

**Library Self-study
Reports from Departments**

12/3/07

Main Reference

Name of reporting department

Patti Becker

Name of coordinator

Yan Liao, Library Faculty

Names of other staff involved in self-study

Colleen Angel, Library Services Advanced

In addition, we asked all Main Reference staff for feedback on drafts of the self-study documents. We incorporated their input into this report and the SWOTs.

1) Description of department or service

Library faculty and staff who work in Main Reference provide bibliographic assistance and instruction in how to use library resources in person, over the telephone, and via email utilizing a collection of print, electronic and microform resources, including one of three Foundation Collections in Wisconsin (for more on the Foundation Collection, see attachment 1). The department also provides technological resources and basic technology support to library users who seek bibliographical research information.

2) Who is served

In Main Reference the primary user group is UWSP students (campus-bound, distance education, study abroad, and Collaborative Degree Program). Also served are UWSP faculty and staff and non-UWSP people and organizations who use the reference collections, services, or resources.

3) Staffing

- a. Levels (faculty, LSA-Senior, etc.) and numbers. Ten library faculty; one library services advanced classified staff. Student workers from the Main Circulation desk shelve books and record usages. A reference student assistant reads the shelves, maintains them as needed, and assists as requested by her supervisor. Maintenance personnel clean the room regularly. For about ten years main reference also employed student assistants to work at the reference desk alongside staff. Due to difficulties in training and the general decrease in reference traffic, we decided to quit hiring students for desk duty as of fall 2003.
- b. Sufficient to meet service needs? Yes. (Link to hours page for service hours: <http://library.uwsp.edu/admin/depthours.htm>)
- c. Well-qualified and trained? Yes. All personnel who currently work main reference have an ALA-approved master's degree and most also have a second master's. Three have doctoral degrees.

4) Facilities

The reference room is large and well-lit (possibly too bright for computer use) with offices for some staff. Students enjoy working together in reference, whether at the room's seven computer pods or at the seven round worktables. There are also three index tables (which no longer hold indexes) used by students for individual study. We should relocate the standalone shelves of paper abstracts and use the space for more urgent needs, such as another pod or two of computers.

Inadequacies include: there is an insufficient number of computers for student use; the power outlet locations are inadequate for users who want to plug in their laptops; the drapes need to be cleaned; the carpet is worn and wrinkly in places; much of the furniture is dated; and the computers that can be used by community members are on old "recycled" tables.

5) Technology

Hardware: We have eight pods with four computers each (includes pod with reference load on 2nd floor) for use by UWSP students, faculty, and staff, plus four older computers which are available for non-UWSP use as well as UWSP use. Only students can print from the “pod” computers, for which there are four laser printers (these prints are charged to student printing accounts). The other four public computers can print to the student printers or to a general use printer located at the Main Circulation Desk. (Non-UWSP student users are charged ten cents a page.) There are two computers and one printer at the reference desk for staff use. The secondary reference desk computer is old and needs to be replaced by a newer one. Wireless network access is available throughout the room.

Software:

Reference computers in the pods are under the jurisdiction of Information Technology. They have a special load that includes Internet access and the Microsoft Office Suite, but not the full array of software available on the Standard Campus Load. This special IT library load is intended to promote use of these computers for bibliographic research. Slow boot-up time for the pod computers is an unresolved problem.

Off-campus users can now easily access reference resources via a proxy server (rather than installing and using Virtual Private Networking).

The other four public computers and the two reference desk computers have an in-house library load that is not under Information Technology. This load includes Internet access and the MS Office Suite. Having an in-house library load makes it possible for the library to provide computer access and printing to non-UWSP users, and enables us to use different versions of software than those provided by Information Technology.

In 2004-2006 main reference staff tried conducting reference via chat sessions. However, this service was very much under-used and was discontinued.

Tech support: Information Technology supports the 32 pod workstations and the four associated printers through a work order system. The four older computers and the two reference desk computers are maintained by the library technical support staff member from IT. Response to computer problems has usually been timely.

Library web page: Reference information includes the Virtual Reference Desk (a collection of publicly available websites selected and maintained by UWSP librarians), links to the library catalog and other library catalogs, and ReSearch Point (Metalib), which provides access to the UWSP version of Ex Libris’s Metalib federated search system and the link resolver called SFX. The library technology group is responsive to suggestions for change on these pages. However, access to databases in ReSearch Point has been slowed down because of UWSP security. Information Technology is aware of this problem.

