Going a Step Further: The Library’s New Urban Studies Course

By Galina Letnikova, Assistant Professor & Coordinator of Library Instruction

LaGuardia Community College Library’s instruction program embraces different forms of information literacy teaching: we offer one-hour Library class sessions embedded in every English 101 and English 103 course, and we teach individual classes requested by faculty in other departments. We also offer a range of 1, 2 and 3-credit courses, the most popular among them being LRC 103: Internet Research Strategies.

Last Fall, our Chief Librarian, Professor Jane Devine, suggested that we create a new course to teach students how to explore New York City by researching its data and history. She even had a title for the new course - “InfoCity.” A team of three librarians, Hong Cheng, Professor Galina Letnikova, and Chris McHale started the work right away. We were really enthusiastic about the idea and soon the title of the course transformed into “InfoCity: Informed Citizens in the Information Age.” One month later the course proposal was ready to be submitted to the College-Wide Curriculum Committee and was approved in January 2014 as a Liberal Arts and Urban Studies course. The course “InfoCity: Informed Citizens in the Information Age” is now part of the College’s Fall 2014 schedule and we are ready to teach it.

One may ask what was the need to design a new course? What were the reasons that motivated us to create a course that would meet Liberal Arts and Urban Studies co-requisites? The answers to these questions are complex.

Currently LaGuardia librarians actively participate in the constantly changing teaching and learning environment of the College. Together with other faculty we contributed to the design, discussion and approval of the new college-wide General Core Competencies - Inquiry and Problem Solving, Global Learning, and Integrative Learning. The course “InfoCity: Informed Citizens in the Information Age” addresses two of the recently adopted competencies: Inquiry and Problem Solving, and Integrative Learning. Students are taught how to define a research topic that will be focused on the historical, cultural, and socio-economic issues of New York City. They learn how to construct a research question and how to collect, analyze, and use information as evidence that results in informed conclusions. “InfoCity: Informed Citizens in the Information Age” provides students with a basic knowledge of how information is produced, organized, and distributed based on examples related to New York City’s multicultural environment. It will offer foundations in information literacy and in information management. We are planning to connect academic and experimental experiences by bringing the learning process

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Welcome to New Library Staff

Silvia Lu
Reference and Social Media Librarian

Silvia Lu is the new Reference and Social Media Librarian and joins LAGCC at the rank of Assistant Professor. Previously, she was an Access Services Librarian at the University of New Mexico. Silvia’s research considers the application of threshold concepts to information science as a discipline; she is currently working with her collaborators on a Delphi study to identify threshold concepts for IL. Silvia holds a B.A in Literature and Government from Claremont McKenna College, a M.S. in Library and Information Science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and a M.A. in English Literature from the University of New Mexico. Silvia loves growing vegetables, minimalist composers, and story-based radio. Most conversations with Silvia will invariably lead to stories about her dog, Watson.

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**Library Notes**

Spring 2014
Volume 25, Issue 2

Editors
Chris McHale
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Ann Matsuuchi
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This newsletter is published once each semester by LaGuardia Community College’s Library Media Resources Center. Opinions expressed do not necessarily represent those of the Library Media Resources Center or of LaGuardia Community College.

Comments may be sent by email to: cmchale@lagcc.cuny.edu or amatsuuchi@lagcc.cuny.edu.
Library Construction Starts Now

By Jane Devine, Chief Librarian

After years of meetings, planning and decision making, construction will finally begin on the Library’s expansion to the second floor at the end of June 2014. In the weeks leading up to that start date, the Library will be visibly preparing for the construction which also begins a year and a half of inconveniences for our Library users. Sections of the Library will be inaccessible for much of that time including the mezzanine and areas directly below it. Much of the Library’s print collections will be relocated to the C building and available only upon request. The Library will retrieve books requested on a daily basis for pick up at the circulation desk. The Library will lose study spaces during the construction and the IT Computer Lab will be reduced in size and number of workstations. While most of the heavy duty work will be performed at night when the Library is closed there may be times when construction noise is unavoidable during the day. The Library may have to close some weekends to facilitate special work requirements.

