebooks and streaming video, and brought all resource licensing in-house
- Implemented lightning-fast demand-driven acquisitions, purchasing items requested by students, staff, and faculty, and delivering them within an average of four business days
- Launched a “Mail to Me” service offering Netflix-style postage-paid delivery of physical books for students
- Developed a reserve textbook collection that includes every course text requested by students each semester
- Increased information literacy instruction sessions by 844%
- Moved into a larger, 5,000 square foot main library, added a second location, 1,500 square feet, and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with a nearby college to lease surplus compact shelving as an “off-site storage” location
- Selected and added over 22,000 physical items
- Expanded the website from one page to dozens, implemented EZProxy authentication, and integrated search tools, online chat, and research guides
- Increased staffing from 2 FTE (one librarian) to 7 FTE (five librarians)
- Developed plans for a 30,000 square-foot Library Learning Commons to be located in a future CWI Student Center

When the NWCCU returned in 2016, they discovered an entirely new CWI Library. Their report granting the College initial, independent accreditation, listed five “Commendations,” or areas of achievement. Item #3 read as follows:

“The evaluation committee commends the College of Western Idaho’s library for its commitment to grow the collection and library services to meet the information needs of students and faculty, its responsiveness to faculty requests in building the collection, and the quality of information literacy sessions taught by the librarians.”

Today’s CWI Library is a place that knows all about transformation, and whose primary goal is to pay it forward by supporting students as they transform their own lives. Built on a “culture of yes,” our Library approaches every interaction with a student, staff, or faculty member with the goal of finding a way to fill their needs. This is not a library that points to policy as an excuse not to do things: we believe policy should be written to empower our mission, vision, and strategic goals. If it doesn’t, then it’s time to rewrite the policy.



While the Library's facilities are — as one architect put it — “dramatically undersized,” the staff's incredible passion, enthusiasm, creativity, and energy more than compensate for the diminutive spaces. In fact, students regularly gush about the Library's services, resources, and staff: students who responded to the Library's annual student survey in 2018 gave the Library a 94% approval rating, commenting, for example:

- “The library to be honest is freaking amazing. Everyone that works here is wonderful. I love the environment and the ease that I can get the things I need.”
- “I think the CWI library takes good care of the students which is a good thing.”
- “Your customer service is amazing. I am never afraid to ask a question because they are so nice. I have requested a couple of items that the library didn't have and they actually got them!! I was shocked! You guys rock!”
- “I really appreciate your concern for us students. I love the resources available and the spaces to study.”
- “I think the CWI library is awesome! And I think they do their jobs well, so there isn't really anything they can improve. They're always friendly and helpful.”
- “You guys are awesome : You're super nice and helpful when I come in and you've got lots of great resources.”
- “The CWI Library is doing well by helping thousands of CWI students in their researches and their work. They are not just helping students but give them the freedom to work in a friendly manner. Keep the good work and hard work you provide to everyone with respect and dignity. Thank you so much for all you do.”

More of these quotes appear throughout this application to illustrate our emphasis upon customer service and support for our student community.

## Mission and Vision

**Mission:** The College of Western Idaho Library is a hub of campus life that supports the teaching and learning goals of the College through activities such as integrated information literacy instruction and faculty collaboration. We create a welcoming, inclusive environment where members of the CWI community can meet, collaborate, learn, and grow. We provide the resources, services, virtual platforms, and physical spaces necessary for research, exploration, and the creation of new knowledge.

**Vision:** The College of Western Idaho Library will provide a vibrant learning environment that ensures access to relevant and reliable information in multiple formats with an emphasis on intellectual freedom. We will display our passion for information and research through our teaching, consultations, and one-on-one collaboration with students, faculty, staff, and community members. Through these and other endeavors, we will empower members of the college community to achieve greater success in their educations and careers.

The remainder of this report is structured by the Library's major focus areas, with highlights of major initiatives and accomplishments described within each area.



## Focus Area 1: Guide Research

Library staff meet with students, staff, and faculty to answer questions, cultivate research skills, and assist with complex projects.

“I had a serious set of problems this past semester - rigid parameters set by my instructor - and I required help from the CWI librarians to get it sorted out. You guys were fantastic and helped me find the resources to turn in a stellar assignment! You guys ROCK!”

“When acquiring the literacy badges, I was required to ask one of your librarians a question. I asked for advice on a research paper idea I had, and she went above and beyond. She gave me her advice, listed related topics I could research, and gave me key words to use during my search! I was amazed at how helpful she was. You guys are awesome and I appreciate the hard work and assistance. Keep it up.”

—*Student Comments, CWI Library Student Survey 2018*

## Reference Philosophy

In an average month, CWI Library interacts with nearly twelve thousand students, staff, faculty, and community members. We have 10,874 monthly visitors at our two locations, answer in-person questions from 327 people, answer chat questions from another 67 people, and our chatbot receives 479 messages. Because of the nature of a community college, and specifically the nature of ours, for many of our students their first time in our library is their first time in *any* library, and more often, it is their first time using the types of resources that we offer. As a result, it is essential that we approach reference not just with the goals of locating information to fill a patron’s needs and providing them with the skills to find it themselves the next time, but to ensure that they feel welcome and safe during the reference interview. This trifecta of needs has guided the development of our reference program, in which we focus much of our energy in gently and kindly guiding students through their research.

As a complement to traditional numbers-based assessment, we have recently implemented a “reflective reference” initiative that entails our staff writing a



brief journal entry after reference interviews. This approach not only provides concrete data about what subjects are being covered and what resources are being used, but also provides soft data that is used internally to polish our approach to reference transactions. Viewing each interaction individually provides a more thorough look at the student body as a whole and their needs.

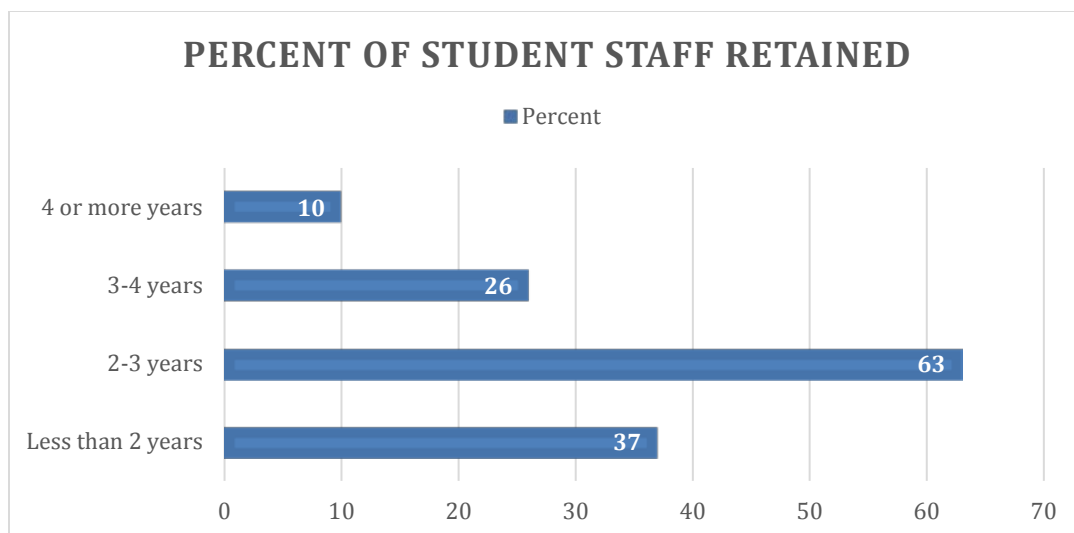
## An Innovative Public Services Staffing Model

CWI Library has taken an innovative approach to student staffing that focuses on the retention of student workers past graduation or transfer from our College. As a two-year institution, student positions typically turn over quickly: students who complete their goals are typically gone in two years, while many other students struggle to persist, often dropping in and out of coursework by semester as they juggle financial and personal challenges. While we almost exclusively hire new Student Assistants who have work-study awards, we prioritize and protect a part-time and student staffing budget that enables us to continue employing our work-study students past the date that their financial aid award runs out, through semesters when they are not taking classes, and beyond their graduation date. We further promote exceptional student staff through a tiered system that allows for increased compensation and responsibility in the role of Research Consultant, a peer information consultant model. Our research consultants provide basic reference assistance from a source that is often less intimidating than a professional librarian or staff member.

Our staffing model achieves multiple goals simultaneously, all of which contribute to our ability to provide exemplary customer service while minimizing desk time for professional staff:

1. It reduces our turnover rate in student and part-time staff positions;
2. It reduces the amount of orientation and training we must offer to new student employees;
3. It provides our student staff with ongoing job security and a sense of identity in their role;
4. It contributes to student persistence by keeping students connected to our College even if they drop out; and
5. It offers our student staff the opportunity to build significant skill sets that will benefit them beyond their roles at CWI Library.

Since developing this model, we have seen our retention of student staff increase significantly, with 10% of our student staff remaining with us for over four years. More importantly, we have seen students who have had to drop out due to uncontrollable life circumstances return to college a semester or two later directly as a result of their continued attachment to the school through their employment at the library. Our student workers keep our doors open, and we have worked hard to build a culture that acknowledges this and views student staff as the incredible asset they are.



In addition to general, ongoing student training, in September of 2018 we hosted a library wide staff training that focused on implicit bias. As noted in the October 2018 volume of ACRL's *College & Research Libraries News*, it has become increasingly crucial to acknowledge and minimize implicit bias in the workplace, and we have taken a proactive approach to this. The training took place over three hours and further conversations and trainings are planned to continue for the foreseeable future, with the understanding that implicit bias is an ongoing issue that needs to be addressed both in the short and long term.

### Innovating in Online Chat and AI

CWI Library was the first unit at the College to launch a student-focused online chat service, and seven years later we are still the only ones on campus offering such a service. We started with OCLC's QuestionPoint service in 2011 and migrated to Springshare's LibChat and LibAnswers in 2012. Due in part to staffing availability, chat usage remained fairly low at an average of 15 questions per month through the end of 2016.

In January of 2017 we launched our "Research Basics" Badge Set (described in Focus Area 2), with one badge requiring students to ask the library a question using their preferred help platform—either in person, by phone, email, chat, or SMS—to obtain a password and earn their badge. Immediately, chat exploded, with our average monthly usage increasing to 111 questions a month during the Spring 2017 semester. Our staff were overwhelmed and rapidly fatigued as we answered repeated questions about library hours, locations, book recommendations, and study room reservations. However, we all agreed that the badge was effective in getting students past library anxiety and comfortable with reaching out to us, so we pivoted again.