6) Supporting statistics (last 5 years if available)

Reference questions: one week each fall we count reference questions asked at all service desks (including reference email). In the last two years the total number of reference questions has stabilized after dropping the previous years. In Main Reference the number of questions for the past three years stabilized after dropping the previous two years. Reference transactions are getting more time-consuming and in-depth than in previous years, so although the quantity of questions has stabilized, the time required to work through them has increased. We also receive more questions about

technology itself and computer assistance, some of which we have to refer to an Information Technology student lab assistant located nearby.

<u>Reference Questions</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
Main Reference (incl. email)	384	392	236	203	233
Main Circulation	100	79	60	60	114
Periodicals	242	194	416	285	211
Gov Docs	483	332	288	209	191
Archives	64	52	86	80	86
IMC	112	61	36	21	23
Total	1385	1110	1122	858	858

UWSP Main Reference allows most items in its collection to circulate overnight (except for Foundation materials, which do not circulate). The trend is that fewer reference books are checked out for use. Total browses (uses but not charges) since we began counting browses (fall 2003) is 13,235.

Reference Circulation*	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
	980	735	791	554	445

*Cut-off date
is Oct. 31

As of Nov. 2007, the size of the reference collection is as follows:

Genealogy Collection in Ref	331
Reference Desk	63
Reference Room	10,099
Ref/Abstracts	774
Ref/Annual Reports	585
Ref/Atlas Case	31
Ref/Indexes	624
Ref/Phone Books	22
Foundation Collection	172
Total	12,701

ERIC fiche* 481,815 titles

*(An approximate count, this collection is not used as much as previously due to increasing reliance on electronic access to these titles)

The main reference budget seems adequate for print materials (we have under-spent our allocations in recent years), however now the trend is moving toward electronic resources, which require on-going budgetary and technology commitments.

<u>Reference Expenditures (firm orders)</u>		<u>Allocations</u>
07-08	\$13,695 as of 11/30/07	07-08 allocation is \$21,000 (bal. is \$6403.97)
06-07	\$17,382.34	06-07 allocation was \$21,000
05-06	\$24,065.06	05-06 allocation was \$28,000
04-05	\$21,373.11	04-05 allocation was \$17,500
03-04	\$51,348.27	03-04 reallocation was \$60,000

7) Results of recent assessment activities

In December 2003 we evaluated all reference email questions (1999-2003) to determine whether the kinds of questions we received electronically could inform our deliberations about joining a consortial virtual reference service or trying virtual reference on our own. The high volume of questions that were specific to UWSP led us to try chat reference using in-house personnel rather than joining a consortium. The analysis also helped us to determine the hours during which we made chat available to our users. (We used chat reference for three semesters, but discontinued it in 2006 due to low use.)

In spring 2004 the library underwent ARL's LibQual Survey of user's opinions of service quality. It would appear that Main Reference is meeting people's expectations and information needs.

In the spring of 2005 we counted the number of reference questions asked during weekends to determine if the volume justified the hours we staffed the desk. Based on that assessment, we determined that it was worthwhile to continue staffing at those times.

Throughout the summer of 2007 we counted reference questions asked during every shift to see whether the volume of questions justified our staffing pattern. We concluded that it was worthwhile to continue the staffing pattern.

8) Special projects underway or major changes being implemented

We are in the process of weeding the main reference book collection and evaluating all reference serials for cancellation or retention decisions.

9) Goals or desired directions of the unit:

To meet bibliographic information needs of students, faculty, and staff, and to assist with non-UWSP bibliographic information needs as possible.

10) Other information.

Bibliographic resources in a wide range of disciplines are crucial to reference. ReSearch Point, a federated search system which provides access to the library's online resources, includes 159 resources, the majority of which are indexes or databases. Funding for these resources come from a variety of sources, including the State of Wisconsin (Badgerlink), UW System (Shared Electronic Collections), UWSP student Technology Fees, and the library's budget. (See Reference book titles total in question 6.)

11) **SWOT analysis of department** – see attachment 2.