Despite these inconveniences, the Library will continue to be open and perform as much of its regular services as possible. There will continue to be access to Reference assistance, the Reserve Book collection, Media Services, Library instruction, computer labs, the Institutional Archives, copy facilities and much more. The Library’s website and many e-services will also be important, so please remember that the Library has a large collection of ebooks, many journals, magazines and newspapers available through its databases, an email reference service and ways to connect to the Library 24/7 through social media.

After the construction the Library will have gained new study spaces, group study rooms, new homes for Media Services and the Institutional Archives and a brand new look. So please be patient with us while all the necessary work takes place. And please feel free to contact us at any time to let us know any concerns or questions you may have. The Library blog and other social media outlets will continue to communicate with you about progress as it is being made and any changes in services that you may need to know about.

One final message: When everything is finally finished, the Library is going to have a grand opening for its new spaces. You are all invited.

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outside the classroom. Students will be engaged in field assignments such as visiting local libraries and government organizations.

The importance of Urban Studies courses for LaGuardia graduates cannot be overstated. Urban Studies courses help students to learn how to connect an understanding of the city with academic skills, and how to acquire the knowledge necessary to become well-informed citizens of our metropolis. It is a college-wide, interdisciplinary requirement that each student takes an Urban Studies course in order to graduate. Urban Studies at LaGuardia is an interdisciplinary program that explores the urban environment and city life from multiple perspectives. The program treats the city itself as a teaching and learning lab. The experiential learning provided by Urban Studies courses involves both political engagement (community outreach and data collection to support local activism) and research into broader conceptions of social, ethical, economic, and legal change. Academic librarians are well prepared by training and professional inclination to teach students how to determine what kind and amount of information is needed for their research, how to develop good strategies for locating appropriate resources, and how to evaluate and use what is retrieved. This is necessary for successful completion of research writing assignments. Incoming students oftentimes do not turn to the Library until it is needed for a particular course or a particular assignment. Our goal was to design such a course that would spark student interest in exploring, connecting, and making practical use of Library resources. We hope that our new course “InfoCity: Informed Citizens in the Information Age” will attract student curiosity and will benefit their scholarship. For more information: Professor Galina Letnikova, Coordinator of Library Instruction (gletnikova@lagcc.cuny.edu) ■
**Blind Date with a Book**

By Silvia Lu, Reference and Social Media Librarian

This Valentine’s Day, the library played matchmaker. LaGuardia students were sent out on blind dates…with books! Pulled from the Leisure Reading and stacks collections, the books were wrapped in festive red paper, their true identity hidden until after they had been checked out at Circulation. Hints and suggestions were written on the front cover to lead students to their literary true love. Students were encouraged to share their happily-ever-afters with the #lagcclibrary tag, with one “couple” winning a box of chocolates. Some of the books featured included:

- If you loved About a Boy and The Time Traveller’s Wife and dream of a vacation in London if you’ve ever fallen in love with your best friend (One Day)
- If you love Malcolm Gladwell and Radiolab and Bill Nye the Science Guy and Math! (Thinking in Numbers)
- If you love “House of Cards” and thought Walter White was a great hero and hate fancy restaurants with tiny portions (The Dinner)
- If you are training for a marathon or an ultramarathon and love early mornings and biographies (What I Talk About When I Talk About Running)

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**Some Reflections from the Library “Last Minute” Citation Workshops**

By Marie Cimino Spina, Institutional Archivist & Public Service Librarian

*(From the editors): At the end of the Spring and Fall semesters, the Library offers one-on-one citation assistance via “Last Minute Citation Workshops.” These are usually well-attended by students rushing to complete their work cited pages. The Library always hopes to see more students at future citation workshops. Here are some humorous reflections from Marie Spina, one of the librarians who always puts in extra time assisting students, describing some scenarios from our citation workshops.*

Scenario 1: It’s night time in the Library and there is a paper due in class tomorrow at 1 pm. A student goes to the Library for urgent help and asks: “How do I cite Ask.com, Wikipedia and an excerpt from Google Books?”

Scenario 2: A librarian and a student discuss the purpose of citation and how to correctly evaluate sources, as well as time management record keeping strategies. Most of this time is spent with the librarian talking on and on. The student nods in agreements since they want to get the darned citations done fast!