During the summer of 2017 the library staff, none of whom had any IT expertise, developed a chatbot built on the IBM Watson artificial intelligence platform, which we named "[Patronus](#)." Patronus was engineered to answer the sort of questions we fielded so often on live chat and, best of all, Patronus could do it around the clock. Launched in Fall 2017, our chat usage

dropped that semester to an average of 42 questions per month and rescued our staff from impending chat burnout while increasing our chat availability to 24/7. Patronus continues to run in the background of LibChat, with a link to the chatbot appearing when LibChat is offline, and responds to an average of 479 messages per month. As an AI bot, Patronus continues to learn how to better answer patron questions and we expect it to become increasingly valuable over time.

## Focus Area 2: Teach Students

Librarians partner with faculty from across the curriculum to integrate information literacy into classes and teach workshops that empower students to successfully complete specific assignments.

“I think the Library does a great job at keeping students informed and engaged with the library. The staff are friendly, knowledgeable and remind us all how important and resourceful libraries are, but most important to utilize them!”

“Continue to encourage and promote students to use the library. I didn’t know about many of the resources until a librarian gave a workshop in class.”

—*Student Comments, CWI Library Student Survey 2018*

## Instructional Philosophy

CWI Library’s instruction program takes a learner-centered approach, aiming to recognize where students are within larger systems of education and to meet them where they are, so that library instruction is meaningful to their lives as well as to their classes. We recognize that research and information literacy are knowledge practices and dispositions that students build and incorporate into their own understandings of the world rather than a static set of responses to a limited set of instructional or vocational situations. Students have already developed strategies, tactics, and understandings of how to conduct research and engage with information. Our goal isn’t so much to replace these with “correct” ones as to show students ones that we think will be effective and efficient for varied situations, as well as to help students reflect on what they are doing to better recognize when a different strategy would be preferable.



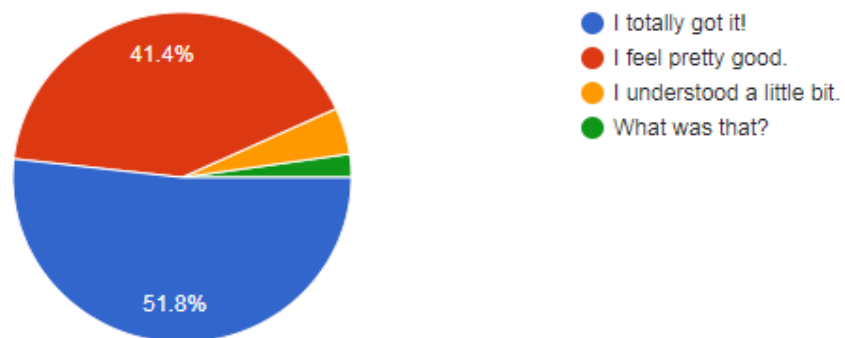
To center our students we try as much as possible to move from a “sage on the stage” to a “guide on the side” model of instruction. We provide active learning elements in our classroom sessions and have adopted a “flipped” model of instruction for the lower-level courses we visit most frequently. As part of this flipped model, we’ve developed online “badging” modules that we ask the instructor of record to assign each student to complete individually in advance of our classroom visits. This “flipped” approach helps establish a baseline of understanding and competency

while also giving each student the opportunity to learn at their own pace. This is important for a community college whose students range from go-getter high school students enrolled in dual credit courses to non-traditional students bravely stepping into the college classroom after decades away from formal instruction. We further aim to time our instruction sessions for when students are working on assignments that require research, ensuring that the learners perceive our instruction as relevant to their current assignments or projects. This allows students to conduct authentic searches and get feedback from librarians on their actual practices. Our instruction program weaves in many aspects of the *ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*, touching upon the threshold concepts in multiple sessions.

We have conducted assessment with both students and faculty to see how they feel after an in-class session with a CWI librarian. 93.2% of students report feeling confident with their knowledge after an in-class session with a CWI librarian:

### How well did you understand the material?

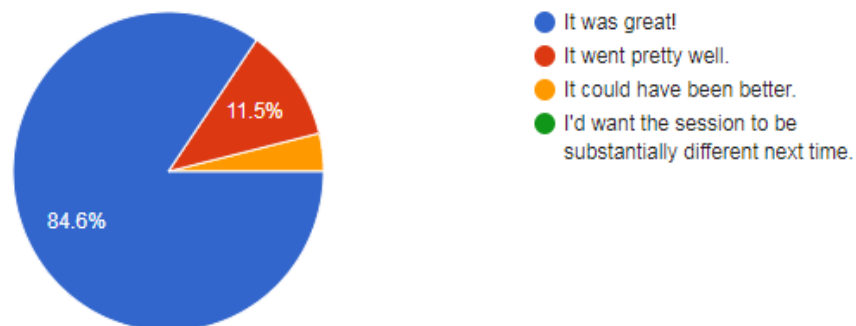
307 responses



On the faculty side, 96.1% of faculty were satisfied with in-class instruction presented by a CWI librarian:

### How do you think the in-class session went?

26 responses



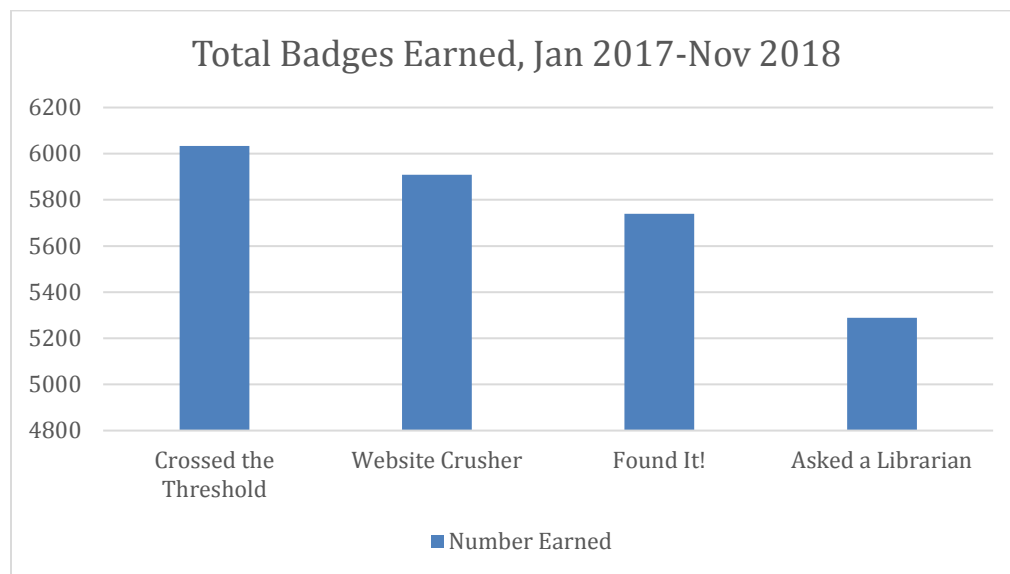
## Success in Microcredentialing

CWI Library's major initiative in the last two years was in microcredentialing. In January 2017 the Library launched our Information Literacy Badging Program in Blackboard, where it was made available to all faculty and credit students. The badges are a set of online modules with multimodal instructional content, simple web pages and librarian-produced videos, followed by quizzes. The program includes four badges:

- *Crossed the Threshold Badge*: Get a tour of the Library and an orientation to our website.
- *Website Crusher Badge*: Find out how to better evaluate and select website sources for your class project.
- *Found It! Badge*: Discover strategies to search for books and articles from the Library.
- *Asked a Librarian Badge*: Learn about and leverage the unique value of librarians as a resource.

The badges may be used individually or required as a set. When all four badges are completed, a meta-badge is awarded, called the "Research Basics Meta-Badge."

The badging program was immediately and widely adopted by CWI faculty upon its release and has continued to be used extensively in a variety of courses, most notably Connecting with Ideas (CWID 101), our first-year experience course. Initially designed by our librarians to "flip" foundational content and create a baseline skill set for students before an in-class visit, the badge instructional format has eclipsed traditional library instruction and dramatically extended the library's reach across campus.



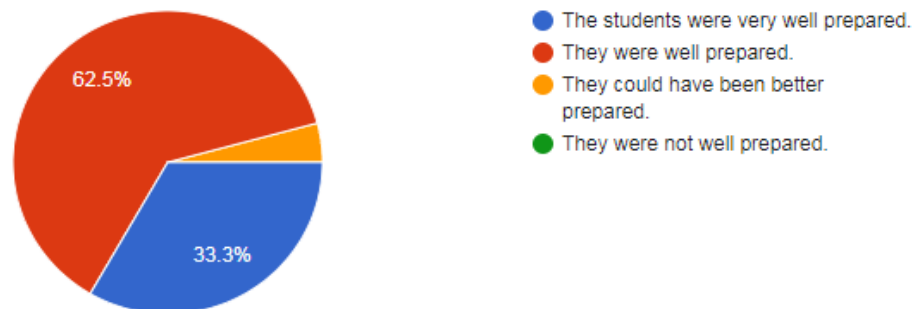
Students who have completed one or more of our badges tend to rate the badges helpful in preparing them for their class research projects. On a 1 to 10 scale, from not helpful to very helpful, the highest rating received 25% of the ratings, rating 9 received between 5 and 10%, rating 8 received 20%, ratings 5-7 received between 10 & 15% of the ratings, and ratings 1-4 each received less than 5% of ratings.



On the teaching side, faculty almost unilaterally have found the badges helpful in preparing students for their research assignments, as reflected in their responses to our instruction feedback survey:

If you had your students complete any of the Library's Information Literacy badges for this class, how well do you think the badges helped prepare your students for their research assignment?

24 responses



The success of the Library's badging initiative has inspired departments across campus—and beyond—to embark upon similar microcredentialing projects. In collaboration with the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Library transferred our entire badging program into a shared Blackboard organizational site called "MyCommons." There students can access the Library's



badges as well as additional badges and information from Tutoring Services, STEM, the Campus Read, and the Connections Project. Meanwhile, colleagues at neighboring Boise State University developed a similar badging initiative based upon our work, which they launched in Fall of 2018.

Recognizing the expansive adoption of the Research Basics badges, and in the interests of evaluating how well the badges are increasing student learning outcomes in CWID 101, and how they may be improved, the Library submitted a research proposal and has received Institutional Review Board approval for an in-depth badging assessment project involving individual interviews with students. The assessment project is currently underway and will be completed at the end of the 2018-19 academic year. The Library expects to have preliminary results available in summer 2019.

## Explorations in Embedding

In the last year, in an attempt to find creative ways for librarians to be involved in classes, especially ones that are wholly online, we have been working with a few instructors to test out having librarians embedded in courses. So far these experiments have involved having librarians join a class on Blackboard, CWI's course management system. Librarians have been available as a co-instructor on courses, and have had discussion boards and prompts open for library and research questions. We have also experimented with integrating into those classes a research-focused assignment for students.

