

The Off-Campus Library Services Of Universities

THE EXCHANGE OF BOOKS and journals for research and serious study is an established practice among university libraries. Generally, research materials are lent to libraries freely if there is no prior need in the lending library or if the materials are not too rare or valuable. There is, however, considerable variation in the lending of non-research materials to individuals, high schools, and libraries. In many states, this extension function is performed solely by state libraries or their equivalents. In others, both the state university and the state library lend directly to individuals, aid book clubs, and supplement the collections of public libraries. Library extension service has been, since the early 1900's, a function of many state universities. In a study¹ made by the National University Extension Association in 1951-52, thirty-two out of fifty-two universities offered library extension services, all developing after 1900 and the majority between 1910 and 1930.

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, the public demand and interest in education and reading grew more rapidly than public library resources. Many state universities filled this demand by establishing library extension departments. As public library resources have improved during the past fifty years, some state universities have

¹ National University Extension Association, *University Extension in the United States* (University, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1953).

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withdrawn entirely from library extension; others have withdrawn partially and gradually; and others have maintained active library extension services. Tradition, leadership, and special circumstances in each state have been different, thereby accounting for the variations in the practices and policies of off-campus services of state university libraries.

In connection with planning for and a subsequent revision of the off-campus services of the University of North Carolina Library, the author became interested in these services of university libraries and the relation of university library extension to other state-supported library extension services, such as those rendered by state libraries and library commissions. In January 1958 a questionnaire was mailed to all state university libraries and to selected private university libraries in each state. The same questionnaire was sent also to university library extension libraries administered separately from the general university libraries. The present report is a summary of the findings of this study. It attempts to answer the questions: To what extent does the university library lend non-research material to off-campus readers? What are the trends regarding university library extension services in the United States?

The libraries. Information was obtained from seventy-four university libraries, including those of forty-nine state universities and twenty-five representative privately supported universities. The state universities of only forty-seven of the forty-eight states are includ-

ed since New York has no one state-supported university library.

Direct loans to individuals by mail. Included on the questionnaire was this item: "What is your policy regarding the loan of material by mail directly to individuals who are not students or faculty of your university?" All of the private universities and about 60 per cent of the state universities stated, in effect, "We do not lend." None of the twenty-five private university libraries has a general policy of lending by mail to individuals, nor do any of them have separate extension libraries. Generally, the private university library lends library materials by mail only through interlibrary loan. However, a number of them make exceptions for their alumni, Friends of the Library, or groups with a special relation to the university. In the case of some church-supported universities, direct loans are made to ministers of those denominations.

State universities are particularly sensitive to the needs of the people of their states. There are two forces operating which determine the state universities' library extension loan policy. One of these is the interest in the aims and welfare of the people who support it. Frank Graham, on the occasion of his inauguration as president of the University of North Carolina in 1931, gave eloquent expression to this idea:

It is the function of a state university not only to find its bits of truth and teach the truth gathered from scholars everywhere, but to carry the truth to the people that they may take it into their lives and help make it prevail in the world of affairs . . . to make the resources of the universities, the discoveries of science, the findings of the social scientists available to the people of the Commonwealth. The state universities come from the people and should go out to the people. The intellectual life of the university should be quickened by contact and interchange with the people. They have a common destiny in the adventure of building a nobler common-

wealth. The state university cannot be an institution of class . . . based on blood, money, or intellectual background. It can never lose its common touch without treason to its own nature and without drying up the springs from which flow the living waters of its own life.²

On the other hand, there is the strong belief that residents of a state should utilize all available local and state library resources and that the university should be called upon only for the more difficult research materials or for those materials which the local and state libraries cannot supply.

Thirty of the forty-nine state universities, or about 60 per cent of them, responded that they do not lend directly to individuals by mail. Eight of these thirty stated that exceptions would be made, such as loans to adults engaged in serious research or to graduates of professional schools.

Four will lend directly to residents of their states for a fee. The University of New Hampshire, for instance, will lend up to five books at once to a person who will be residing in New Hampshire for twelve weeks for a fee of one dollar per year. In cases of emergency, when individuals cannot make arrangements with their local libraries, the University of Arkansas will lend directly to individuals for a five-dollar fee which is returned when the books are returned. The Universities of Washington and Texas will honor non-university requests for those who have purchased a borrower's card. Texas will issue this card to in-state residents for five dollars. The charge at the University of Washington is three dollars and may be issued to in-state and out-of-state residents. Three others (Idaho, Mississippi, and Missouri) will lend directly by mail to residents of the state if the material cannot be obtained from the local or state libraries.

