Vision and reality

Vision
By 2015, Champlain College Library will be widely recognized as and will be one of the most innovative, effective, and supportive libraries in higher education.

Mission
Champlain College Library endeavors to be a recognized leader in helping students become skilled, effective, responsible, life-long information users. We are agile, navigating quickly and effectively in the fast-changing environment of our profession, our College, and our higher education arena. We are entrepreneurial, securing and deploying exemplary resources and services in innovative ways. We are thoughtful in our application of new technologies, selecting and implementing the best available tools to support students and faculty in their information needs. We capitalize on the innovative design and purpose of Miller Information Commons. We maintain and promote it as an intellectual center on campus and a welcoming and supportive environment. We are knowledgeable and approachable, and are active in our profession locally, nationally, and internationally. This approach is the signature of both the physical and virtual Library, its resources, staff, and services, as we provide relevant, patron-centered support to students, faculty, and staff.

Values
agility • approachability • being patron-centered • breaking new ground • collaboration • collection • community • contributing to the profession • creativity • curricular support • customer service • customized response • dynamic collection practices • efficiency • fun • innovation • nimbleness • progress • relationships • supportiveness • thoughtful use of technology • welcoming atmosphere
Champlain wins ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award

Burlington, VT -- On April 16, 2012, ACRL President Joyce Ogburn, Dean and University Librarian of the University of Utah, presented the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award to Champlain College.

Sponsored by ACRL and YBP Library Services, the award recognizes the staff of a college, university and community college library for programs that deliver exemplary services and resources to further the educational mission of the institution; Champlain is the 2012 recipient in the college library category. Past recipients of the college library award since its inception in 2000 include Wellesley College, Earlham College, Oberlin College, Baruch College, Hope College, Mount Holyoke College, Augustana College, Trinity University, Carleton College, Hollins College, Elmhurst College, and Grinnell College.

“This year’s award recipients exemplify the commitment of today’s academic and research librarians to providing quality, innovative student learning experiences,” said ACRL Executive Director Mary Ellen K. Davis. “Receiving an Excellence in Academic Libraries Award is a national tribute to each library and its staff for outstanding services, programs and leadership.

The Champlain College Library impressed the selection committee with its nontraditional approach to instruction and positive student-driven environment: “The library’s small but mighty staff have a big impact on campus, and they have fun as well, fostering community through inventive social and cultural events,” Lori Goetsch, chair of the award selection committee noted. “The campus has adopted technology and information literacy as a core competency, and the library provides leadership through an information literacy program that is incremental, inquiry-based, embedded in the core curriculum and assessed through established rubrics. Surveys indicate that students have come to recognize the technology and information literacy core competency as most important to their academic success. It is clear that these librarians love what they do and spark creativity by working as team.”

“The Champlain College Library is deeply honored to receive this award,” said Janet Cottrell, director of the library at Champlain College. “This recognition from ACRL is a tribute to the enthusiasm, creativity and hard work of everyone in the library, and to the collaborative spirit of our campus. Our work is — and will remain — challenging, and this honor is a testament to what a small group of people can accomplish through innovation and dedication as we aspire to embody Champlain College’s motto: ‘Audeamus —Let us dare!’ We are deeply grateful to ACRL and YBP.”

What makes our library so great? Watch the video!
The Miller Information Commons

DISPLAYS
- Get Caught Reading
- Photography and Place (International Photo Contest)
- March is Women's History Month
- Meaningful Books: Sarah Cohen
- Meaningful Books: Claire Giroux Williams
- Self Portraits (student art)
- New Children's Books
- Video Reviews of Books selected by library student employees
- How do YOU see yourself?
- Study Abroad
- Hispanic/Latino Heritage Month
- Wangari Maathai
- Constitution Day
- Remembering 9/11
- **Endangered Alphabets** (ongoing)

**EVENTS**
- ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award Reception
- International Photo Contest Awards Reception
- Meaningful Books: Sarah Cohen
- Meaningful Books: Claire Giroux-Williams
- Reception for Champlain's "Beaver collection"
- 4th Annual Chili Cookoff

At the ACRL Award Reception, from left, Champlain Provost Robin Abramson, Champlain College Library Director Janet Cottrell, Holly Miller, Robert Miller and Champlain College President David Finney. The facility is named The Robert E. and Holly D. Miller Information Commons.