We will continue working with classes to find ways that work for both instructors and librarians to reach students and help them learn about research methods. Scalability may be a challenge given our small staff size, but we are developing a targeted approach to embed into touch-point courses within disciplines that include research-oriented learning outcomes, so that we can provide students with the greatest benefits from our effort.

## Integrating Instruction Across the Curriculum

CWI librarians are constantly working to integrate information literacy and research into the college-wide curriculum. Our ultimate goal is the development of a set of tiered, increasingly complex information literacy lesson plans that matches the courses students take as they progress through their programs. While we continue to reach towards this aspiration, it is a constantly moving target given that the College curriculum has evolved significantly since CWI gained independent accreditation in 2016, and the courses required by the broadest set of programs aren't recommended to students in any particular order. Specifically, nearly every student must take these three courses to obtain an Associate's degree:

- CWID 101, Connecting with Ideas 101, our first-year experience course
- English 102, English Composition 2
- Communication 101, Introduction to Communication

While CWID 101 is prescribed for a student's first semester, the other two courses may be taken at any point in the curriculum which means tiering our instruction is essentially impossible.

Instructors of record approach COMM 101 and ENGL 102 in substantially different ways, so instead of prescribing a single set of course outcomes and activities, we've developed an "a la carte menu" of topics and activities we will cover for each of these. Designed to build upon and mutually reinforce each other, our lessons and activities in these sessions give students opportunities for productive reinforcement of the threshold concepts and to see how these ideas and knowledge practices transfer to and operate within various domains. These courses build a foundational set of practices and dispositions that our higher level instruction further refines, while avoiding repetition of content between these courses.

Our librarians teach for higher-level, discipline-specific courses as well as the general education courses. These courses provide opportunities for higher level instruction focused on hallmark knowledge practices and habits for each discipline, as well as giving students more feedback on how they engage with databases or other resources most relevant to each discipline. For instance, thanks to a partnership we've developed with the Biology Department, we teach every section of the Biology 1 Lab each semester to prepare students for scientific research in their discipline.

As part of ensuring that our program integrates well into the college's curriculum, the Instruction Coordinator and Faculty Outreach Librarian visits the monthly meetings of both the college's Curriculum Committee and its General Education Subcommittee. In addition to following the updates and discussions of how specific courses and course changes fit into the larger picture of the college curriculum, participating as an ex officio member has allowed our librarian representative to work with the General Education Subcommittee as part of its assessment activities. The Subcommittee yearly reviews portfolios of student work, with each portfolio made up of signature assignments completed as the student moves through the college's general education courses.



Over the last two years, our librarian representative has helped refine the rubrics for a couple of the Ways of Knowing assessed by this portfolio review, helped score a number of student portfolios in the yearly reviews, and helped facilitate professors discussion of the findings of the yearly reviews.

Through analyzing the curriculum to see where our efforts will reach the broadest range of students, tiering our instruction to help students refine their knowledge practices and dispositions as they progress through general education and discipline-specific courses, and

through ongoing work with faculty committees and academic departments, our instruction librarians are committed to integrating library and information literacy through the curriculum.

## Focus Area 3: Provide Resources

Library staff explore, select, license or purchase, organize, and make accessible scholarly and popular content that students need to successfully complete assignments.

“I really appreciate how many materials are available through CWI. The physical books and online resources are quite comprehensive, and being able to access other libraries' books through CWI is very helpful as well.”

“I think everything is great! Computers, printing, help, nice staff, material for every occasion, and a nice environment to work in.”

—*Student Comments, CWI Library Student Survey 2018*

### Resources Philosophy

A library's collection should meet the informational and technological needs of its community. Despite our limited budget and space, we consider it our role to support any resource need that comes to our attention, whether it's for textbooks, GPS units, or 3D printing. Our culture of “yes” empowers employees of all levels of our organization to find ways to accommodate patron requests, even if it means challenging current policy or making the occasional exception. This culture allows us to try new things and eliminate or restructure that which is not effective. Understanding that most of our students have hectic lives and might not bring their books back on time, we were early adopters of a fine-free library. As long as the book is returned eventually, we waive all charges. Noticing a gap between how long faculty were keeping resources despite their due dates, we implemented extended checkouts for faculty and staff. We even purchase basic office supplies to alleviate last-minute project completion stressors: yes, we have a blue highlighter, a peach crayon, butterfly clip and mailing envelopes! When it came to our attention that many Anatomy and Physiology students were unable to make it to their open lab times, we purchased A&P anatomical models students could use in the library. At the end of the day, we view our resources as a tool to increase student retention.

### Taking DDA to New Levels

In 2011 CWI Library held only about 2,000 physical items and was almost entirely unable to fulfill student, faculty, and staff demand for print materials. Even today at just over 34,000 physical items, we face a constant barrage of requests for materials we don't, yet own. As a further complicating factor, 59% of our patrons, many of whom live in rural areas with limited internet service or who simply can't afford home internet, request print books over ebooks.

While we were able to launch a substantial ebook collection in 2012 that addressed many of our students' needs, we still had to find a way to quickly fill the demand for print materials. We integrated the most successful examples of expedited DDA that we had seen at other

institutions and created our “[Request It!](#)” service, which allows students, staff, and faculty to request any item and receive it quickly through an expedited process that leverages the following features:

- Requests submitted by 2:00pm on any business are reviewed and ordered, where available on the same day. Requests after 2:00pm are completed the next business day.
- Articles not owned are purchased through the Copyright Clearance Center’s “Get it Now” same-day article delivery service; where not available they are requested through interlibrary loan.
- Ebooks not available in our collection that fit our Collection Development Guidelines are added to our Proquest LibCentral collection immediately if possible or ordered in print if unavailable; those not fitting our guidelines are submitted as print interlibrary loan requests.
- Videos not available in our collection that fit our Collection Development Guidelines are added to our Swank Digital Campus collection immediately if possible or ordered in DVD if unavailable; those not fitting our guidelines are submitted as DVD interlibrary loan requests.
- Books and DVDs not owned that fit our Collection Development Guidelines are ordered from Amazon.com with Prime shipping and delivered to our local Amazon locker where possible for the fastest processing and pickup; those not fitting our guidelines are submitted as interlibrary loan requests.
- Received items are typically processed the same day and sent out to the student’s desired pickup location.

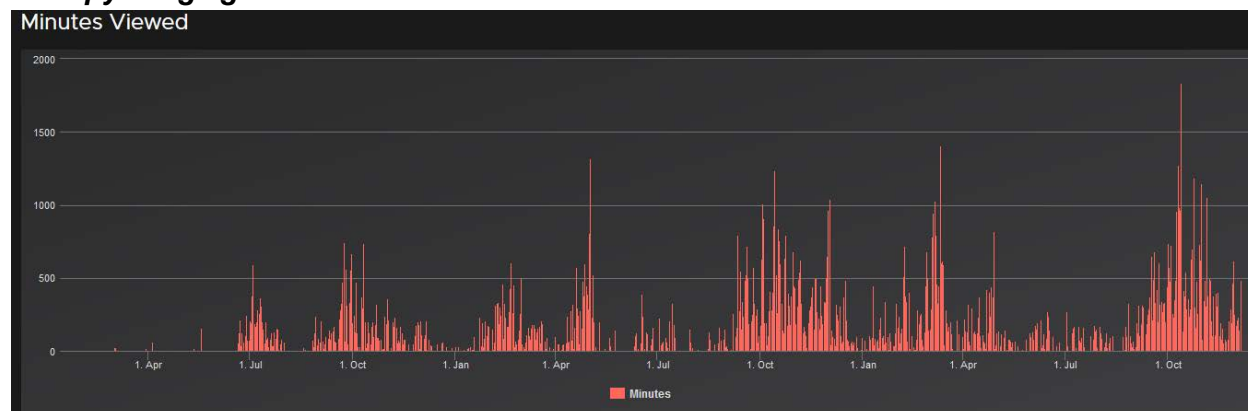


In the last year we have received 1,412 requests through this service and filled 90% of them. 77% of requests came from students, 20% from faculty or staff, and the remaining 3% were from community members.

Streaming video is another increasingly important DDA resource that we provide. CWI faculty use video extensively in their courses but with students scattered across the area, and with many classes wholly online, reserve DVDs won’t cut it. Due to ongoing demand over the last several years, we added both Kanopy and Swank Digital Campus in order to license and provide documentaries and popular films beyond what our Films on Demand collection previously offered. Use of the two new platforms continues to build, and we now offer 66 videos on Swank, all of which have been requested by and are used actively by faculty; we know this

because we consult with those faculty on an annual basis when we renew each video and drop films from the collection that are no longer in use in a CWI course.

### ***Kanopy usage growth over time 2016-2018***



Kanopy's video hosting capabilities became a major lifesaver this past spring when students from multiple classes were all trying to get their hands on only two copies of a DVD for a class. We bought the streaming video rights for that film and hosted it on Kanopy, so now a heavily-used resource is available to all students.

### **Making Expensive Course Materials Accessible**

We know anecdotally [and from the research](#) that 65% of students will decide not to purchase their textbooks and other required course materials because they are too expensive. The soaring costs of course materials deeply affects community college students, many of whom are struggling to cover the costs of housing and food for their families as they reinvent their lives and careers in hopes of better days ahead. Despite CWI's implementation of some IncludeEd textbooks, which bundle textbook costs into the course fees, and scattered adoption of Open Educational Resources in specific courses, student access to course materials is a critical issue at our institution.

CWI Library considers course materials to be an essential component of our charge to provide students with access to resources. While we don't have a budget sufficient to purchase every text in use at the College, we have a commitment to purchasing every textbook requested by even a single student and putting a copy on reserve at the library location of their choice. This includes not only traditional textbooks but also supplementary texts and other materials. We extend this collection through a partnership with STEM faculty whose classes depend on student access to specialized equipment including GPS units, compasses, anatomical models, and soil probes. Our partnership began when departments began purchasing class sets of this equipment, handing it out to students at the beginning of the semester, and then struggled to track who had which items and whether they were returned at the end of the semester. The Library accepted management of these items and now houses and coordinates circulation of those equipment sets. We additionally check out laptops and video cameras to students who lack their own technology.

In the last year, eleven percent of student materials requests, or 121 out of 1,082 were specifically identified as textbook requests. We also regularly receive requests that we're unable to fill from CWI students who have transferred to nearby four-year institutions and return to us to ask for materials because they have found us so responsive in the past. Our colleagues at Boise State University have specifically commented on this phenomenon, as we've had to redirect students to them after they've transferred.