Fifteen, or about 20 per cent, of the

² *Ibid.*, p. 2.

state university libraries lend directly by mail to individuals or permit materials from their collections to be lent through a separate extension department. Eight libraries lend material to individuals directly by mail from the circulation or reference departments of the general libraries. Of these, only Wyoming and West Virginia had more than a thousand off-campus requests. Both of these stated that they loaned freely to individuals residing in their respective states. The other six libraries in the group had so few requests that extension loans apparently have not created any problems.

The general university libraries that lend materials through extension libraries are those of the Universities of Alabama, Colorado, Florida, Kansas, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Wisconsin. There are other universities with extension libraries but only the above have a policy of circulating books by mail to individuals from the general library collections. A number of state university libraries send out books directly to correspondence students.

Extension libraries. Only the Universities of Colorado and Michigan have extension libraries administered by the general university libraries. There are, however, fourteen other state universities with extension libraries administered separately from the general library. One of the main functions of most of the extension libraries is to provide books for correspondence courses. Although the services offered by the sixteen extension libraries vary, most of them offer packages of pamphlets or books dealing with educational, social, or political topics; a play-lending service for schools, little theaters, clubs, and libraries; and study outlines for book and community clubs. Generally, university library extension services are available only to residents of the particular state, but one or two will serve out-of-state residents for a fee.

The Library Extension Service of the

General Library of the University of Michigan offers help to local communities throughout Michigan, primarily by supplementing school and public library collections. In 1956-57, the Michigan Extension Library received 1,978 requests requiring loan of 26,499 pieces of material, and 251 requests for children's books totalling 21,611 books. Michigan's service include packages of pamphlets dealing with current educational, economic, and social problems; the lending of plays; the distribution of general information about the United Nations; supplementary materials for the Michigan schools participating in forensics and speech activities; the lending of children's books to areas in the state without adequate local library facilities. Although the extension library is administered by the general university library, books from the general library of the University of Michigan are not lent except through interlibrary loan. Miss Clover M. Flanders has described in detail the off-campus services of the University of Michigan Library.³

The University of Colorado Library, through its extension service, lent over fourteen thousand items in 1956-57. Generally, loans are made to residents of Colorado only, but exceptions are made for out-of-state correspondence students and for those who wish to examine plays. Books from the general library collection which are not too valuable or hard to replace and those not needed in the teaching and research program of the university are lent to individuals by mail. No fee is charged for this service.

Indiana University Division of University Extension has one of the most extensive package library and study outline services. Package libraries on numerous topics of current interest are available for the cost of postage to Indiana residents, whereas a flat fee of one

³ Clover M. Flanders, "Off-Campus Services of the University of Michigan Library," *CRL*, XVII (1956), 160-68.

dollar plus postage is charged out-of-state residents. In 1956-57, about sixty-two thousand items were mailed from the Indiana University Extension Library.

The University of South Carolina Extension Division lent 20,000 plays, readings, package library materials, and books from the university library collection in 1956-57. The service is free to in-state residents but a small fee is charged out-of-state patrons.

The University of Florida also has an extensive library service for in-state residents. A circulation of 74,166 items was reported for 1956-57. Although separate from the University Library, the Extension Division Library lends materials from the general university library collection directly to individuals in Florida. No fee is charged.

The University of Kansas Extension Library with its establishment in 1909 was a pioneer in extension service. It has one of the most extensive programs, including assistance to book clubs, package libraries on various current topics, a loan collection of materials on Kansas, the loan of books from the University of Kansas Library, a drama loan collection, a collection of art prints, a United Nations collection, pamphlets and other materials on vocations and occupations, and reviews of current books. A single loan rate of twenty-five cents and a yearly service rate based on the number of loans within a calendar year are charged. The Kansas Library reports that 4,500 requests for books were received during 1956-57. Of this number, 500 packages were sent out for individual use, some 2,300 for school use, 1,600 for club use, and 80 were for small public libraries in Kansas.

In addition to these six, the Universities of Tennessee, Alabama, Wisconsin, Arkansas, Iowa, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Virginia have extension libraries that mail materials to individuals, but only seven of the sixteen

extension libraries lend materials from the general university library collections.