The number of people entering Miller Information Commons this year was within 1% of last year. Building use has increased 16% in the past five years--with an increase of over 28% in the past eight years.)
Collections and usage

Faculty and staff members engaged in collection development efforts all year, both recommending titles of relevance to their disciplines and students as well as willingly reading book reviews at the request of Scholarly Resource and Academic Outreach Librarian Hanna Bachrach. Approximately 61 faculty and staff members participated this year, including: Angel, Beaulieu, Bongiorno, Bonino, Brandenburg, Brookes, Bunting, Casey, Charles, Clark, Daly, Dees, Ducolon, Edelstein, Eldred, Erickson, Eskildsen, Esposito, Estrin, Ferguson, Friedman, Godwin, Hunt, Hunter, Isgro, Lewis, Lieberman, Lord, Lustgarten, McDonald, McGrath, McIsaac, Meyer, L. Miller, M. Miller, Myers, Nagelschmidt, Noonan, O’Grady, Oishi, Pelletier, Pepin, Pettit, Pile, Portilla, Price, Rafiemeyer, Ronis, Rosenblatt, Selby, Stevens, Stone, Stroup, Strubler, Suozzi, Wehmeyer, Wilkinson, Williams, Wolf, Young, Zeman

While all curriculum-related deselection is done together with faculty members, at a library retreat in May 2011, librarians agreed that deselection in areas of the collection that are not directly related to the college curriculum could be taken on by librarians.

The summer was a good time to begin such a project, and Hanna Bachrach coordinated the effort. She and Reference and Instruction Librarian Paula Olsen carefully weeded such areas of the collection as adventure and exploration, weddings, astronomy, fitness, gardening, cars and planes, and ships. Each book was considered not only in relation to its main area of focus, but also for its interdisciplinary relevance to related fields of study. Over the course of the summer, librarians removed a total of about 800 outdated and/or irrelevant books from the collection.

In September, faculty members Phil Cykon, Eric Friedman, and Jean Myers helped in reviewing the law and criminal justice areas of the book collection. A total of about 700 outdated and/or irrelevant books were removed from the collection by these three motivated faculty members. The time they spent in the stacks also resulted in quite a bit of discussion about the great resources the library does have and how they might take those resources into consideration when planning assignments.

In addition to continuing to develop the print, ebook, media, and periodical collections, several new databases were added to the library collection in close consultation with faculty during the 2011/2012 school year. One of those databases, Elsevier’s Science Direct, addressed the requests of five faculty members for specific journal titles. Other electronic resources added to the collection this year include PrivCo (in-depth business and financial data specifically on private companies), Prendisko (offers over 15,000 video clips from experts on business leadership, and entrepreneurship), Chicago Manual of Style (online; it also provides convenient tools, such as sample correspondence, proofreaders’ marks, and a quick guide to citation), Chronicle of Higher Education (the no. 1 source of news, information, and jobs for college and university faculty members and administrators), and Films on Demand – Business and Economics (a collection of over 800 videos on topics of Business Education; Business Technology; Economics; Ethics & Business Law; Finance, Accounting & Taxation; Management; and Marketing).
Reference questions

Reference questions declined noticeably, by almost 24%. The overall change in 5 years still represents an increase of about 38%, but the recent decline is substantial.

All types of questions decreased this year: basic information questions decreased by 22%, advanced questions declined by 45%, and technology questions by about 11%. This year, advanced questions accounted for only about 18% of all questions, compared with 25% for the past two years.

Why the decline? National data suggest that students overall have begun to value to library instruction more over time, and library reference service less (data from the MISO Survey). We hope to study this further by participating in the MISO survey in 2013-2014.
Instruction

The library provides two types of classroom instructional sessions: a coordinated series of information literacy-based instruction embedded in the Core curriculum, described in the following section of this report, plus individual instructional sessions at the request of faculty members in courses outside the scope of the Core instructional program.

The total number of instructional sessions offered has increased dramatically in recent years primarily as a result of the embedded Core instructional program. Via this program, each undergraduate student sees a librarian in the classroom every semester during the first three years of the Core curriculum. Implementing such a comprehensive program has naturally increased the number of students reached as well as the number of instructional sessions.

Sessions taught: The number of instructional sessions taught 134 this year decreased slightly, about 7%, primarily due to decreased instruction requests outside the Core. However, the amount instruction over the past five years has increased 42%.
Information Literacy: Student success to date

Like all educators, we face a central question: We are teaching, but are students learning? And if they are, how can we demonstrate their skill attainment accurately?

In studying the effectiveness of our instructional program, we rely on several sources of information: 1) evaluation of student work via e-portfolio; 2) self-reports from students, including responses to supplemental questions in the Noel-Levitz survey; and 3) anecdotal information. Clearly these sources are very different. This mix of quantitative and qualitative information provides alternative perspectives that help form a kind of “triangulation.”