Scenario 3: The librarian asks: “What citation style are you using?” Student response: “Huh?” The librarian goes on to describe the many different citation styles, MLA, APA, Chicago, etc. Student response: “Why are there so many ways to cite stuff?” The librarian and student agree on the madness of the many citation styles and forge ahead.

Scenario 3: The librarian reveals how useful the “Find it” tool can be. She then goes on to show how using the DOI (digital object identifier) can locate the full text of a “UFO” source the student wishes to cite. Joy comes to student’s face as they see that most databases can offer at least the minimal citation elements needed for their papers. The student vows to come to Library sooner in the future and to use library databases more. The student then runs off to retype their paper with corrected citations.

And it doesn’t end there. The librarian goes on helping the 10th student in a row who needs intensive help with citation.
New Book about Academic Research in the Cloud

By Steve Ovadia, Web Services Librarian

"The Cloud" refers to the concept of software that is connected to servers via the Internet. It's what lets us watch movies in our web browsers and connect to our files through our phones and tablets. The cloud is a powerful tool that most of us use every day for any number of tasks. It's also a powerful research tool, and the subject of my book, The Librarian's Guide to Academic Research in the Cloud (Chandos, 2013).

The book examines cloud-based services, like Dropbox, CiteULike, Google Docs, and even Tumblr, and presents a process for not just using the services, but also how to think about them, in terms of academic research.

Before delving into these kinds of services, most users, but especially academics, probably want to focus on two issues: data portability and privacy/security.

Privacy and security aren't inherently related, but it is difficult to keep something private when it is not secure. The first step in understanding if a service is private and secure is looking at the terms of service. Given the length and complexity of some terms of service, though, that's not always particularly illuminating. Another option is to let someone else do the heavy lifting. Sites like PrivacyChoice [http://privacychoice.org/checkprivacyscores] rate other sites based upon their own research. The news site Ars Technica [http://arstechnica.com/] is also very aggressive in their privacy coverage.

Data portability is another important issue. Users can spend years putting their data into a cloud-based system, but how easy is it to get the data out? Google is trying to make it easier for users to extract their data via the Takeout service [https://www.google.com/takeout], which lets users export data from their email, calendar, and even photos. Not every cloud service offers this kind of export, though. And even some that let users export their data only allow the export in a difficult-to-use format. Still, data portability isn't a crucial for everyone. Some users are OK walking away from certain kinds of content they've created, seeing it as disposable. The important thing is to figure out your portability parameters before you're too heavily invested in a service.

One of the interesting things to come out of my research for the book is that the rise of cloud-based services, most of which are browser-based, means user operating systems are less and less important. For instance, I use Linux, an open source operating system. Most commercial programs are developed for Windows and OS X, but a Linux version of a program is hardly a given. But when an application is in your web browser, it doesn't matter what operating system is powering the browser. Something like OneDrive, Microsoft's file storage service, is just as accessible from a Firefox browser on Linux as it is from a Safari browser on OS X as it is from a Internet Explorer on Windows. This also has implications for mobile devices. Right now we think it terms of apps. Many users are invested in their phones, and the underlying platform, because of the apps upon which they rely. Many iPhone users won't switch to Android because of the apps they would lose access to. But as services become more effective in the mobile browser, the underlying mobile operating system becomes less important. If the app is really just a website, it doesn't matter what device you're using to access the website. This has implications for users who want to switch phones, or tablets, or even computers, but feel tied to a platform due to app availability. Eventually, the underlying operating system might not matter at all,
Where there is Instruction, there is Assessment: Assessing the Library’s

By Hong Cheng, Instruction Librarian

Library instructional services include credit-based liberal arts courses, non-credit one-hour instruction classes, and workshops on various topics about research. Many of the hundreds of one-hour classes each year are mandatory for ENG 101 and ENG 103 students, and others are provided upon request by other departments. Before 2012, the assessment initiatives focused intensively on credit-based courses. A new journey started in Fall 2012 when the Library decided to assess student learning outcomes after attending one-hour instruction sessions for its Periodic Program Review.

