Campus partnerships building on success

A look at San Jose State University

by Patricia Senn Breivik and Robert McDermand

The California State University (CSU) System's history of collaboration among library and classroom faculty to develop information competency dates back to 1993.[1] Activities have included system-wide conferences, a common set of standards (which precede but closely parallel ACRL standards), collaborative benchmarking endeavors, and a small grant program to foster librarian/classroom faculty collaboration to incorporate information literacy into the curriculum.

Building on the success of this system-wide collaboration, librarians at the individual CSU campuses have developed their own institutional-specific collaborations. At San Jose State University (SJSU), guaranteed one-hour library instruction sessions in the basic writing course and in a junior-level writing course have been in place since the late 1980s. Librarians share responsibility for the general education writing courses and each librarian handles all information literacy requests for his or her designated academic programs; for years individual librarians labored alone to fulfill these responsibilities.

In August 2003, SJSU and the City of San Jose opened the Dr. Martin Luther King Library, the first in the United States to integrate major university and city libraries in one place. When major changes were being studied during the planning for the proposed university/city library, we decided to create an outreach librarian position. This librarian would help facilitate opportunities to build collaborations across the campus—especially with faculty. This new position would help to alleviate the concern that the new combined library might diminish emphasis on academic priorities.

The outreach librarian is a member of the SJSU library dean's management group. In addition, the librarian is responsible for coordinating the planning and integration of activities that promote effective use of library resources and services and is working to achieve better understanding and use of the library. One of the primary goals of the outreach librarian is the further incorporation of information literacy into student outcomes in each discipline. The outreach librarian teams with the library liaisons on this goal because an essential ingredient in successfully integrating information competence into the curriculum is the quality of the relationships among the librarians and the classroom faculty.

Library liaisons

SJSU librarians work with a minimum of two academic departments, and they have collection management and information literacy responsibilities for their departments. To support their efforts and to avoid a scenario where each librarian individually develops all initiatives and correspondences with faculty, the outreach librarian has developed a series of templates. So far, these templates provide examples of lower- and upper-division classroom assignments that meet CSU in

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formation competence goals, they explain the background of and the process for a journal cut, and they foster faculty involvement in library-related activities for specific needs. Librarians tailor the templates to meet the requirements of their specific departments.

Many partnerships with academic departments illustrate our efforts in the collaborative area. Following are some of the most successful librarian/faculty collaborations to date.

• *Art Department*—A partnership to redesign the B.A. and M.A courses to ensure that students develop visual, verbal, and information competency skills.

• *Biology Department*—A partnership to integrate information competency outcomes throughout the curriculum by assessing current practices, then developing information competency objectives, and creating departmental support for these objectives by sharing successful information competence strategies and assignments.

• *Business Department*—A partnership that has resulted in a Web-based tutorial entitled "Tips and Practice for Finding and Using Tax Information on the Internet." The five-part tutorial familiarizes students with techniques for effective Internet searching.

• *English Department*—An ongoing partnership resulting in an Information Competence Proposal funded with a $5,000 grant and accepted by the department in 2001 that allowed the department to revise its courses to incorporate information competence goals. The resulting Web page[2] is a model for other departments seeking to integrate information competence activities into the curriculum.

Since the program's inception, several areas have been identified to provide ongoing opportunities for shaping student-learning experiences. All but one of the illustrations below involves partnering with instructors.

• *Library tour*—Since the opening of our new university/city library in August 2003, many students' first introduction to the new King Library is through a volunteer docent-led tour. These tours are not designed to be in-depth encounters, but serve as a departure point for further study and exploration in the library. The outreach librarian, in partnership with a volunteer cochair, developed the docent program and to date they have trained two groups of volunteers.

• *English 1B*—The online InfoPower program, used with the English 1B required librarian session, is based on the TILT (Texas Information Literacy Tutorial)[3] program and was adapted for use at SJSU under the leadership of one librarian. Each English 1B student completes the library's three-module InfoPower program before the librarian's classroom visit. Using these modules, students learn to select, search for, and evaluate information for their papers. Using InfoPower's online modules, the student picks a topic, drafts a thesis statement, and with the help of the librarian/faculty member team, carries out the required online research. Students can move quickly through content that they have encountered before and can spend more time on unfamiliar concepts.