**Evaluation of student work**

Evaluation of student work submitted in response to course assignments is the most direct measure we have of student success. Specific aspects of student work are evaluated by faculty members on a four-point scale: does not meet expectations, nearly meets expectations, meets expectations, and exceeds expectations. Evaluations of “meets” or “exceeds” are considered evidence of having met the competency. In evaluating the overall success of the information literacy effort, we have set a preliminary target that 80% of Champlain students will meet the competency by graduation.

Evidence to date shows that in the Class of 2011, 72% of students achieved competence, and in the Class of 2012, 77% of students met the competency.

Over the past two years, student achievement in some components of the competency has exceeded the 80% target: defining the task, considering sources and selecting sources (Figure 3). While short of our target overall, this initial data affirms that our target is attainable, and already reveals some increases in student success.

(Note: For some components of the competency, we are not able to measure student achievement in all years of their work. For example, “considering sources” is currently measured only once, during students’ second year of work. The achievement levels shown in Figure 3 are based on the last measuring point for each component.)

We also looked at how student work as a whole changed over time in their achievement of each component of the competency. The class of 2012 student cohort performed much better by their third year than they did in their first year; sometimes the improvement was dramatic in these two years. We will continue to track these measures as an indication of overall success.

We also use student outcome measures to guide our instructional planning. In the very first semester of the new Core curriculum, evaluation of student work showed clearly that students were not doing well at attribution and citation. Only 56% were citing and attributing competently. We realized that we hadn’t actually included any instruction on the topic for this cohort. In subsequent years we added instruction -- and saw dramatic improvement. Seeing student outcomes allows us to monitor and adapt quickly and easily, continually refining our instruction in light of student progress.

Looking ahead, we anticipate continuing to use faculty evaluation of student work as a measure of progress. We have begun librarian evaluation of samples of student work, and we are interested in how closely librarian evaluation correlates with faculty evaluation. We are also exploring additional ways we can monitor our effectiveness.
**Student self-reports**

In 2011, Champlain College students identified Technology and Information Literacy as the most important of seven College-wide competencies. In the Noel-Levitz survey, which the college administers regularly, students are asked to rate two aspects of each item: how important the item is to them, and how satisfied they are with the College on that item. In supplemental questions about the college competencies included on the 2011 Noel-Levitz survey, students ranked the technology and information literacy competency as the most important college competency (the other competencies include written and oral communication, quantitative literacy, ethical reasoning, global appreciation, and critical/creative thinking). When students were asked to rate satisfaction with the College's contribution to their development of these College-wide competencies, the technology and information literacy competency again ranked at the top. These results indicate that students are much more aware of the technology and information literacy competency than we might have guessed, and that they are very interested in developing their skills in this area.

**Anecdotal information**

The opportunity to embed library instruction within the Core curriculum is a wonderful advantage—but it carries a responsibility. Today's students -- and faculty -- demand high value for the time we spend with them. In particular, students don't want to sit through instruction that feels repetitive or boring. This realization has forced us to continually examine and refresh our instruction, and to integrate new ideas and new technologies. One example occurred when we incorporated students' use of mobile phones, laptops, and other electronic gear in an instruction session, by using them in place of traditional "clickers." The success of this instruction session is best described by the following anecdote from a faculty member teaching the Core course in which the new instructional technique was introduced:

I have taught this course in prior semesters, and taken part in its information literacy component. I assumed, therefore, when I opened my classroom door to the library representatives this year that I knew what to expect.

I couldn't have been more wrong, nor more pleasantly surprised.

When the first slide of the power point presentation flickered into view, I'm sure my students thought that they knew what to expect as well. But as soon as they heard the request to "take out and turn on your cell phones" they were shocked into an attentiveness that usually requires considerable coaxing to achieve. Students began to talk excitedly to one another... asking one another questions about their respective preferences for information resources. Students who had seldom spoken in class before this offered eager defenses for their particular choices, and animated discussions erupted at several tables - and this after only the first slide in the presentation.

The positive effect that this simple, but powerful, pedagogical tool had on student engagement and attitude in my classroom was clear and profound.

This broad range of evidentiary sources allows us to have greater confidence that we are not only seeing success in terms of student achievement, but also in their engagement in the topic and their recognition of its value to their education.
Professional activities


- Janet Cottrell and Michelle Miller [Associate Provost], "Theory into Practice: Translating research into program development and improvement." (Symposium.) *Librarians' Information Literacy Annual Conference, LILAC 2012*, Glasgow, Scotland, April 11-13, 2012.