Requests for non-research material from libraries. The ALA's "General Interlibrary Loan Code 1952" states that the purpose of interlibrary loan is "to make available for research and serious study library materials not in a given library, with due provisions made by the lending library for the rights of its primary clientele."⁴ The libraries included in this study were asked if they loaned non-research or recreational materials to high school, public, or college libraries. The answer to this question is an indication of how strictly the university libraries attempt to adhere to the Code. Forty-eight of the seventy-four libraries or about 65 per cent (thirty-one state-supported and seventeen private) said that it was their policy not to lend non-research or recreational material to libraries. In some cases, however, there are extension libraries within the universities which will fill these requests from the general collection.

Of the twenty-six others, two said that they would handle requests only if the state libraries could not do so. Fifteen, or about 20 per cent, honor any request from a library; five answer any in-state request from a library and six answer any request from a college or public library, but not a high school library.

The libraries that do not lend non-research material by mail refer requests to the local or state libraries. Sometimes the requests are sent to the local libraries and the patrons are notified; other libraries return the requests to the patrons with an explanation that loans are made only to libraries.

Trends in library extension. These data indicate that the strength or weakness of public and state library resources is the principal determinant of university library extension service. State uni-

⁴ American Library Association, "General Interlibrary Loan Code 1952," *CRL*, XIII (1952), 350-58.

versity libraries in states with a long tradition of good public and state library service have never found it necessary to establish library extension services. This was expressed by several librarians of libraries that do not lend to individuals. Typical comments were these: "With the good public library system in Georgia we have little justification for developing an extension library service." "All individual requests are filled through local libraries. This idea is fairly well established in our state and most requests come from local libraries."

Several librarians stated the conviction that services of state and public libraries should not be duplicated by university and college libraries. The librarian of a New England state university says, "Care must be taken to avoid centralized services that should and could be provided at the local level. In this state, the college libraries have avoided duplication of services offered by the State Library, and are unanimous in their support of public libraries."

Generally, as public library resources of a state increase, state university extension services are withdrawn. Several examples of this gradual withdrawal were revealed in this study. For many years, the University of Indiana Division of University Extension had a large library of books which were lent to anyone in the state requesting them. By 1949, it seemed that Indiana was adequately taken care of by the State Library Extension Service and by the Interlibrary Loan Service of the University Library. The book collection was discontinued and the magazine files were reduced to clipped articles that are classified. Today, the University of Indiana extension division collection consists of a large number of unbound materials—periodical clippings, pamphlets, newsletters, and bulletins from organizations of all types. These files are used by a great many students, but their principal use is for pack-

age libraries that are prepared on request and mailed to people all over the country, but primarily to residents of Indiana.

The University of Virginia Library provided an extension service which was abolished in 1942 because there was too much duplication between the University Library and the Virginia State Library. The University of Virginia Library concentrates on research, scientific, and highly specialized materials which the State Library cannot provide.

Among state university libraries, there is still the feeling of great responsibility toward the residents of their states, but a determined effort not to duplicate services which local and state libraries can provide. Some state university libraries have definite agreements with their state libraries that requests from individuals and public libraries will be referred to the local libraries or to the state libraries and that only those requests which cannot be filled by the public library resources will be handled by the university library. The director of libraries at the University of Mississippi says, "Mississippi is attempting to develop a statewide system of library service based on municipal, county, or multi-county libraries. We hold the belief that this practice [of referring requests from individuals to local libraries] will make the individual more conscious of the service possibilities of the local library and will eventually increase the materials possibilities." The West Virginia University librarian says, "Our long range plan is to get out of the public library field. As public library resources improve, we withdraw." The University of Missouri Library and several other large libraries in Missouri cooperate with the State Library in giving supplemental service upon request. Teletype has been installed recently in these libraries for extra service.

From the evidence in these data, the trend is clear. As public library resources

and services improve, state university libraries are withdrawing gradually from direct service to residents of their states, but on the other hand, they are ready and willing to provide service when local and state libraries are not able to do so.

As has been pointed out earlier, traditions and circumstances in each state are different and these account for differences in practices. The withdrawal of a long-standing service to residents of a state without adequate provisions that the people will receive the services they need from other agencies can result in serious damage to public relations and, possibly, to support of the library.

The North Carolina solution. In January 1958, the Extension Department of the University of North Carolina Library, which had given direct service to citizens of North Carolina for more than fifty years, was discontinued. The books in this library were incorporated into the general collection of the University Library and the decision was made to refer requests from individuals to county, regional, or city libraries, or to the State Library. This policy was adopted only after cooperative agreements with the State Library and other libraries in the state had been arranged.