## Can't Get to Campus? We Deliver

CWI has no on-campus housing and our entire student population commutes to campus. Given Idaho's geographical isolation and expansive rural areas, many live at a significant distance and rarely visit our campuses due to the time and cost involved, while others study entirely online. Mass transit is extremely limited within the Boise metropolitan area and almost nonexistent in Idaho overall. To address these challenges faced by our students, and to ensure that online students have equal access to the library's collection, CWI Library implemented a Netflix-like service called "Books by Mail." This service allows any student, faculty, or staff member to request that we mail physical materials directly to their home, or any campus mail stop, with a pre-paid return shipping label.

Books by Mail is also popular with our students who have families. One of our very first promotions of the service was to a young mother who had brought her toddler to the library in an effort to complete a course project. She was overwhelmed trying to find resources with her child in tow and the little boy was unsatisfied by the mother's attempts to keep him entertained. One of our librarians, noticing her struggle, shared with her the details of the service. The mother was ecstatic and left with her books and a printed a return label so she could mail them back at her convenience.

## Focus Area 4: Extend Learning

Library staff create physical and online spaces and pursue innovative initiatives that facilitate learning beyond the classroom.

“It’s noticeable that the library is always seeking ways to better serve the students, and it always does so well. Keep up the great work!”

“I love our library!! I love that they put out snacks sometimes during exam week or do special stuff for a holiday!! I love how helpful they are and that they have extended hours during exam weeks.”

“I really enjoyed the activities they had like making pancakes and pizza plus the stress relief station. And the librarians are top notch they always had time to help me out and were very knowledgeable.”

—*Student Comments, CWI Library Student Survey 2018*

### Extend Learning Philosophy

CWI Library is not bound by traditional library functions, and is constantly open to providing services and resources that fill gaps created by our College’s lack of infrastructure. For instance, CWI does not have an Academic Technology unit that provides students with access to critical hardware, so we check out laptops and video cameras. We don’t have a student union and our community-focused spaces are few, so we strive to provide an atmosphere—both on campus and online—that provides students with a sense of belonging on campus. Further, due to our extreme limitations in our physical spaces, we continue to reinvent, reorganize, and increase the flexibility of our facilities to serve ever greater needs.

### Flexible Spaces

One of the great challenges of life at CWI is space. The College owns only one building and leases a variety of facilities across the Treasure Valley in a patchwork effort to serve students. Although several new buildings are planned for future





construction, none are yet underway. For the foreseeable future, Library staff must creatively and constantly seek new ways to configure space to support the varied learning and study styles of our 31,000 students.

The main Nampa Campus Library is approximately 5,000 square feet divided between a main space and a 900 square-foot instruction lab with 30 laptops. The Library's main space is further reduced by five staff offices and a workroom. The Ada Campus Library is approximately 1,500 square feet total. To transcend these physical limitations, Library spaces are flexible wherever possible. For instance, the Nampa Campus Library was redesigned in 2018 to repurpose underutilized spaces and improve sound issues. Previously, our staff were housed in four soft-walled cubicles located inside the main library space, which was a constant noise issue for students trying to study. The tall cubicles, along the south wall of the Library, also blocked out much of the available sunlight each day. Meanwhile, two walled group study rooms, a quiet study room, and an adjacent lounge area were underutilized compared to the rest of the space.



We had a brainstorm: what if we could move our conversations, meetings, and phone calls behind the hard walls and open up the whole south space of the Library for study? This move simultaneously created a new, open, light-filled study area that was immediately popular with students, and shifted collaborative staff into soundproof rooms. Further, the service desk, which we found to be oversized for the space, was reduced by half. We reconfigured the Library

Instruction Lab as an even more flexible space by adding movable partitions that divide the room into four reservable study group study spaces—which more than made up for the loss of the two previous study rooms. Student feedback since the change has been glowing, usage of the south space and group study spaces is consistent, and the staff look forward to deeper feedback in our 2019 student survey.

Our 1,500 square-foot library at the Ada County Campus lacks dedicated instruction space, and the few computer classrooms at that location are constantly in use by ongoing classes. Rather than try to convince faculty and students to travel to our Nampa campus to meet with librarians, we took our instruction lab on the road! We created a mobile laptop cart with 29 laptops that we house at the library and take to Ada County Campus classrooms, making it possible for our librarians to engage students in active learning and hands-on research activities. We further

extend the usefulness of our laptop cart by allowing faculty to reserve it for their classes through a campus reservation system.

Another initiative we have undertaken to address our space crunch is establishing an Off-Site Storage location that enables the Library to continue building the print collection without adequate shelving at the two facilities. In 2015 we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with nearby Northwest Nazarene University, which had just built a large Learning Commons on their campus and had a basement full of unused compact shelving. The agreement allows CWI Library to house materials at NNU's Learning Commons and retrieve them at will. Students, staff, and faculty can locate these items in the Library's catalog, request them from storage, and they are retrieved within the same day, if requested before 2:00pm or the next day, if requested after 2:00pm.

## MakerHub

Despite our space challenges, we began a makerspace initiative in 2018. Called the MakerHub to emphasize that it's less a space and more of a mobile set of physical and learning resources, the equipment is spread throughout the main Nampa Campus Library and adjacent office spaces. The most advanced 3D printer, one which doesn't rely on an external computer, sits near the main doors along with a number of example prints. We often hear students and instructors excitedly discuss its new presence in the Library, and since it is near the desk, we're able to personally extend an invitation to everyone that we do indeed want them to use it. Another set of 3D printers, ones which rely on external computers, live in a hallway that formerly was used for storing parts of our noncirculating textbook collection during semesters when those editions or texts were not required for any classes.

The MakerHub initiative is a collaboration with the campus Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). The CTL had identified a number of professors who had expressed interest in using 3D printing technologies in their classes, but they have no public-facing spaces, so asked the Library if we would be open to housing the 3D printer and making it available to students when not in use by professors. The Center provided funding for a 3D printer, which was jointly selected by CTL and Library staff based on faculty input and inquiries to other area libraries about aspects like ease of maintenance, the amount of uptime, and ease of use. This process of reaching out to other area library makerspaces has created continued relationship with both the Meridian Library District's unBound technology space and the Boise State University Albertsons Library's Makerlab. Just as the Library and CTL were selecting the new printer, a set of students approached the Library with an interest in making 3D printing available on campus. The Instruction Coordinator and Faculty Outreach Librarian, who is also the liaison to the sciences, worked with the students to create a student club. Called the MakerHub Club, this student initiative has purchased and built two 3D printers from kits, assembled a computer to control the printers, and purchased a vinyl cutter. The President of the MakerHub Club, Garrett Ellison, has also been hired as a student worker for the library, and focuses primarily on the MakerHub. He has thus far worked with the first two classroom integrations of the 3D printer, one for group projects in a sculpture class and another for individual students in a math class.

As with most makerspaces, the CWI MakerHub provides opportunities for students to extend their learning in self-directed ways, teaching themselves and their peers about technologies most would find prohibitively expensive to dabble in on their own. Unlike many library makerspaces, CWI's has a librarian as the staff advisor for the MakerHub Club. As an official club advisor, the librarian helps students learn not just the technologies and processes of making objects, but also how to navigate the social and bureaucratic aspects of an academic institution. With many of our students being the first in their families to attend college, they often lack an institutional awareness of procedures and practices.

## Outreach

The College of Western Idaho Library supports students with extensive outreach efforts throughout the year, designed to create an atmosphere that not only meets their academic needs, but also their need for a community within the College. On a commuter campus with many first-generation and nontraditional students, outreach is particularly important and difficult to come by. Additionally, our campus is broken up geographically and few common spaces exist for students to gather. As a result, we take our role as a communal space very seriously.

The library takes a holistic approach to supporting students by hosting multiple "study breaks" during midterms and finals, times which tend to be the busiest and most stressful for our students as they juggle classes, work, and family. Because the only on-campus food services are vending machines and affordable nearby restaurants are scarce, food can be a barrier at these times of the year. As a result, our study breaks include providing nutritious snacks, pizza, and pancakes, as well as unlimited coffee and tea. A Sensory Stress Relief station provides a place for students to take a break and decompress from the anxiety of tests and papers. The library collaborates with tutoring by scheduling writing consultant hours at the library, and tutors during finals extended hours. Just before finals, the library offers extended hours until midnight with activities scheduled to breakup studying and provide a social outlet, including crafts and game consoles available at monitors where students can meet to play a few games. In Spring of 2018, over 1,100 students and their families participated in extended hours and related activities.



The library advertises resources through social media, primarily Facebook, including overviews of databases, the physical collection, and other resources, such as study tips. An effort is made

to become involved in student life from day one by volunteering during the heaviest registration periods and tabling at resource fairs offered during the college's campus-wide orientation. In addition to these more traditional approaches to outreach, the library hosts an annual Halloween event with themed decorations, coffee, snacks, and games.

## Librarians Are Everywhere!

CWI Library staff are deeply involved in campus life and activities. The Library director is currently co-chair of College Council, a CWI committee that forms part of the College's participatory governance structure. The College Council is comprised of the leadership and appointees from the three campus senates—staff, faculty, and student—along with representatives from a variety of campus departments.

Beginning in 2016, two of our librarians have participated in the creation and judging of CWI's new Emerging Scholars Awards. These monetary awards are given to students identified by faculty not based on their academic status, but on their commitment to learning, demonstration of a special talent in their discipline, and their potential to excel either within or outside of the classroom. The awards are presented during the annual CWI Connections Project and also are distributed as scholarship funds for the subsequent academic year in order to incentivize retention and persistence. The Library has further made an effort to build community for CWI's Emerging Scholars by hosting social events to help them develop a peer support network.

Beginning in 2016, our User Experience Librarian has been part of judging the entries in the yearly Connections Project, a yearly showcase of student work. Last year her group judged more than twenty entries. She has remained part of the Project's planning committee, helping with the planning committee and the campus-wide communications about the Connections Project.

Librarians have been involved in portfolio reviews to assist academic departments with meeting their programmatic goals. This has happened through participating in the English portfolio review of English 101 essays and through the portfolio review of signature assignments for the General Education Subcommittee.

Since 2016, the Instruction Coordinator and Faculty Outreach Librarian has participated in both the Curriculum Committee and particularly in the General Education Subcommittee's portfolio review. This review entails learning the ways of knowing established as components of the General Education program, helping a smaller working group develop a rubric for two of these disciplinary ways of knowing, and then assisting with actually reviewing portfolios of student work for how students have demonstrated the ways of knowing. He also led a debriefing session in which faculty discussed their collective answers to a reflective survey of how the rubrics and portfolio review could be refined in future iterations. This work has helped the General Education Subcommittee assess how students are performing in the general education-designated courses, which in turn helps the larger Curriculum Committee know which courses need to be altered and how changes to courses will fit into the larger picture. It also helps inform the Library's instruction program by letting the Instruction Coordinator librarian see

more authentic examples of student work to see how research is actually integrated into student work outside of library instruction sessions.

