

SCAMeL Librarian Exchange Professional Development Program
UAMS Library visit to LSU Health Shreveport Medical Library
June 13-14, 2012

Visiting Librarians from UAMS Library

Jon Goodell, Web Services Librarian
Debra Boddington, Liaison and Education Librarian
Suzanne Easley, Archivist

Host Librarians at LSU Health Shreveport Medical Library

Dixie Jones, Interim Director
Mararia Adams, Assistant Director, Systems
Donna Timm, Education/Outreach, Head
Diedra Woodson, Metadata & Digitization Librarian
And others

Goals for Visit

LSU Health Shreveport Medical Library has many areas that we wanted to learn more about including clinical librarianship, history of medicine, community outreach, writing consultants, proposal writing, focus groups, posters and paper presentations, and marketing library services

Planned Itinerary

Wednesday, June 13

11:00 am - UAMS visitors arrive, library tour
11:30 am - Lunch in lounge
1:00 pm - Clinical Librarianship
1:30 pm - History of Medicine
2:15 pm - Outreach
2:45 pm - Break
3:15 pm - Writing Consultants
3:45 pm - Proposal Writing
4:15 pm - Assessment—focus groups, various surveys, counts of everything/usage stats, comments, suggestions
5:30 pm - Dinner out

Thursday, June 14

8:00 am - Working breakfast – Marketing library services
9:00 am - Posters and Paper Presentations
9:30 am - Break
9:45 am - Library Faculty Meeting - lounge
11:30 am - Lunch

Description of How Goals Were Met or Not Met

Goals for the visit were met. We discussed all scheduled items indicated above and more. Scheduling meetings for multiple groups can be difficult. Dixie Jones and her staff did an excellent job of making sure everyone we wanted to talk with was available to meet. They were excellent hosts and we would really encourage other librarians to try to visit LSU Health Shreveport Medical Library. They are doing great work and obviously work well together.

Lessons Learned

Many LSU Health Shreveport Medical Library community outreach projects promote their www.HealtheLinks.org website. The website links to specific article topics they feel are most relevant to their community. We like this approach so much that we are investigating something similar at UAMS.

Their novel Writing Consultants service provides proofreading and related writing services by two librarians to students and faculty. One librarian has a master's in Technical Writing and the other has a certificate in addition to their master's degrees in Library Science. In 2011 they proofread 215 papers and 99 so far at the time of our visit. Librarian writing consultants use the MS Word "track changes" feature and primarily make comments to suggest changes instead of making word and sentence revisions as coauthors might. This seems to be a very appropriate approach given the educational context of the library and university.

Proposals for external funding sources are often a team effort both internally and externally. Librarians often get ideas from community partners such as public libraries, the YMCA, and others. When librarians are up for promotion or tenure review they try to include those individuals. They also try to include travel expenses in budget proposals to share what they learned to the larger health sciences library community. When proposals are not funded they ask for proposal reviewer comments in order to improve future proposals.

Papers and presentations are often group efforts among librarians with shared interests and collaborators on outreach projects. They write together side by side and assign each other different writing sections. They send drafts to people unfamiliar with the topic to ensure it makes sense to those unfamiliar with the topics.

We found the Systems department to be very interesting. The library has approximately 22 employees, three of whom are in the Systems department. At the time of our visit they were beginning a job search for another Systems employee making Systems about 17% of library staff (4 out of 23). Given the technology rich environment of academic health sciences libraries this makes a lot of sense. Medical students all receive MacBook Pro laptops and iPads loaded with relevant Medical school applications. Campus IT has a team of people dedicated to helping med students specifically. They moved to Macs after complaints and bad experiences with Windows Vista.

We were able to time our visit with their faculty meeting. 14 attendees gave updates and the meeting lasted 75 minutes. We were told meetings sometimes run longer. Everyone seemed to be involved in multiple projects and about half were currently working a paper or conference presentation. David Dugger shared a very long list of recent publications and presentations so it is clear LSU Health Shreveport Medical Library's approach to professional involvement is a productive one.

Suggestions for Improvement

In order to encourage the sharing of lessons learned, SCAMeL may want to request that Professional Development Program participants to submit lessons learned during site visits to SC Connections or another health science library publication.

Final Note

Special thanks to SCAMeL for funding this visit and encouraging the sharing of ideas among our region's health sciences libraries as well as our library directors for encouraging us to connect with others in the region.