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Spring 2001

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Humboldt State University Library

SERIALS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM HEADS UP

In order to manage the increasing cost of our journal collection, the Library, together with help from faculty in all departments, has been working to create a serials management system. We have traditionally dedicated a certain proportion of our budget for the purchase of books, journals, media and electronic resources. In order for the Library to continue to be able to purchase resources in all of these categories, we need to work with each department to review our journal collection and to determine which journals, and in what format, our students should be familiar with when they graduate.

We recently received a five-year historical pricing analysis for our journal collection. It was awe-inspiring to see that over the last five years, prices have increased an average of 8.3 percent **each year** for a majority of the titles to which we subscribe. (And that really does mean that some titles have therefore increased in price by 40 percent or more over that time period.)

In addition to the budgetary reason for monitoring our journal collection, this is also a good opportunity to ensure that it continues to reflect and support our curricular needs. Many of you may have already been contacted by your assigned subject bibliographers to begin this process, and others will be hearing from us as we continue to work upon this project.

USER SATISFACTION FOCUS GROUPS:

The Library is initiating outreach efforts to assess user satisfaction with Library services this spring. The first initiative will be a series of focus groups to be held the week of March 5. Professor Lee Bowker's students in Soc 584, Qualitative Research Methods, will run four focus group sessions lasting an hour each with paid student participants. These are expected to provide really valuable information on student views and needs. Faculty, staff and additional student comments will be collected later in the semester, probably using an online survey. If you have any questions, please contact Sharmon Kenyon or Mary Kay.

CSU ELECTRONIC BOOK PROJECT

A new wave of efforts to develop successful models for electronic books has led the CSU to put together a group of six "lead libraries" to evaluate vendor offerings and test alternative models in a one-year pilot project during 2001. HSU Library is one of the pilot group. Project purposes include developing an understanding of the potential uses of eBooks in CSU Libraries; testing the viability of eBooks as a medium for increasing access; developing a model for cooperative collection development of electronic monographs for the CSU. Two vendors have been chosen for the project thus far: NetLibrary of Boulder, Colorado, and ABC-CLIO, an established publisher of print reference resources.
NetLibrary offers two models for testing: outright purchase of titles, and also a one-year lease model. The 1,400 selected titles can be accessed through a database link on the Library Databases menu, and also through records for the individual titles loaded into Catalyst, our online catalog.   Titles were selected in the social sciences, sciences, education and psychology with single-user access. Books in business/economics, computer science/information technology, and general reference works were leased for a single year with three simultaneous users.

ABC-CLIO is in the process of bringing up electronic reference titles monthly, and will be providing 160 reference titles by the end of the year. These will be available for three years without further payment, and will be accessible as a database or as individual titles in Catalyst, as well.

The CSU system is fully funding this project, with a probable extension for 2002. You can help by providing feedback on your encounters with this new material.   You can send comments to Mary Kay at mhk1@axe.humboldt.edu, or watch for the online evaluation form that you'll be encountering as you use the titles.

THERE IS A NEW http://library.humboldt.edu/

You may have noticed that the Library web site has a new home page. This is not just a new look, but a way to make the rapidly growing Library web site a bit easier and faster to use. The new home page allows us to put more direct links to content right on top.

In addition to almost doubling the number of links into the Library, we were able to provide some extra information about where each link is leading. The search box, to quickly find a page, is right up front, for quick access.   While we've added features and upgraded our graphics and presentation, the new page is smaller and fifty percent quicker to load, a particularly important factor on slower, at home connection to the Internet.

The changes are the result of a lot of study, discussion and effort from the Library's Web Advisory Committee. The group looked at many other library sites and university sites, looked at new technologies, considered our goals and reviewed the comments, questions and suggestions from our users. We hope you can see the results of our commitment to improving our electronic services, by listening to you, our users, and making technology work for you. Let us know what you think and watch us online as we continue to improve.