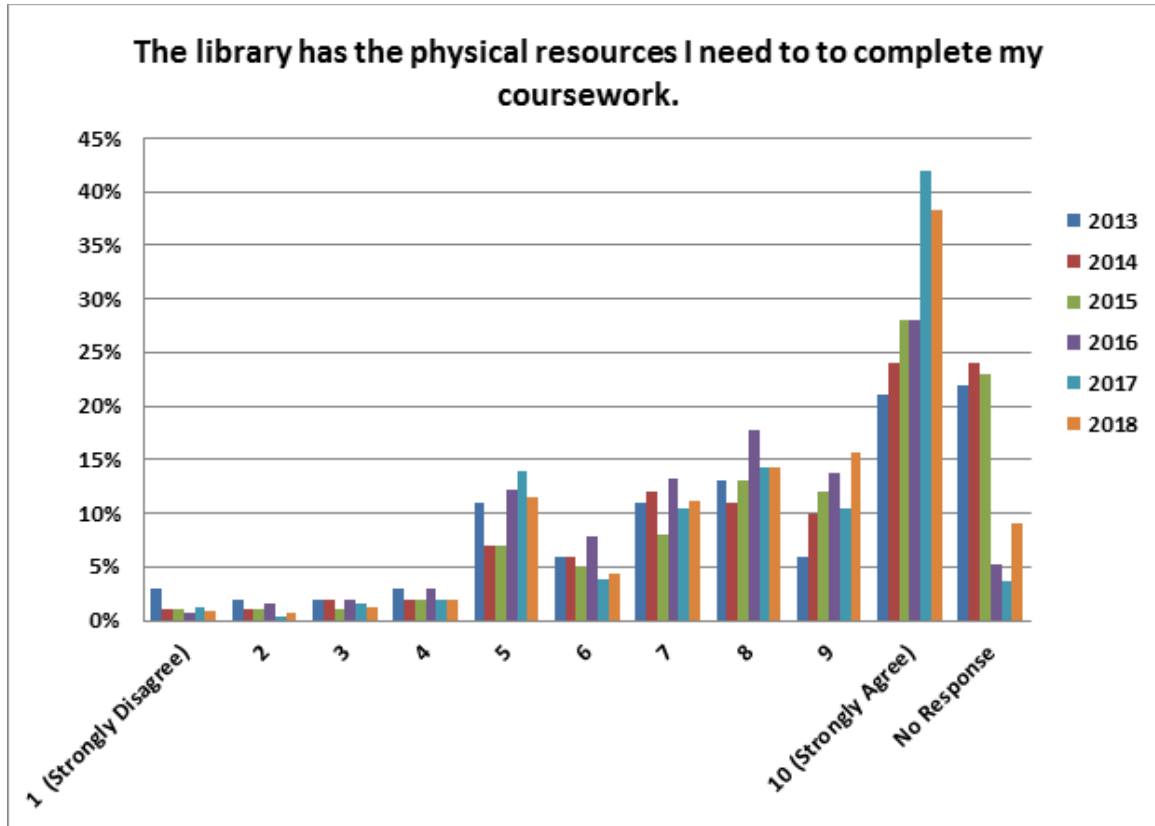
## POPFIC and Children's Books

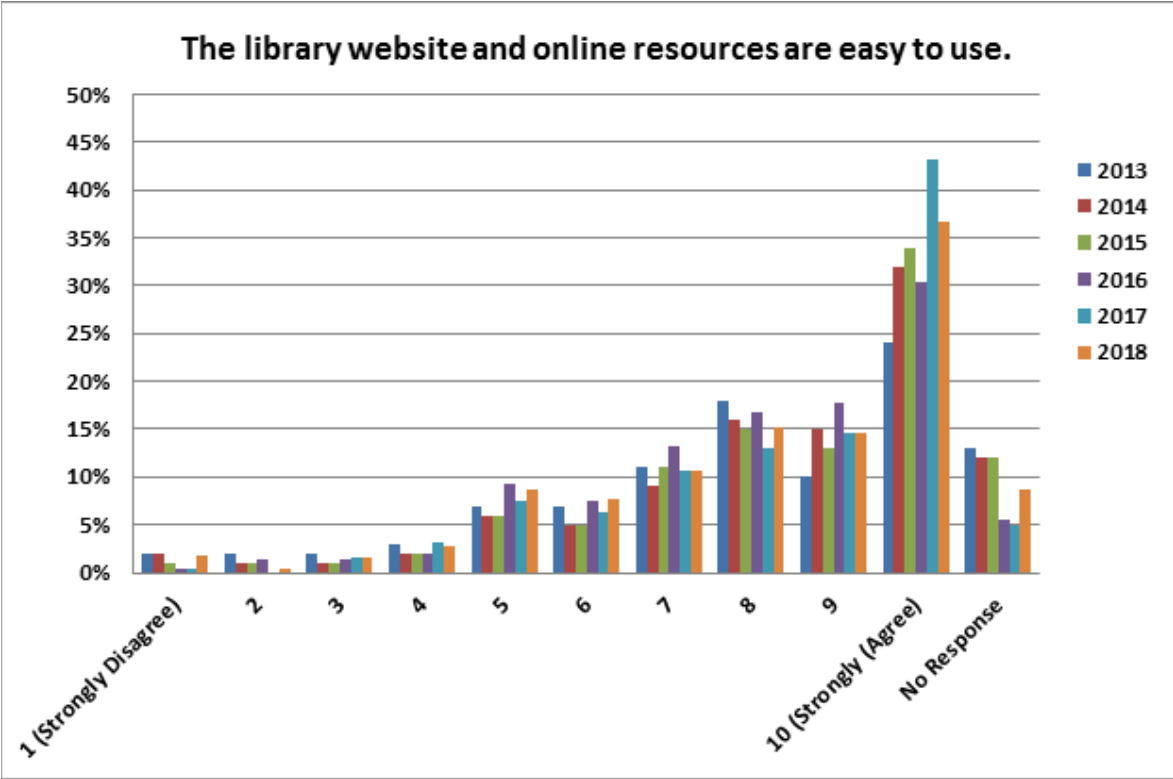
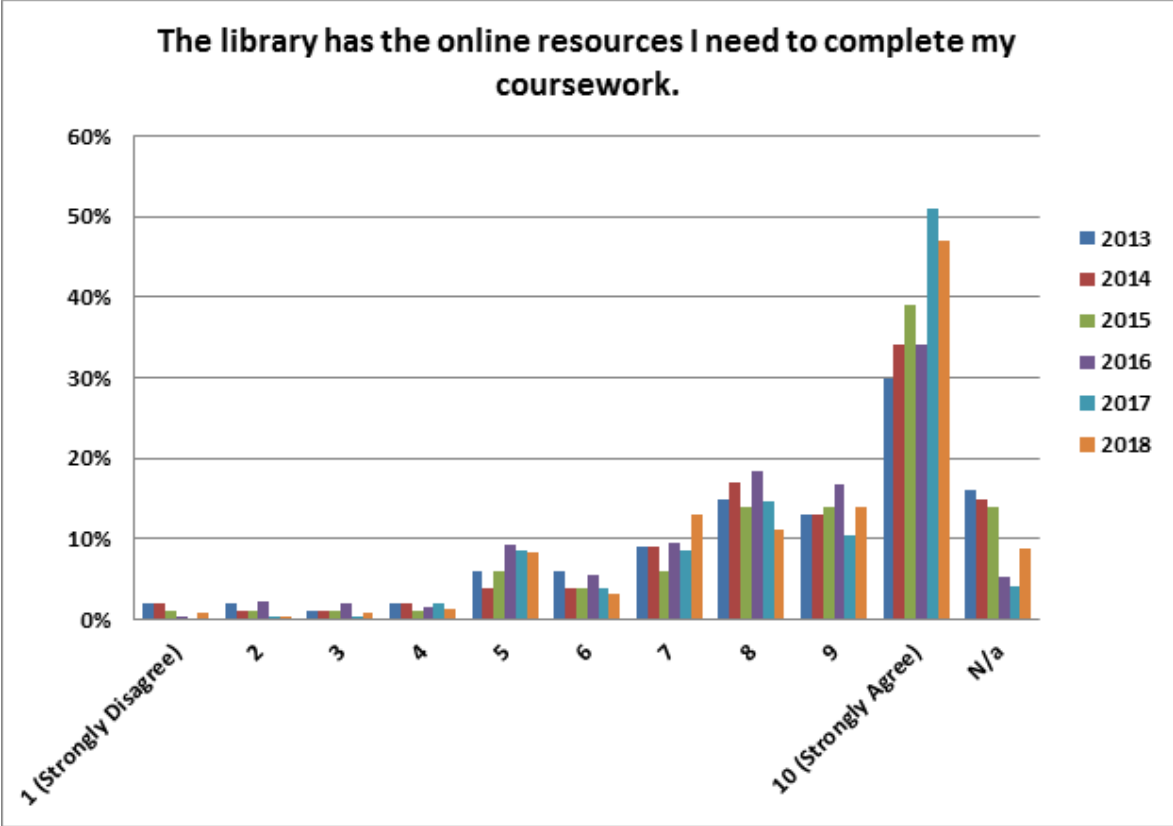
In addition to our general collection, we have developed and maintained a sizable pop fiction collection of newer materials that are intended solely for recreational reading. This collection supports the college's core value of lifelong learning, allowing patrons to cultivate a relationship with reading that goes beyond what is required in school and to develop an interest in the services that college libraries can provide beyond traditional research. This service also benefits faculty who might otherwise go elsewhere for recreational reading, further cementing our position in the campus community.