The assessment committee was formed in October 2012 and included librarians mainly from public services. The goal of the committee was to seek a systematic and longitudinal method of assessing students’ learning. A unique situation emerged in the last week of October when the devastation of Hurricane Sandy caused a week of class cancellations at LaGuardia, including 18 ENG101 library classes. There was no time for rescheduling the classes, but the committee took advantage of this opportunity and used these 18 classes as a control group. A six-question survey was designed for the 18 cancelled classes and 18 randomly selected classes which had already had an instruction class. The survey tested students’ abilities in identifying appropriate keywords and Boolean operators, identifying different sources and the best library web resource. The results showed that students who took the one hour session demonstrated better skills than students who did not in the tested outcomes. At the same time, both groups faced challenges in identifying appropriate keywords and Boolean operators.

The results of the Fall 2012 survey were adopted as the benchmark for the following three semesters, during which the committee surveyed 40 classes each semester, with 20 pre-instruction classes and 20 post-instruction classes respectively. From the Fall 2012 survey, the new survey was based on the top three things all librarians teach during an hour and the committee reached a consensus on testing students’ understanding of library resources and search strategies. Students were asked to identify the appropriate keywords and Boolean operators, identify the best library resource for articles based on a particular topic, and evaluate differences between online resources. The Spring 2013 and Fall 2014 findings were consistent with the previous project that students who attended a library class performed significantly better than students who did not. Moreover, the gap between the pre and post groups after two semesters is slightly declining, with more students in the pre group came to the library with better preparation and knowledge and the students in the post group demonstrated a slightly declining performance. The Spring 2014 results are forthcoming and the committee is looking forward to finding out more about the new trend in both groups.

As the Library’s instructional services are expanding, assessment is becoming an increasingly crucial component of their program. In the coming Fall semester, the committee is going to assess the instruction classes for the first ever First Year Seminar for Liberal Arts. This is going to be the first time the library assesses the students’ first year experience and we are excited to continue on the assessment journey.

To see more information about all projects, please visit http://guides.laguardia.edu/instructionassessment

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leaving users to choose whichever platform they want based upon whatever variables matter most — whether it’s interface, cost, or hardware.

The cloud is not a new concept. It’s very much rooted in the mainframe-terminal concept that began modern computing. For academics, it presents a way to unify work across multiple devices and platforms without having to worry about important pieces, be they drafts or articles or notes, falling through digital cracks. This convenience comes with a price, in terms of privacy implications and data portability. Moving one’s content into the cloud, especially important content, like academic work, is not a decision to be made lightly, but scholars making informed choices about which services to use will find cloud services have the potential to make life much easier.
Electronica…

By Catherine Stern, Electronic Resources Librarian

The Best of Times

Unlimited access to The New York Times online is now available to all members of the CUNY community thanks to a subscription deal worked out by the CUNY Office of Library Services. Sign up for the Academic Pass using your CUNY email account and you’ll have no more article limits to worry about. Smartphone apps are included in the subscription (but not tablet apps). Subscriptions last for 52 weeks from the day you sign up and CUNY is, in all likelihood, going to renew its subscription next year.

Should you cancel your personal digital subscription?

Academic Passes offer very limited access to articles from 1923 to 1980, however, LaGuardia’s Library subscribes to The New York Times historical archive where these articles can be found. Academic Passes also do not include print copies, e-reader editions, Premium Crosswords, or the NYTimes Crosswords app. Consider if you want to keep these options before canceling a personal subscription.

How to Register for Your Free Academic Pass:

- Go to nytimes.com/passes
- Click “Register” to create a NYTimes.com account using your cuny.edu email address. If you already have a NYTimes account (free or paid) tied to your CUNY email, you need to unlink your CUNY email from that account before signing up for your Academic Pass. Log in to NYTimes.com, click your username in the top right corner, select “My Account,” and replace your CUNY address with a non-CUNY one. You can then use your CUNY address to register for your pass.
- At the bottom of the Welcome page, click “Continue.” You will be prompted to check your email. Look for the confirmation message, which should arrive within 15 minutes.
- Click the link in the confirmation email. This will simultaneously verify your eligibility and grant your Academic Pass, which will provide access to NYTimes.com for 52 weeks.

If you don’t get the confirmation email, check your spam filter. If you still do not receive it, send an email from your CUNY email account to edu@nytimes.com.