12) **SWOT analysis of Library** – see SWOT appendix.

3/27/08

ATTACHMENT 1



University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

University Library

Stevens Point, WI 54481-3897

FOUNDATION COLLECTION REPORT

The University Library at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point (UWSP) contains one of three Cooperating Collections in the state of Wisconsin. Marquette University and the University of Wisconsin-Madison house the other two collections, and all three collections fall under the auspices of the Foundation Center in New York City. It is a unique service that benefits both UWSP and the Central Wisconsin community.

The following summary provides a snapshot of the overall mission and operating standards of the collection, and some statistical information on its usage and cost:

Mission Statement

The mission of the Foundation Collection is to serve as a resource for information on private foundations, grants and philanthropy for the surrounding area in support of community and business partnerships. This service is available to individuals seeking grants or scholarships, local non-profit groups and larger institutions. Resources include print directories, reference tools, and databases that focus on foundation and grant seeking activities, and are available to patrons free of charge with the exception of printing costs.

Operating Standards

As a Cooperating Collection, the University Library is responsible for maintaining the standards of operation set by the Foundation Center. These standards include the following:

- Provide public access to the collection a minimum of 25 hours per week with no appointment required. No fees are to be charged for reference services, or for access to Foundation Center resources.
- Assign one individual (preferably a librarian with an MLS degree) to be the Cooperating Collection supervisor. That person should be knowledgeable about our electronic and print resources.
- Provide public access to *Foundation Directory Online Professional*, as well as to Foundation Center print publications that make up the core collection. For those who opt for *FC Search*, the most current version of this database must be installed on a computer for public use at or near the print collection. All must provide access to a computer(s) connected to the Internet for public use.
- Indicate the availability of *Foundation Directory Online Professional*: for your visitors on your organization's web site.
- Indicate affiliation with the Foundation Center by posting information on the organization's web site, producing press releases, newsletters, brochures, or flyers that promote the collection, or by posting signage stating that the organization is "A Cooperating Collection of the Foundation Center."
- Conduct at least two annual public orientations or workshops, which highlight the use of Foundation Center resources. These sessions may be led by the supervisor and/or other

organization staff or appropriate guest speakers, and can be scheduled during site visits by Center staff.

- Attend at least one regional Cooperating Collections meeting or the Foundation Center's annual Network Days conference every other year. If the CC supervisor is unable to attend, another organization staff member who works on the collection may be sent in his/her place. Supervisors of newly designated CCs must attend Network Days the year they are designated.

Membership Fee

The membership fee of \$995 includes complimentary copies of all books in the core collection and access (with license restrictions) to *Foundation Directory Online Professional*. If purchased separately, the publications in this core list (see below) would cost over \$4,000. These titles are updated on an annual basis.

Electronic Databases

- *Foundation Directory*
- *Foundation Grants to Individuals*
- *Foundations in Wisconsin (published by Marquette University)*

Print Publications

- *The Foundation Directory*
- *The Foundation Directory Part 2*
- *The Foundation Directory Supplement*
- *Foundation Grants to Individuals*
- *The Foundation 1000*
- *Guide to Funding for International & Foreign Programs*
- *Guide to U.S. Foundations, Their Trustees, Officers, and Donors*
- *The National Directory of Corporate Giving*

Foundations Today Series

- *Foundation Giving Trends*
- *Foundation Growth and Giving Estimates*
- *Foundation Yearbook*

Collection Usage Statistics for 2001- 2007

Collecting statistics on how many people have visited and used the Foundation Collection is a bit tricky. The Library does keep a sign-in sheet by the Foundation Collection sources; however, not everyone that uses the collection necessarily signs in. Phone calls, email requests, appointments and classes that use the Foundation Collection, and contact someone directly, are tracked and recorded.