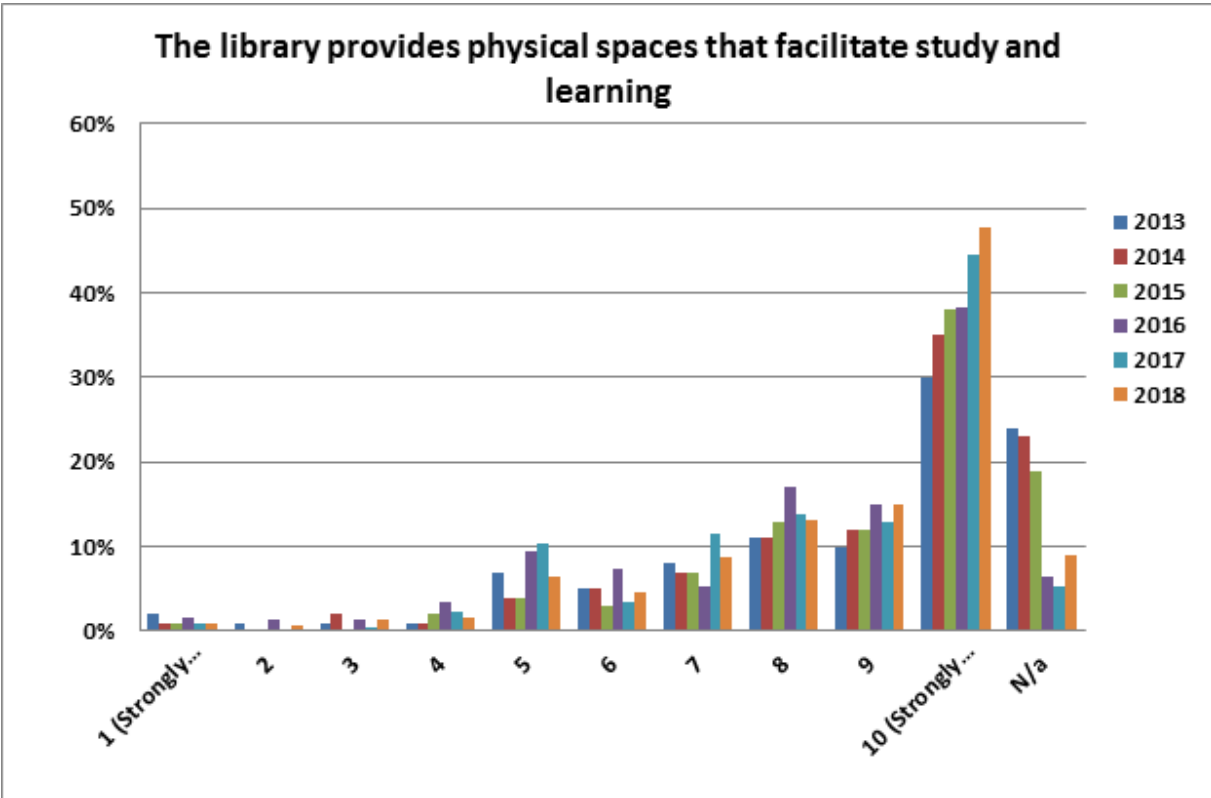
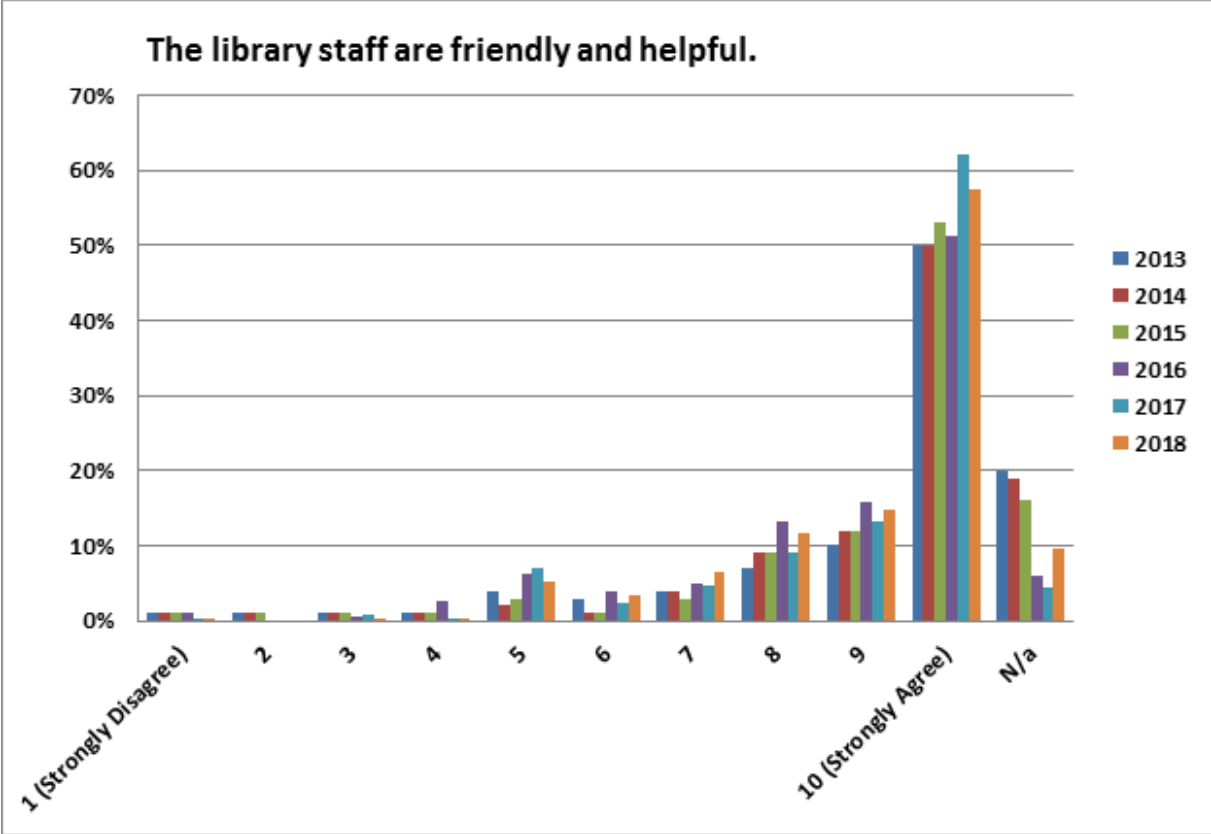
CWI's Early Childhood program shares our building and we were excited to show students of the program how the library can help them succeed. To this end, we purchased a small collection of children's books that could be used in their course work. To our surprise the children's collections has become highly utilized by the campus wide community and has grown to over 400 books. The collection was initially cataloged and shelved using LC classification but because most of the books are children's literature, it was difficult to keep everything easily browsable. We alleviated the issue by adopting a category system similar to those used by many public libraries in the area. Now students, staff, faculty and their children are introduced to the collection with easy-to-find colored labels that empower readers young and old to find books that are most exciting.

## Student Feedback Over Time

CWI Library's primary measure of effectiveness is student feedback. To that end, the Library conducts an annual student survey each spring that gathers student perspectives on services, spaces, resources, and more. Following is an overview of the last six years of data for the major questions on that survey. Feedback skews strongly to the higher end of the satisfaction range. The removal of "N/A" as a response option in the 2017 survey appears to correlate with a notable increase in responses of "10" for each question.









## Staff Listing

Brenda Arechiga, Student Library Assistant  
Kristin Burbidge, Research Consultant  
Bethany Burch, Student Library Assistant  
Jennifer Coburn, Student Library Assistant  
Lindsay Dwyer, Librarian-Part Time  
Garrett Ellison, Student Library Assistant-Makerspace  
Sarah Haskell, Research Consultant  
Shannon Holt, Student Library Assistant  
Rachel Kessinger, Student Library Assistant  
Sean Kramer, Student Library Assistant  
Jonathan Mazambi, Student Library Assistant  
Noah Munster, Student Library Assistant-Outreach  
Alyssa Thomas Navarro, Student Library Assistant  
Amanda Nida, Librarian, Digital Services  
Danielle Persinger, Library Assistant, Specialist  
Louisa Puga, Student Library Assistant  
Jenn Quinones, Student Library Assistant  
Ryan Randall, Librarian, Instruction Coordinator & Faculty Outreach  
Kim Reed, Director, Library Services  
Chris Santiago, Student Library Assistant  
Jasper Schultz, Student Library Assistant  
Joan Smith, Library Assistant, Senior  
Kimberly Stephen, Librarian, User Experience  
Rebecca Kethcart Warren, Student Library Assistant  
Brennon Womble, Research Consultant  
Jean-Louise Zancanella, Assistant Director, Library Services  
Kerri Zwang, Student Library Assistant



Dec. 6, 2018

I am very happy to write a letter in support of the College of Western Idaho library's application for the Excellence in Academic Libraries Award. I have been a faculty member at CWI since we opened our doors in January 2009 and have seen the library grow from a room with a single shelf of books and one employee with minimal institutional support to a dynamic and important component of our academic programs staffed by a group of enthusiastic professionals, staff and work-study students.

Visual and Performing  
Arts

5500 E Opportunity Dr  
Nampa, ID 83687

Phone (208) 562-3400  
Fax (208) 562-3111

In several of my classes I've incorporated the development of research skills which culminate in a project or paper. The Information Literacy Badging Program has been invaluable, particularly when combined with visits where students work on their projects with the support of the staff. Staff are generous with their time and expertise, eager to provide the necessary resources for students to be successful. The most extensive project was for my first year experience course where students learned about the art and architecture of Ancient Egypt, researched examples of artwork influenced by that time period and created posters about their topic. This was only possible because of the support of the library and their willingness to acquire books and other materials for the class. Students learned about databases, how to assess resources and how to present their ideas effectively, giving them a stronger foundation for their studies.

This past year has seen the beginnings of a Maker Hub and I am hoping that one of my Art History classes in 2019 will be able to create replicas of key buildings with the 3-D printer which will help them get a better understanding of architectural forms in 3-dimensions.

Our librarians also work directly with Student Life, the Center for Teaching and Learning and academic departments, attending meetings and helping facilitate specific projects such as the annual celebration of student research. They also serve on important faculty committees such as the General Education Committee.

Outside of specific classroom assignments, students find that our libraries provide a friendly space for studying and working on projects, essential on a campus which has limited space for those activities. Our students have called the librarians "rockstars" and I'd have to agree with that assessment – they've created a friendly and helpful community center at an institution that has undergone tremendous growth and change over the past 10 years.

Yours sincerely,

Karen H. Brown, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor, Art History and Humanities  
Department of Visual and Performing Arts  
College of Western Idaho  
[karenbrown@cwidaho.cc](mailto:karenbrown@cwidaho.cc)  
208-562-3121



To: Association of College & Research Libraries

RE: Excellence in Academic Libraries Award

I am writing in strong support of the College of Western Idaho Library application for the Excellence in Academic Libraries Award.

Kim Reed and her staff in the CWI Library have done an outstanding job placing library services as the “essential center spoke” of the many facets of community college life. The library staff have found fun and creative ways to support students and promote library services.

The Health Sciences and Nursing programs have collaborated with the Library in a number of ways:

- Utilizing the Library’s research basics badging system to make sure our students were prepared for the research paper in the course.
- EXHS partnered with the Library to use the Library’s computer services to help students run the Healthcare Simulation program for their Healthcare Simulation project.
- EXHS 155 and HLTH 220 courses collaborated with the Library’s SWANK Digital campus to make the documentary Fed Up available for use in the courses free of charge to the students.
- EXHS 201 course collaborated with the Library’s SWANK Digital campus to make the documentary Bigger, Stronger, Faster available for use in the courses free of charge to the students.
- Librarians have requested time with the entire School of Health at the in-service meeting to share what’s new in the library and latest technology.

