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# Three terminals, a telefax, and one dictionary

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## *Electronic library service as a solution for an external Learning Center.*

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The term "electronic library" has been used for over a decade to describe the book-less library of the future which will rely on telecommunications and computers to provide users with whatever information they need. Howden and Boyce<sup>1</sup> have expanded on that term with their recently proposed DELTA Center concept as a means for research libraries, particularly Louisiana State University, to provide access to information in a Distributed Electronic Library with Terminal Assistance. DePaul University Library in Chicago has implemented the idea behind the electronic library/DELTA Center to provide library services at its extended campus facility in DesPlaines, a northwest suburb of Chicago.

DePaul's O'Hare Campus (formerly Northwest Center), located in an office complex just minutes from O'Hare Airport, offers undergraduate and graduate classes in the School of Commerce, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the School for New Learning with classes concentrated in the evening and on weekends. Most students at O'Hare Campus fit the description of "adult learners," adult

students over 21 years of age, and most are employed full-time. Students in the School for New Learning are unique in that all students are adults 24 years of age or older, and they can earn degree credits for work accomplishments and other learning experience. Approximately 500 students attend the O'Hare Campus every quarter for regularly scheduled classes, and an additional 20 professional development workshops and seminars are held in the School of Commerce every quarter.

To provide library service at the O'Hare Campus, DePaul University Library used the ACRL *Guidelines for Extended Campus Library Services*<sup>2</sup> as the foundation for determining and assessing needs. Restrictions on the availability of space for books and other library materials at O'Hare Campus and an already tight library materials budget were major considerations in planning for effective library service. DePaul's solution to both problems was to focus on providing access to materials and to supply library materials as they were needed by students and faculty. Online access to the holdings of all DePaul library collections and the libraries of 26 other academic institutions in Illinois through two LCS (Library Computer System) terminals gives students and faculty at O'Hare Campus ready

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<sup>1</sup>Norman Howden and Bert R. Boyce, "The DELTA Center Concept: A Modest Proposal for the Improvement of Research Library Infrastructure," *Information Technology and Libraries* 4 (September 1985):236-39.

<sup>2</sup>*College & Research Libraries News* 43 (March 1982):86-88.



*A DePaul student checks for book locations on OCLC.*

information for finding materials by author and title. Users cannot walk to the stacks to browse or to retrieve materials immediately, but receipt of DePaul materials is delayed only until the next delivery from the University Library locations in the Loop and Lincoln Park to the O'Hare Campus.

Materials for the O'Hare Campus from the other LCS libraries are shipped to DePaul's Lincoln Park Campus by the State Library's Illinois Library Delivery System (ILDS) and then trans-shipped by DePaul courier to O'Hare Campus. Reserve materials, whether books or journal articles, are requested by the faculty member and sent from either campus library to O'Hare Campus for the time indicated by the requester. Microform reels or fiche are sent to O'Hare Campus for student/faculty use on a microform reader/printer there. No library materials are kept permanently at O'Hare Campus—except for one dictionary.

While the DePaul University Library endorses the assumptions in the *Guidelines* which place primary responsibility for satisfying information needs on the parent academic library and its institution, the thrust in Illinois has been to provide broad access and to share resources among all types of libraries. A public OCLC terminal was installed, therefore, to give library users access to serial holdings in the Serials of Illinois Libraries Online (SILO) union list group of OCLC which includes public, special, and academic libraries. Since many of the excellent public libraries in the Chicago suburbs also use OCLC for cataloging and retrospective conversion, DePaul students and fac-

ulty who reside in those suburbs can locate needed material on OCLC and then use the copy from their own public library. Subject access to business journal articles is available in the COM-fiche version of *Business Index* from Information Access Company. While a crude subject search by classification can be done on LCS, the BRS "Easi-Reference Index" will expand subject access for recent library materials in the OCLC database; reference librarians at any of DePaul's three locations do subject database searching for DePaul students and faculty, but instruction in end-user searching to be implemented at O'Hare Campus in the 1985-86 academic year is needed to increase ready subject access.

Providing electronic access to holdings, however, does not guarantee a satisfied library user; indeed Haworth's<sup>3</sup> description of a "daunting experience, particularly for the inexperienced or timid library user" is very accurate when applied to students unfamiliar with a traditional academic library. Professional librarians and a user education program help to overcome such inexperience and timidity. At DePaul's O'Hare Campus a full-time librarian who is based primarily at the Loop Campus oversees the extended campus library services which are staffed by part-time librarians; the supervising librarian works at least one night per

<sup>3</sup>D. Elaine Haworth, "Library Services to the Off-campus and Independent Learner: A Review of the Literature," *Journal of Librarianship* 14 (July 1982):157.

week at O'Hare Campus. This arrangement works well for scheduling and for coordinating library services, policies and procedures among all three locations, but the part-time librarians at O'Hare Campus do not have the same familiarity with Library collections and services as full-time staff at the other two locations.