Each module includes a final quiz and a request for students' opinions on what they have learned. Student scores are available to the classroom faculty, the librarian, and the student. These scores allow librarians to tailor classroom presentations to areas identified by the modules as the students' weakest.

Librarians' classroom visits usually coincide with the introduction of a multistep assignment that requires students to research a topic and write a paper using library resources. Students complete the assignment in steps and the classroom faculty and librarians provide individual responses to the students at the completion of each step. For example, step two is often an annotated bibliography.

• *100W*—Building on the research skills acquired in English 1B, students in English 100W, a required junior-level writing course, continue to develop writing and research skills but they are now tailored to their majors. Several interactive Web-based tutorials for specific disciplines have been developed and more are in process. The tutorials, which generally follow the InfoPower module format, are directed at students to "help you find the material you need to be successful in 100W and other courses." The emphasis on student success intends to build upon the similar emphasis on their academic success introduced by the InfoPower modules.

• *MUSE (Metropolitan University Students Experience)*—More recently, the appointment of a new provost resulted in a new priority for establishing freshmen-level research courses—and the outreach librarian was involved from the outset. Now SJSU annually offers 100 MUSE seminar courses; and, in each, a librarian works closely with the instructor and the students to improve research skills.

Building faculty connections

Another beneficial activity accomplished by the outreach librarian has been to secure appointment as one of several faculty fellows in the Center for Faculty Development. The center exists to provide a context for comprehensive professional development for faculty. Facilitated by the outreach librarian, SJSU librarians regularly offer workshops at the center on topics such as plagiarism, creating successful library experiences, incorporating information competence into course work, and demonstrations of Web-based library research. Librarian activities and presentations at the center are particularly important as they reinforce librarian/ faculty collegiality and offer a forum for librarians to illustrate directly to classroom faculty the specifics of King Library resources.

Many faculty members do not take full advantage of the Development Center, so other ways are needed to promote the intrinsic value of librarians beyond collection management and provision of research overviews for the faculty's students. For example, through a series of initiatives under the leadership of the outreach librarian, more faculty members are coming to view librarians as important to achieving their personal goals through the following activities.

• *New faculty orientation*—To assist new faculty who face the pressures of teaching and the promotion and tenure process, a half-day library orientation session is offered as part of the new faculty orientation. New faculty members are introduced to library resources and their library liaisons. Following the orientation, the librarians follow up with phone calls and visits to make sure faculty have the information they need, understand how to integrate information competence goals into their courses, and can gain access to research materials they will use in the publication process as they begin to build their promotion and tenure dossiers.

• *The University Scholars Series*—This series, managed and promoted by the outreach librarian, creates an informal scholarly forum for faculty to present their research to students and faculty. It is cosponsored by the university provost and the university bookstore. Attendance for these monthly presentations ranges from 40 to 120, and the series is broadcast on the campus radio station. The series offers many benefits. It provides the library with a visible link to scholarly activity on campus and promotes the library as a patron of scholarly activities. More faculty members are asking to participate in the series than can be accommodated.

• The *Annual Faculty Publications Reception*—Cosponsored by the library and the campus bookstore, now to be held in the new King Library, features faculty who have published books in the previous year. The faculty provide copies of their monograph(s) for display and sale. This social gathering showcases the library as a supporter of scholarly endeavors and helps to strengthen the connection between the library and classroom faculty.

• *Faculty Publication Database*—This searchable database contains all SJSU faculty publications, journal articles, conference proceedings, and monographs published since 1992. When faculty members introduce students to the scholarly literature of a discipline, they can use the database for examples. Students also like knowing more about the scholarship of their faculty members.

What comes next

The partnership between SJSU librarians and classroom faculty to attain the goal of information competent graduates is a constant. At King Library, we have developed new ways of working together to achieve this goal. In fact, the library's outreach program has capitalized on the interest generated by this beautiful new facility to establish new initiatives and to strengthen current programs.