Here is a link to the troubleshooting guide for the New York Times Academic Pass. http://www.nytimes.com/content/help/account/purchases/group/academic-pass-troubleshooting.html. Make sure you clicked on the enclosed link in the confirmation email you received when you signed up using your LaGuardia email address.

Spread the word to your colleagues and encourage your students to sign up. Questions? Ask at the Library or email castern@lagcc.cuny.edu.

3D Printer — continued from p. 8

Guide on 3D printing and education: This exciting technology has the potential to engage students to learn in different ways. The limitations of 3D printing are only set by the size of the printer itself. The Library is hopeful to have a workshop during Opening Sessions 2014 to showcase the 3D printer to the college community.

If you’d like to find out more about using a 3D printer with your class, please contact Ann Matsuuchi (amatsuuchi@lagcc.cuny.edu). With our current set-up, it would probably work best for use during one or two class sessions. We could wheel the printer on a cart to your classroom in the E building. Otherwise, we can try to reserve use of the Library lab or conference room for your class to use the printer in the Library. We will also have a few portable devices such as Raspberry Pis and MaKey MaKeys available for classroom use.
Welcome to new Library periodicals staff member, Melissa Alcantara and to Liz Jardine, Metadata Librarian.

Elizabeth Arestyl presented her paper, "Manga, Manhua, and Manhwa: Postwar Distribution, Globalization," at the Comics Studies Seminar: Alternative Manga Panel on May 6, 2014. This event was part of this year’s Asian Heritage Month series.

Arlene Carpio received her Bachelor’s degree in Sociology from Hunter College, CUNY.

Hong Cheng presented “From Disaster, Opportunity Arises: Assessing a Library’s One-hour Instruction Session after Hurricane Sandy” at the SUNY Conference of Instruction & Technology in Ithaca on May 28, 2014.

Francine Egger-Sider and Jane Devine’s recent book was featured in the March/April issue of American Libraries.

Dianne Gordon Conyers has been appointed to Assistant Professor.

Silvia Lu presented “Assessing Threshold Concepts for Information Literacy” at the CUNY Reinventing Libraries: Reinventing Assessment conference at Baruch College on June 6, 2014.

Ann Matsuuchi has been appointed to Associate Professor. Ann was also interviewed by METRO regarding Wikipedia Education Program activities at LaGuardia Community College and other CUNY colleges.

Steven Ovadia has been appointed as Full Professor. He was also awarded a 20 day research leave.

Steven Ovadia presented at the Brooklyn Core Conference - General Education and Student Success: Renewing the Core Curriculum at Brooklyn College. The talk was "A Game Changer: Open Education Resources” on April 25, 2014.

Alexandra Rojas and Steven Ovadia served on the planning committee and presented at this year’s LACUNY Conference, "Information Literacy to Empower: Theory and Practice." Alex Rojas also moderated a panel during the conference.

Catherine Stern gave a Periodic Program Review (PPR) presentation at the Professional Staff Meeting on May 15, 2014.

Phillip Torres was elected to serve as Alpha Theta Phi chapter/Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) president for the 2014-2015 year.

Scott White was selected to serve as Grand Marshal for the 2014 commencement on June 5, 2014.

Introducing the Library 3D Printer

By Alexandra Rojas, Head of Reference & Public Services & Ann Matsuuchi, Instructional Technology Librarian

The Library has exciting news to share: we now offer a 3D printer for classroom and faculty use. Providing the means of exploring new educational technologies in the classroom is an important part of the Library’s mission. In the past two years, there has been a great deal of media coverage on the potential of industrial and consumer-end 3D printers. Usage of 3D printers in educational settings is being tried out in many libraries, schools and colleges.

3D printers are often a component of what are known as Makerspaces - locations designed to provide a hands-on learning conduit for active learning. These 3D printers produce physical models for hands-on active learning. Complex models can be created at a minimized cost, and existing model templates can be easily customized (for example, there are thousands of protein model files that can be downloaded). Usage is also not limited to engineering and product design contexts. For more information about how 3D printers are being used in other colleges, libraries and specific classes including arts, English composition and communications, take a look at our Library Research.

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