Full-time librarians, therefore, give orientation

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*There are no permanent library books, except for one dictionary.*

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sessions and instruction lectures on specific subjects. Although many full-time librarians have filled in at O'Hare Campus, plans call for more exchange of duties to be effected during the 1985-86 academic year so the part-time O'Hare Campus librarians can be more knowledgeable about Library collections and services at the other two campuses. Library-produced bibliographies and research guides have focused on the traditional student at the two Chicago campuses; while these publications are distributed at O'Hare Campus, they would perhaps be more useful if they were customized for the student at the external learning center.

Librarians or students at O'Hare Campus have quick access to full-time staff at the main locations with an auto-dial phone which links the O'Hare Campus to the Reference and Circulation departments at both the Loop Campus and Lincoln Park Campus. While the auto-dial phone is used to forward circulation and ready reference questions to the central libraries' staff, a telefacsimile machine serves as the real link between the journal collections at the main library locations and O'Hare Campus. Students and faculty at O'Hare Campus complete a request form which is telefaxed to the campus where the hard-copy journal is located. Reference department staff photocopy the article and telefax it to O'Hare Campus. Library policy indicates that a request made from O'Hare Campus before the beginning of a class will be telefaxed in time for the student to pick up the article at the end of class. The DePaul telefax is also used to supply O'Hare Campus students, faculty, or librarians with needed information from an abstract or index. The Library supplies the first three pages gratis and for larger items the student pays the same copy charge they would pay if they photocopied the material at either Chicago campus. Because existing telefax machines are sheet copiers, the system is labor intensive since material from a

book or journal must be photocopied before it can be transmitted by the telefax machine.

Other transmission problems result from static on the phone lines, too much white space in a character as with a dot-matrix printer, and original copy too dark or too reduced to transmit legible copy. Some of these problems should be reduced when copying machines with telefacsimile capability are introduced.

The "electronic library" at DePaul University's O'Hare Campus is in no way paperless, nor does it pretend to be the final answer to library service at every extended learning center. In addition to the problems mentioned above, a well-organized outreach program needs to be included in DePaul's library program since students at the external learning center are not as oriented to library services as students at the traditional campuses. The ACRL *Guidelines*, however, do provide a good basis to analyze library needs for an extended campus situation and are easily adapted for the particular situation of any institution. As Johnson suggests after her Wyoming experience,<sup>4</sup> perhaps the DePaul model is more effective in an urban area where students have ready access to local public libraries and often to special libraries in their workplaces. As acceptance of remote library access grows, however, and as telecommunications capabilities increase, the model could be adapted for other environments and should be a satisfactory solution for the problem of providing library service in sites away from central library facilities. ■ ■

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<sup>4</sup>Jean S. Johnson, "The Wyoming Experience with the ACRL 'Guidelines for Extended Campus Services,'" *College & Research Libraries News* 45 (February 1984):76-82.

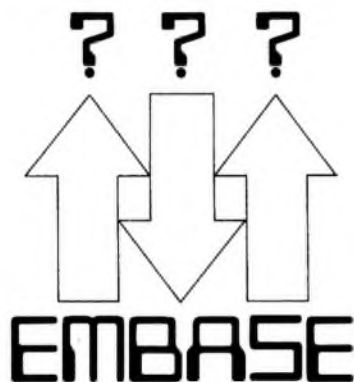
### Student paper award

The Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS/NA) has announced its 1985 Gerd Muehsam Award, given annually to a student in a graduate program of library science for the most outstanding paper on art or visual resource librarianship. Entrants must be enrolled in an accredited institution during the calendar year 1985. Suitable papers done in conjunction with course assignments are admissible and should be no less than 2,000 words in length, with an abstract of 250 words. Entries must be received by December 15, 1985.

The winner receives a one-year membership in ARLIS/NA, a cash award of \$100, plus an additional \$150 for travel reimbursement to attend the February 1986 ARLIS/NA national conference in New York City.

Submit entries to: Jeannette D. Downing, Chair, Gerd Muehsam Award Committee, ARLIS/NA, P.O. Box 9440, Fort Worth, TX 76107; (817) 332-8451.

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