The library extension service of the University of North Carolina developed in the early part of this century when public resources in the state were inadequate. The library situation in 1958 has changed considerably. There are now only six counties without local library service. The State Library was strengthened in 1956 by combining it with the Library Commission and increasing its support. As early as 1952, it was suggested at a trustee-librarian institute that the University of North Carolina's library extension department was duplicating library services. In 1957, the Committee on Cooperative Library Resources of the North Carolina Library Association adopted the following motion:

That the Cooperative Library Resources Committee of the North Carolina Library Association recommend to the Library of the University of North Carolina, the North Carolina State Library, and public libraries of North Carolina that the North Carolina Union Catalog at the University Library be expanded with additional public, college and special library holdings; and that direct line communication be initiated between the University Library and its Union Catalog and the State Library; and that the State Library be authorized to participate in the development of a cooperative Interlibrary Service Center to be located at the University Library to assist in reference and interlibrary loan work for public libraries and citizens of the State.⁵

This plan was approved in principle by the Administrative Board of the University Library, the State Library Board, and the membership of the North Carolina Library Association.

An interlibrary center, replacing the extension library, was established at the University Library to serve as a focus of operations for accomplishing the objectives outlined in the motion. The major public, college, and university libraries in the state have agreed to provide materials to other libraries when the need is beyond the resources of local libraries. North Carolina is fortunate in having the nucleus of a Union Catalog which lists the holdings of the major research libraries in the state. This catalog is located in the Wilson Library of the University of North Carolina near the quarters of the Interlibrary Center. Since the establishment of the Center, many of the larger public libraries and several special libraries have added their holdings to this catalog and are contributing cards regularly to it. The primary bibliographical resources of the Center are this catalog and that of the University Library.

The Center is especially organized to

⁵ "Interlibrary Center at Chapel Hill," *North Carolina Libraries*, XVI (1958), 50.

supplement the normal services provided by the State Library and public libraries in the state. Requests are sorted at the Center and at the State Library to determine the ideal point of service. Both the State Library and the Center will attempt to insure maximum utility of local library resources. Requests from individuals and high schools are referred to the local libraries, or to the State Library if the individual has no county-wide library service. Every effort is made to assure the State Library of an opportunity to work with county, regional, and research libraries in providing materials which are beyond the level of the small public library. Requests from public libraries for non-research material are referred to the State Library or to another public library if a location is given in the Union Catalog. The State Library refers requests from public libraries which it cannot serve to the Center. The Interlibrary Center checks these against the Union Catalog and refers them to a library that does have the material, or supplies it from the University Library if not needed by students and faculty. The Interlibrary Center then becomes the final resort for requests, after local and State Library resources have been exhausted. Both the State Library and the Center attempt to keep informed of the subject strengths of other cooperating libraries so that direct inquiries or questions pertaining to those fields can be directed to a specific library. Every attempt is made to utilize to the maximum all library facilities in the state without duplication of effort.

There has been a continuous flow of correspondence and messages among the State Library, the Interlibrary Center, and some of the larger public and university libraries. To speed up referrals and locations of materials, new devices and practices are being sought. Plans are being made to install teletype in the State Library, the Interlibrary Center,

and representative libraries throughout the state so that Union Catalog locations and referrals of requests can be transmitted within a matter of hours. Truck service on alternate days (Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays) has already been instituted among the State Library and the libraries of Duke University, North Carolina State College, and the University at Chapel Hill. Dr. Jerrold Orne, librarian of the University of North Carolina, says of the project, "Our experiment on a state-wide scale may well serve as a proving ground for a larger enterprise. Rapid communications methods and devices which we may discover in the course of our operations may later serve as models to be applied in a national plan. Our kind of operation may serve that purpose, as well as others, since this is a new concept of service and outspokenly seeks new means of furthering these services. It is most logical that it should serve as a pilot or experimental proving ground for such devices."⁶

After nine months of operation, it can be reported that the system is working successfully. The number of individuals making requests directly to the University Library has been reduced considerably and public libraries have established the habit of making requests for non-research material to the State Library first. The State Library and public libraries report increased demands upon their collections. By skimming off the requests for non-research materials which can be answered by other libraries, the University Library is able to give more attention to its main business of providing research and teaching materials. At the same time, a bibliographical center has been established which will permit a better utilization of resources and freer movement of materials among all the libraries in the state.

⁶ Jerrold Orne, "A New Pattern of Service," *North Carolina Libraries*, XVI (1958), 53.