For example, one of the new collaborative efforts made possible by the King Library is an initiative to enhance pre-K–12 learning in San Jose. The Educational Resource Center (ERC) provides information and resources for anyone interested in enhancing pre-K–12 education in the Silicon Valley. ERC is a collaborative effort among SJSU librarians, the College of Education, School of Library and Information Science, San Jose public librarians, school personnel, community members, and concerned groups. An advisory board oversees the center's programming and outreach activities. In addition, selected collections are housed together on the mezzanine over the children's room to promote better-informed pre-K-12 decision makers. The collections include California-adopted textbooks and learning materials, award-winning children's literature, and the best in curriculum and professional development materials.

New collaborations must be balanced by continuing to build on old successes. For example, as this article is being written, members of the Academic Senate University Library Board, including the university library dean, the vice chair of the Senate, several librarians, and one faculty member

discussed how Yale University libraries have marketed the expanding role of the library on campus—from cultural icon and sacred space to an evolved, technologically sophisticated place of study and new learning commons. Mary Reichel of Appalachian State University discussed how her library used marketing to gain support (financial and otherwise) for a new library building and information commons. Virginia Cherry of Richard Bland College presented ideas for using the @ your library campaign to promote library events, activities, exhibits, and services to the larger campus community, and related specific campaigns that her library has used to gain greater visibility and support on campus. Finally, Kenneth Marks spoke about the history and development of the @ your library campaign.

The Campus Administration and Leadership Discussion Group presented "First, You've Got to Get Their Attention! A Discussion About Budget-Reduction Strategies That Wake Up Campus Administrators (And Those That Put Them to Sleep)." David Gleim of the University of Colorado-Denver led a lively discussion about budget-cutting tactics designed to restore financial strength in libraries and absorb cuts while protecting user services and resources.

The Public Services Directors of Large Research Libraries Discussion Group presented several topics for discussion. Diane Strauss of the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill facilitated a discussion on consolidating libraries, service points, and branch libraries. Members of the group provided examples of what works and doesn't work; the impacts on space, staffing, and financial resources; and how to make the transitions easier on library and departmental faculty and staff. Paul Constantine of the University of Washington then led a discussion on staffing at reference and other service desks. Members discussed staffing models using professional and paraprofessional staff; how changes in numbers and length of reference questions and digital reference are affecting staffing on desks; and training issues. A discussion of virtual reference services will be continued until the Annual Conference in Orlando.—*Leslie Madden, Georgia Institute of Technology, leslie.madden@library.gatech.edu* ■

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from each college is working on a Senate resolution. Its intent will be to encourage information literacy learning opportunities to be expanded across the curriculum of the general education requirements and within each major. This is not to say that each course will have an information literacy stand-alone component, but that care will be given to ensuring that by graduation, students will have mastered all of the agreed upon information literacy standards.

Finally, just as other librarian/faculty collaborations have evolved out of new campus initiatives, planning is now underway for collaboration among students, faculty, and librarians to provide a library-based learning experience within a residential experience. SJSU is currently constructing a residential housing facility for more than 6,000 students and faculty. The library's Residential Life Proposal will go beyond the classroom to enrich students' sense of community and nurture their intellectual and leadership interests by integrating library-related learning activities as a natural part of their residential experience.

Conclusion
What have we learned so far at SJSU from our collaborations with faculty? First and foremost, we have experienced the power of good library and classroom faculty relationships and the importance of supporting these relationships in practical ways, and second, that fostering such relationships is too important to leave to chance. With the appointment of an outreach librarian, someone is responsible for continuously monitoring emerging opportunities for collaboration, taking the lead in laying the groundwork for the new initiatives, and providing support for the ongoing outreach efforts of the librarians. The ultimate winners are our SJSU students.

Notes
1. Charge to the Work Group on Information Competence, CLRIT Task 6.1. Information Competence in the CSUA: Report Submitted to Commission on Learning Resources and Instructional Technology, Work Group on Information Competence, CLRIT Task 6.1. Susan C. Curzon, Chair. December 1995 Retrieved February 24, 2004, from www.calstate.edu/LS/Archive/info_comp_report.shtml#Appendices.

2. See www2.sjsu.edu/depts/english/Infocomp.htm for the Information Competence Web site.

3. Visit the University of Texas System Digital Library at tilt.lib.utsystem.edu/yourtilt/agreement.html. ■