NEW CATALOG SOFTWARE FOR CATALYST

You may have noticed a few changes in Catalyst, when you returned for the spring semester. Over the break, the Library installed a new version of the Endeavor Voyager software that runs Catalyst.   The displays are providing more information about where the results of your search are located. The options for formatting the screen have improved, resulting in an easier to read display and better online help messages. Options for refining your search without re-entering it are now available, as are options to sort your search results as you are viewing them. We have added "Fast Search" options to the first page of catalyst, to save time and typing. If you are an advanced user who has had to remember to capitalize all of your boolean operators, you may quit typing AND, OR and save a little time, Catalyst no longer requires this capitalization. As with any software update, some of the changes in the software are behind the scenes, giving the system enhanced support for national information standards. These standards allow us to expand the catalog's contents and participate in some innovative resource sharing projects.   Let us know what you think about the new Catalyst and help us improve upon it.

THE LIBRARY'S PUBLIC WORKSTATIONS ARE GETTING A NEW LOOK

The public computers in the Library are getting a new look and a new functionality this spring. Microsoft Internet Explorer Version 5.5 will be replacing Netscape as the public interface of the Library's public computers. After years of supporting the Netscape Web browser for the Library's public stations, we have decided to make the switch to Microsoft's Internet Explorer Version 5.5. There are a number of reasons for this change. The version of Netscape that we are supporting is now obsolete, and has been causing more problems over time. Internet Explorer provides better support for the more advanced technology that we are now using on the Library's home page. The same technologies are used in more of the databases and information services that the Library subscribes to. The newest release of Netscape, version 6.0, is technically advanced in many ways, but is incompatible with a number of the services that the Library subscribes to. We will continue to watch the development of the new Netscape, but cannot support it at this time. With the change to Internet Explorer we will be able to provide better access to services, supporting more advanced programming that many of our information providers are using.   We will be retaining an option to use Netscape as a web browser on the start menu of the public workstations.

RESOURCE SHARING SYSTEMS TO ARRIVE IN FORCE THIS SPRING

The reach of the Humboldt State University Library card is going to extend in the next few months. The Library is participating in a project that will allow you to search all of the California State University libraries and borrow from them, using your HSU Library card.

The Pharos system will link all 22 CSU Libraries, beginning with a smaller test group, which includes Humboldt State. The diversity of collections in available in the CSU Libraries may make a surprising difference in the books you have available for your teaching, research and recreational needs. The technology involved is state of the art inter-networking, allowing multiple database searches from a single interface and real time status information on books and the people who borrow them. You will be able to find out that Chico State has the book you need, find out if it is checked out or on the shelf and request it to be delivered, all in one session.

Making the networking technology work to make connections between many different computer systems has been a major effort. Your Library and the other libraries we will be working with have been preparing for this for years. We have very powerful tools to design an interface that is both convenient and effective for your information needs. To do that we need to hear from you, the good, the bad and the what-if. Please, watch for our announcements, try it out, and let us know what you think.

LIBRARY JOINS NEW CASCADE PACIFIC LIBRARY NETWORK

Last fall, the Humboldt State University Library signed on as one of the charter members of the Cascade Pacific Library Network (CPLN). The CPLN is a new State-supported non-profit library consortium organized under the aegis of the Library of California Act. The 39 current members include academic, public, school, and special libraries from throughout the 13 northernmost counties in the state. Quoting from the CPLN web site at http://cascadepacific.org/index.html, "the purpose of Cascade Pacific Library Network is to promote cooperation and coordination of library collections and services to meet the educational, informational, research and other library needs of all residents of northern California." Within the next few years, the CPLN is expected to supplant the North State Cooperative Library System (NSCLS), another State-supported library network. For more than a decade, the NSCLS has been serving a similar mission, facilitating resource-sharing between libraries within the same geographic region, but with a more limited clientele of public and academic libraries.

For further information, consult the CPLN web site or contact Wayne Perryman, chair of the HSU Library Access Services Department and vice-chair of the CPLN Board of Directors.

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