The following numbers include nonprofit organizations, grantmakers, individuals and courses affiliated with UWSP who used the Foundation Collection:

2007 – 152 patrons
2006 – 167 patrons
2005 – 150 patrons
2004 – 128 patrons
2003 – 105 patrons
2002 – 93 patrons
2001 – 150 patrons

ATTACHMENT 2



University Library
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Department: **Main Reference**

Dec. 3, 2007

Participants: **Yan Liao, Patti Becker, Colleen Angel, with input from Main Reference staff**

S.W.O.T. Analysis

<p>STRENGTHS (Internal)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate number of qualified reference personnel with a variety of interests, strengths, and flexibility in service styles. • Strong collection of databases appropriate for our campus through a combination of state, UW System, and local funding. • Adequate reference book budget. • Strong reference collection. 	<p>WEAKNESSES (Internal)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computers often full, have to turn people away. • Reference Room needs to be updated. • Lack of data on student information needs. • Limited training opportunities.
<p>OPPORTUNITIES (External)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness of reference services and resources. • Increase use of Google Scholar and Google Books. • Digitization and creation of electronic collections. • New social communication tools. 	<p>THREATS (External)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student lack of awareness of library resources. • Budget resources for electronic collections. • Tension between student needs for computers and provision of community access.

Strengths:

UWSP is fortunate to have a sufficient number of Main Reference personnel so that staffing the desk at all times of the year is a shared responsibility that does not overburden or cause undue reliance on a few individuals. All Main Reference staff are highly qualified and take advantage of a wide array of professional development opportunities in-house, at conferences, and through professional reading.

We provide a rich array of databases that are appropriate for our students and faculty. Many of these come to us through the UW System’s Shared Electronic Collections, the State of Wisconsin, the library’s budget, and student technology fees.

For the past several years the reference book budget has been adequate for the purchases we wanted to make, and in some cases we under-spent the budget.

Much time and thought is given to reference collection development, which has resulted in a collection that is appropriate and adequate for our users. We are in the process of evaluating reference serials to see if their usage and content indicate retention or cancellation, which is already resulting in cost

savings. This activity and on-going weeding of the rest of the Main Reference collection will help to streamline the collection.

Weaknesses:

There are insufficient numbers of computers and pods for student use. During the school year all reference computers are often in use at one time, which not only prevents some from doing their school work on them, but it can also make it very inconvenient and disruptive to reserve pods for “hands-on” use by a class after a BI session.

The power outlet locations are inadequate for users who want to plug in their laptops. Reference furniture needs some attention: the drapes need to be cleaned; the carpet is worn and wrinkly in places; much of the furniture is dated; the seats of some of the computer chairs can no longer be adjusted; and the computers that can be used by community members are on old “recycled” tables. Some students have complained that the lighting in reference is too bright for computer work. Sunlight also washes out screens, and causes books and furniture to fade.

We would like to know more about what kinds of services and resources our students need from Main Reference and about how we are meeting (or not meeting) their bibliographic information needs.

There are few internal training sessions for library staff, and a limited number of presentations given by the library to campus faculty and staff

Opportunities:

Many faculty and students are unaware of many of our resources and services, with the result that they often don't find the information they need. This presents us with an opportunity: how can we increase this awareness?

Google, which is just about everyone's favorite search engine, has features that can be of great benefit to students and faculty. Making people more aware of Google Scholar (which incorporates access to our licensed databases and uses the SFX link resolver) and Google Books (which incorporates access to library catalogs via WorldCat) can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their use of Google (and, by extension, their use of the UWSP library resources available through Google).

So many digital collections are available now that it is difficult to know about them and their contents. This represents an enormous store of material that could be of great benefit to our faculty and students.

Web 2.0 provides us with many new opportunities for communication which we could use to improve internal and external communications.

Threats:

Students are not always aware of the library's resources, in particular the online indexes and databases, and as a consequence use general search engines like Google. However, they don't always realize how limited the results actually are and what they are missing by reliance on publicly-available websites. They also lack the patience to work through databases methodically and prefer to do “one-stop shopping.” The federated search of Metalib (called ReSearch Point at UWSP) falls short of providing a Google-like experience for students because it is cumbersome to use and can be quite slow.

Access to electronic databases is very expensive, and there are an increasing number of them available. Although we have many appropriate databases, there are others we would like to add or upgrade. However, adding databases is almost impossible unless we cancel others, which is not always a good or obvious alternative. We must have more funding to increase the number of databases we offer.

The UWSP library has always been proud to provide services and resources to the general public. However, there are times when students wish to use computers being used by community members. Also, sometimes the community members are using the computers for non-research purposes, but we lack an enforceable policy to combat this (students often use the computers for non-research purposes, too).