I sincerely hope you will strongly consider the College of Western Idaho Library for the Excellence in Academic Libraries Award.



Cathleen Currie, RN, MTD  
Dean, School of Health



**School of Social Sciences  
and Public Affairs**

P.O. Box 3010  
Nampa, ID 83653

**Nikki Gorrell**

Anthropology Faculty  
208-562-3403

Dec, 7, 2018

To the Association of College & Research Libraries,

This letter is in strong support of the staff of the College of Western Idaho (CWI) Library. As Assistant Professor and Program Head of Anthropology, I have had extensive communication and collaboration with the CWI Library staff, in particular Director for Library Services, Kim Reed and Anthropology Program liaison and User Experience Librarian, Kimberly Stephen. I have seen Ms. Reed and her staff literally build the CWI Library from the ground up, since CWI opened its doors in 2009.

Having been a member of CWI faculty since 2010, I have felt very strongly about requiring my students to utilize our Library and understand the role libraries in general, and the expertise librarians in particular, have to bring to our community and student success. Ms. Reed and staff have consistently demonstrated an enthusiastic commitment to growing and developing our Library content, resources, personnel, services, and student and faculty outreach. I have made many requests of our Library in the past near decade, including several encyclopedic sets, individual texts, and online databases. In every case, I and my students have had every request met with a keen objective to meet our needs and fulfill those requests. Never content to rest on their laurels, I have observed Ms. Reed and staff evolve and adapt to and with new technologies and the high pedagogical standards of Library Sciences.

Having worked with several university libraries at large institutions, I can confirm that the CWI Library offers an outstanding, and ever expanding, collection of content. However, even more commendable is the enthusiasm and willingness to personally engage and support students and faculty to meet our academic and instructional goals. The staff is simply extraordinary; I feel strongly my courses and students would be at a serious disadvantage if we lacked the impressive Library resources and incomparable assistance the staff offers.

Therefore, I can unequivocally state there is no one more deserving of the Excellence in Academic Libraries Award than the Library of the College of Western Idaho.

Sincerely,

*Nikki Gorrell*

Anthropology Program Head  
Assistant Professor Anthropology  
College of Western Idaho



November 16, 2018

Dear Excellence in Academic Libraries Award Committee:

It is my great privilege to write this letter in support of the College of Western Idaho Library. I am a founding member of the faculty at CWI and have worked closely with our library since the college opened its doors in 2009. Over the past decade, the library has exemplified the very best of what CWI offers to our students. They exude a care, compassion, and support for the entire CWI community. I have consistently been in a state of awe at the growth, success, and effectiveness of the library team in their efforts to support student, faculty, and college success. In this letter, I hope to outline the unbelievable outcomes-based support our library team has offered to the CWI community while serving as a leading department on campus through its strong collaboration and community building with faculty, staff, and students.

In January of 2009, when the college opened its doors, we had no collection whatsoever. We had no online databases, books, no staff support, no processes for faculty and students, and no actual librarians. It was literally a room with empty shelves and a few computer terminals. Upon hiring Director of Library Services Kim Reed, she set about making a plan for meeting the needs of our college. It was not easy. At the time there was serious speculation that libraries were a thing of the past and a very real, and at times disconcerting, sense that the modern-day internet could fulfill all the research needs of our college without significant investment. That was where our library staff first demonstrated their institutional effectiveness. It was not enough to just say "we need a library." Rather, a coordinated information campaign across all levels of the college community was necessary to change the existing mindset. As one facet of that initiative, the library staff created a Library Advisory Committee. The Director of Library Services brought in stake-holders from across the college, including administrators, faculty, staff, and students to both inform their efforts and transform the campus perspective on academic libraries. It has been in part through the leadership of that group that our empty room has grown into a full-service library with over thirty-five thousand books, more than one hundred thousand ebooks, almost a hundred databases, seven full-time staff, and 20 part-time staff serving students at two locations and online.

The best thing about our Library is their responsiveness. Here I will describe a number of ways they have been creative, innovative, and responsive to our needs. Recognizing the need to build our collection, a call went out to faculty asking for their suggestions on library holdings. The initial core collection included thousands of books. Many of those were specifically selected by the faculty at CWI to directly support the educational objectives of our programs. Further, our library maintains a demand-driven acquisitions approach dictating that whenever a faculty member or student needs a book or resource to support a course or even an individual project, they immediately purchase the work and add it to the permanent collection or, as an alternative, borrow it through inter-library loan. My students report that when I send them to the library with a book request, they generally have it within 48-72 hours. The Library's wise strategy of bringing faculty into the collection-building process has been extremely helpful for supporting my students. And it is not just books. The library actively finds ways to support students who cannot afford many types of resources. Our library has added just under a hundred databases for advanced scholarly research and maintains a collection of electronic devices like GPS units, laptops,

anatomical models, 3d printers, and cameras that students can check out to use for their class projects. Our student population often lacks the financial resources to have access to many of these items. Many of my students could not be successful if it were not for the CWI Library's advocacy.

Another way the library has proven responsive is through their online Information Literacy Badging Program that they developed and deployed across campus. Recognizing that our student population had little to no understanding of how to use databases or the library, the staff set about building an online curriculum module that walks students through all aspects of basic informational literacy. The program includes modules teaching students what the library can do for them, how to use online databases, how to assess a source's quality, and more. The badging program was so successful that it was adopted as part of the required curriculum for all academic programs at CWI. In its first two years, over twenty-two thousand badges have been earned by students. Those students have been much more successful in their courses and we have seen improved retention as a result of the program. Further the program is showing such signs of success that the library will be presenting on it at a national conference this spring. Other departments like the writing center and history department are following their lead by creating badging programs because of the remarkable success of the library program.

The CWI library has been a beacon of leadership at CWI. While faculty can, and often do, get bogged down in processes and procedures for producing successful educational programs, the library is much more proactive. When given a problem, like the lack of materials or poor student understanding about Informational Literacy, they act. When they act they do not do so in a silo. They bring in stake-holders from across the campus including our Center for Teaching and Learning, our Curriculum Committee, our students, and our faculty to swiftly and effectively create solutions to meet the outcomes of our programs. Those solutions have been highly effective in enhancing and expanding student success.

Last, the CWI library is the heart and soul of our college. We operate on a very limited budget and unfortunately our college simply does not have the financial resources to provide a robust and effective program toward building student community. The library has stepped into the breach to address this shortcoming. Every term they host numerous get-togethers and programs to enhance student life. Examples of this include their Finals Blackout Program where they host a plethora of fun events to support and de-stress students during finals week. They also host gaming competitions, pizza parties, scavenger hunts and more. Students at CWI know that the library is the place on campus to be. By getting students into the library for these events, students feel more comfortable going to the library within they need academic help. It is a win-win for students and the college overall.

The bottom line is that our library is the most supportive and effective department at our college. I always feel 100% confident that my students can get the support they need there. I know as a faculty member, I can rely completely on them to help me to help my students succeed. *I love our library.* Without reservation and with my unfettered support, I recommend the CWI library be honored with an Excellence in Academic Libraries Award.

Respectfully submitted,

*Reginald Jayne*

Associate Professor of History  
College of Western Idaho



School of Math and  
Science  
5500 E Opportunity Dr  
Nampa, ID 83687

Phone (208) 562-3336  
Fax (208) 562-3122

Monday, December 03, 2018

Irene M. H. Herold  
Librarian of the College  
College of Wooster  
1140 Beall Ave  
Wooster, OH 44691-2337

Dear Ms. Herold:

It is my pleasure to write in support of the CWI Library in our application for the Excellence in Academic Libraries Award. As you may be aware, CWI is only ten years old. I have been at the college since our first full academic year, and in that time, I have had opportunity to work with the library in multiple capacities. I have watched it grow from a single room in our Academic Building to a fully functioning, multi-site support network for students.

I would like to highlight a few examples of the ways in which the CWI Library collaborates with the college community:

- As a faculty member in Education, the library staff would regularly present in my Study Skills classes to help students understand the services and benefits provided by the library. Additionally, I had a dedicated librarian who helped me develop a comprehensive list of resources and materials most commonly needed by my Education students.
- As a doctoral student myself, the library provided access to scholarly articles that supported my own learning in Instructional Design.
- As the Dean of STEM, the library graciously agreed to implement a materials checkout system that allowed students access to equipment they would need to complete field experience labs. This provided a highly functional option to meet student needs when they missed a lab class.
- As the Dean of Math and Science, I have worked with the library on the development of our myCommons site on Blackboard which provides students access to several out-of-class learning modules that advance their likelihood of academic success. The library provides information literacy training and other badges and the science program provides introductory modules in chemistry. These resources save students time and money by providing consistent, quality learning opportunities without the commitment of a full semester of instruction.

Again, this list provides only a few examples of the many ways our students, faculty, and staff benefit from the CWI Library. If I can provide additional information, please feel free to reach out to me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kae Jensen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kae" being particularly prominent.

Kae Jensen  
Dean of Math and Science  
College of Western Idaho  
[kaejensen@cwidaho.cc](mailto:kaejensen@cwidaho.cc) 208-562-3336

6 December 2018

Dear Dr. Herold and other members of the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Committee:

I am writing to offer my strong support for the College of Western Idaho Library's application for the Excellence in Academic Libraries Award. I have been working closely with the librarians and staff since I began in the spring of 2010. At that time, I was one of the faculty writers for the College of Western Idaho's self-study for accreditation candidacy status from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. The library was then located in a classroom-size space in our main academic building, and had very few staff. As you likely know by now, the library was found to be insufficient in infrastructure, staff, and materials in the 2011 candidacy visit. The current Library Services Director, Kim Reed, had started working at the College only a few weeks before the visit. Through my continued work with accreditation self-studies and my work as an English faculty member and now department chair, I have watched the CWI Library grow into one of the College's strongest support services. The Library is strongly committed to CWI's educational mission, as is evident in its own mission, and it meets each of the criteria for this award.

The College of Western Idaho is still quite new (opening its doors not even 10 years ago), and due to an unexpected rate of growth, it does not have the physical facilities many colleges enjoy. Space is at an extreme premium on campus. Additionally, the College is spread over several sites, with two "main" campus spaces in each of the counties we serve (Ada and Canyon). This makes providing access for students challenging. Libraries, of course, are about more than books on shelves, but that is still one important piece of what libraries offer. The CWI Library has committed to ensuring access to students, faculty, and the college community in at least three important ways:

1. The Library has found ways to increase its physical footprint. The Nampa campus library moved into a significantly larger leased space soon after the candidacy visit, and the Library successfully lobbied for a small space at the Ada County campus. The Ada space has been expanded over time, and both locations now offer reasonable physical holdings and study spaces for students, including lots of computers and expert librarians. Nampa has a library instruction room, and Ada has a laptop cart for instruction in any classroom on that campus. The majority of students at CWI now have access to Library staff and holdings at their primary location.
2. The Library has continually grown and improved its digital holdings to balance out the relatively small physical holdings. Video resources have increased significantly in the time that I have been at CWI, which benefits our entire campus but especially online courses, where copyright can make assigning video difficult. Journal and database access have also improved significantly as the Library has responded to the needs of academic departments. I know from prior service on the Library Advisory Committee how carefully the librarians monitor usage to be sure they are providing access to what students really need and use. Additionally, the ebook collection is superb, and I have personally been impressed with the range of scholarly material available to students anytime and anywhere.
3. The Library has made it possible for all students, regardless of location, to access physical resources through the Books by Mail service. This means students who live in outlying areas or are unable to travel to one of the library locations can quickly get the materials they need.

In short, the Library has found numerous ways to overcome its physical size and still provide excellent resources for the students and faculty who rely on them.



Very recently, the library started a badging system to better serve CWI students. Rather than having a librarian come into a class and show students how to do a book search, article search, and so forth, students now complete modules on our LMS (Blackboard) where they learn about some key topics relating to using the library and conducting high quality research. Instead of watching someone else run a computer (possibly in several classes over the course of their education), students do the work themselves to prove they've mastered a given skill. This flipped model means librarians can dive deep into information literacy or more advanced research skills when they meet with a class; it also means students only have to go through the basics once, meaning each library instruction session can add value instead of repeating the same information. These badges have been enormously popular with faculty, and students appreciate the lack of repetition. Instruction sessions have become much more meaningful. This is true for both first-year classes, which have standard-but-adaptable lessons faculty can request and for more advanced classes, where instructors and librarians work together on learning outcomes. I have found this program to be extremely beneficial across a variety of courses I teach (first-year experience [CWID 101], English composition classes, and 200-level literature), and I have heard nothing but praise from other faculty. I've appreciated the standard sessions on fake news and the information life cycle, and I've had great experiences working with a librarian to develop advanced, discipline specific goals for a session as well. The badging + deep instruction model is one I cannot recommend highly enough.

The librarians at CWI have made a dedicated and consistent effort to stay in conversation with faculty and students and to adapt their services and offerings to best serve the current needs of the College community. I have seen this in other departments (a past collaboration with the Communications 101 faculty to embed an information literacy component into every section—before the badges), but I will speak to it from my personal experience in the English department. There is an obvious connection between the research writing of our English 102 course and the library—we have course outcomes that require students to be good consumers of information and to engage with and use peer reviewed sources; the Library is also committed to information literacy, and they are the most accessible way for students to find peer reviewed sources. Over the years, English faculty have served on the (former, I believe) Library Advisory Committee, to maintain communication in a formal way; librarians have visited school and department meetings to give announcements and reminders of resources and services; and the library has on at least one occasion sent a librarian to participate in our English 102 course assessment process (a portfolio review) to further the already good communication. Just this semester, two librarians came to an English department meeting to check in on a drop in instruction sessions for English 102 classes to see if there were things they could be doing to better meet English faculty needs. (The answer, of course, is complicated—some people have stopped using sessions because of the badges, yes, but we also have had a lot of turnover and have moved more of our classes to a hybrid format. We brainstormed strategies to target communication and to make sure faculty knew how much flexibility there was in having an instruction session. A librarian will visit our 102 review next week to follow up on that conversation.) I speak with department chairs from across the college routinely, and I know that the collaboration between English and the Library is not unusual—it is the norm for the Library to reach out in this way, and many faculty use the services provided, so that we can collectively better serve our students.

I am enormously proud of the CWI library, and not at all surprised that they received a commendation when CWI received its independent accreditation. I have worked with individual librarians to request books and videos, which were promptly purchased and put into circulation for my and my students' use. I have used interlibrary loan to access articles for professional development. I routinely schedule library instruction sessions, because I know that the librarian will be engaging and helpful and that my students will learn something of value. I never hesitate to encourage students to contact the librarians to ask a question—when their search terms aren't working, or they're struggling to find the right resources, or

whatever the problem may be. No matter how they contact the library, I know they will find someone who will listen attentively and carefully and help them take the next step in their project. And if they make it to one of the physical libraries, they will find a welcoming space to study or write or work on a project (alone or in groups); they'll find children's book section in Nampa (which I've used with my own son) and a browsing collection at both locations (which I've also used for personal reading). Some of my fondest memories have been in libraries: the Fairfax Public Library, where my mom took us for story time when I was very young; the Cedar Rapids Public Library, one of the first places I ever drove myself, and where I spent many hours wandering the stacks; my college library, where I holed up on the third floor reading article after article after article and discovered the joys of microform; and now the CWI library. Every time I'm in the building, I walk in, and I am grateful that this space is here for CWI students. I believe the College of Western Idaho Library provides excellent support for the CWI mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joy Palmer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J" and "P".

Joy Palmer  
Department Chair of English  
Associate Professor  
College of Western Idaho

November 28, 2018

Irene M. H. Herold  
Librarian of the College  
College of Wooster  
1140 Beall Ave  
Wooster, OH 44691-2337

Re: College of Western Idaho

Dear Award Committee,

It is with pleasure and pride that I write this letter of support for the College of Western Idaho Library as an Excellence in Academic Libraries Award nominee.

As the Dean of the School of Social Sciences and Public Affairs, I can attest to the exceptional contributions they make to our programs in support of student success. The Library staff play a critical role in supporting faculty and students by ensuring resources are available, including ordering items if necessary. In addition, the Library representative for our school attends our in-service meetings and other faculty development events and is considered a integral part of instruction.

The College of Western Idaho Library is staffed and led by professionals who continue to demonstrate excellence in their field. They are continually developing programs to support the success of students, including a badging system among others.

I appreciate the opportunity to share just a few details about our Library and feel confident they are deserving of this award.

Please let me know if you need any additional details.

Sincerely,

*Courtney Santillan*

Courtney Santillan, MPA  
Dean, Social Sciences and Public Affairs  
College of Western Idaho  
[courtneysantillan@cwidaho.cc](mailto:courtneysantillan@cwidaho.cc)

November 30, 2018

Irene M. H. Herold  
Librarian of the College  
College of Wooster  
1140 Beall Avenue  
Wooster, OH 44691-2337

Dear Ms. Herold,

Thank you for taking the time to consider our library for the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award.

The College of Western Idaho (CWI) has spent the ten years since our inception building our programs, infrastructure, services, and resources at an unprecedented pace, a phenomenon our President has frequently referred to as “building the plane in flight.” From our first day of classes in 2009 enrollment grew by leaps and bounds, expanding the demand exponentially upon our staff and faculty each semester. While I have had the privilege of seeing groups across campus rise to this challenge each day, our Library staff has consistently performed at a high level as one of the most talented, dedicated, and student-focused teams at the College.

CWI Library is widely regarded as a center of creativity and innovation on campus. The Library is always an early adopter when it comes to educational technologies on campus: they were the first at CWI to implement an online chat help service, the first to launch an online badging initiative to support student learning outcomes, and the first to build an online public chatbot that provides research assistance to students beyond regular service hours. Their small staff leverages their energy and creativity to provide services that many research institutions would envy. They sustain the longest service hours of any department on campus (and extend those hours substantially during finals), respond with impressive speed--typically within the same business day--to requests from students, staff, and faculty, and do it all with a marked positivity that elicits compliments from students and faculty alike. While they function under extreme space limitations, they do more in 6,500 square feet than one would imagine possible, offering a blend of options for various student learning styles and hosting frequent community-building events for students. Their recent redesign at the Nampa Campus Library, for instance, identified a pattern of complaints from students who found the space too noisy, and for under \$8,000 transformed their library into a light-filled, sound-zoned, student-friendly area (with no noise complaints since the change).

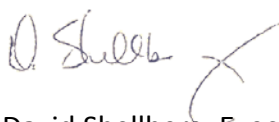
Seven years ago, faculty would send their students to the nearest university or public library rather than directing them to our own library at CWI. Today, CWI’s library staff is actively engaged with students and faculty both inside and beyond the library’s spaces. The Library

partners with our Center for Teaching and Learning in consulting with faculty on copyright and Open Educational Resource (OER) initiatives for their courses, works closely with Tutoring Services and the Writing Center to connect and integrate services where possible, and is a regular presence at faculty and curriculum-oriented meetings on campus. The Library has a vibrant program of information literacy instruction that targets learning outcomes to appropriate courses across the curriculum, and librarians meet with faculty regularly to continue adjusting and improving their approach. The Library is also known for its rapid ability to provide materials beyond our own collection; they fielded over 1,400 requests from students, staff, and faculty last year alone, filling 90% of them. Their positive relationship with students is evident in their 94% student approval rating, as reflected in their latest (2018) student survey. Students comment upon the helpfulness and friendliness of library staff, the library's apparent care and concern for students and their success, and an environment that makes students feel comfortable and supported.

Among all of CWI Library's accomplishments, two stand out most. First, the one-hundred-and-eighty degree reversal of their review by our accreditors at the Northwest Commission on College & Universities, which the library staff effected within four years. As the chair of our College's accreditation process, I can speak to the fact that such a turnaround, from inclusion as a "Recommendation" in 2012 to a "Commendation" in 2016, is a remarkable achievement and reflects the deep dedication of the Library's staff in transforming their entire organization in such a short time frame. Second, I would be remiss if I did not mention the Library's instructional badging program, launched in early 2016. Developed to "flip" instruction of introductory research skills for our first-year experience course, Connecting with Ideas (CWID) 101, the "Research Basics" badges they developed have been successful beyond all expectations. In two years, students have earned nearly 23,000 badges in this program. In fact, the badges have garnered so much attention that our neighboring university's library, Boise State University Albertsons Library, launched a similar instructional badging program this fall after consulting with our librarians, and our two libraries continue to meet and build collaboration in this and other areas. Still not resting on their laurels, CWI Library's staff received IRB approval last summer to undertake an in-depth assessment project to evaluate the effectiveness of the badging program, which is currently in progress.

In sum, I am proud to recommend the College of Western Idaho Library for the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award this year. While I am sure that you have many fine candidates among our community college colleagues, our Library's staff and achievements are superlative and well-deserving of national recognition. I appreciate your and the committee's time and consideration as you make your determination.

Respectfully yours,



David Shellberg, Executive Vice President  
Instruction