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Society for Advancement of Poynter Library.

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SOCIETY FOR ADVANCEMENT OF POYNTER LIBRARY THE LIBRARY CONNECTION



Carol Hixson, Library Dean

From the Dean

This is my first message “*From the Dean.*” As the new Dean of the Nelson Poynter Library, my first job has been to acquaint myself with the librarians and other staff of the Library, with the Library’s strengths and challenges, with the University and its needs, and with the broader community.

I have met individually with all staff in the Library to hear firsthand what they do, what they need, what they envision for the Library. The result of those first and ongoing conversations is a deeper awareness of how much the Library accomplishes with very little. We have great vision and dedicated people who provide excellent service, but we are challenged by reductions in both staffing and funds. We always assess our resources and approaches in order to provide the best service possible to our patrons. In spite of the economic challenges, we are looking ahead to the future. We pride ourselves on delivering

excellent service to all USF students, whether they be first-time university students from Florida, mature students returning to school after military service, differently-abled students who need specialized attention or equipment to enable them to succeed, senior auditors of USFSP classes, or students from other cultures.

We strive to keep our collections and services up-to-date and adequate to support the new courses and programs being offered by the University. We provide leadership in the creation and delivery of distance education courses for USFSP; we are laying the groundwork for the development of a USFSP digital archive; we are delivering for-credit courses in information literacy to a growing number of students; we continue to reach out to our local community to build innovative partnerships and explore grant opportunities; and much more!

I also meet frequently with the College Deans and individual faculty members to clarify the role of the Library in academic programs and in providing support for the University’s growing distance-education offerings. Garnering support for the Library’s collections budget and services is the focus of my meetings with the Faculty Senate Library Committee. Meetings with Student Government leaders are focused on partnering with them to

secure funding for expanded library hours during exam periods and to consider new services such as collecting textbooks to put on reserve.

The Dean of the Libraries at USF Tampa and I have met several times to discuss shared resources and opportunities for further collaboration.

The President of the SAPL Board, Marion Ballard, and I have shared our personal visions for the future of SAPL and a Board meeting is planned for mid-November. I have also met many other individuals whose prominence in and connections with the local community provide us opportunities for building new partnerships to assist us with our future endeavors.

It has been a very busy three months!

The mission of the Society for Advancement of Poynter Library (SAPL) is to increase communication between the Library and the students, faculty, and citizens it serves, and to work for the improvement of the Library’s resources, collections, and services.

The University of South Florida System

USF is changing, as well as growing. What had been a main campus in Tampa with satellite campuses in St. Petersburg, Sarasota, and Lakeland is evolving into a System comprised of several separately accredited Universities. USF St. Petersburg has been separately accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) since 2006 and received full support from SACS this year. USF Sarasota-Manatee is the next institution scheduled to undergo SACS accreditation.

All the Deans, Vice-Chancellors, the Chancellor, and the rest of USFSP's Executive Team continue to prepare policies and other documents for the SACS reaffirmation visit in 2011. Changes of such magnitude always bring both challenges and opportunities.

On October 7, President Judy Genshaft hosted the first-ever System Retreat for the Deans, Chancellors, Vice-Chancellors, Provosts, and other key members of senior administration from the different institutions. In the daylong retreat, we grappled with what it meant to be a System. As the Dean of the Poynter Library, I was pleased to meet many of my colleagues within the System and gain an appreciation for the strength of the System as a whole.

Part of the transition to a System is the cost allocation process that is underway between the campuses. For the Library, this means discussions with the Dean of the USF Tampa Libraries about which services they provide for us and which services USF St. Petersburg's Poynter Library provides for them and how we might share the costs equitably. The two primary points under discussion are how much USFSP needs to pay for access to the thousands of electronic resources that Tampa subscribes to on behalf of all System libraries and how much USF Tampa needs to pay for the services we provide to the College of Marine Science, which is part of USF Tampa but which is physically located on the USFSP campus. Fortunately, the Dean of the USF Tampa Libraries, Bill Garrison, and I are in agreement. We are hopeful that our respective campus negotiators will reach a settlement that serves all of our needs and that enables our continued successful collaboration.

What is a Library?

Like all academic libraries in North America, the Poynter Library is always reviewing what it means to be a university library and what its core and new services need to be. As the only USFSP building open in the evenings and on the weekends, we connect our students and faculty with a wide range of services that go beyond what one normally expects of a library. For a service-oriented institution with a decreasing budget, this prompts us to be in a state of continuous self-examination.

Learning Commons

USFSP has begun planning for building a new multi-purpose student center and for the renovation of the Campus Activities Center. One of the trends in academic libraries in North America is to partner with other student services and develop shared spaces where students can get access to help with writing, math, library resources, and other services. Such partnerships are often referred to as Learning Commons or Information Commons. The Poynter Presentation Corner was one step in the path towards developing a broader set of services to support the students in new ways within the confines of the library building. Continuing on with the work started by Dean Arsenault in this area, I have begun discussions with the Director of the Academic Success Center (ASC), Dr. Ruby Qin, to see if we can identify a space within the Poynter Library that might house the Academic Success Center. Whether we continue with these discussions will hinge on the University's refinement of the planning for the multi-purpose student center, as well as on whether we have the funds to redesign some of the Poynter Library's space to accommodate this service center. It will also be important to make certain that the ASC is adequately staffed so that library staff don't find themselves suddenly expected to take on the tutoring services offered by the ASC.

Use of Library Space

Another issue related to our definition of ourselves as a library relates to the use of the public and non-public spaces within the building. Because the Library is located on Bayboro Harbor, beautiful views abound. Because the Library has been well designed and maintained over the years, it boasts many rooms and spaces that attract the interest of the entire campus and the community beyond. It has been necessary to develop a set of guidelines for

the use of the library's space affirming that the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library's mission is to support the research, learning, and teaching needs of the students and faculty of USF St. Petersburg by providing access to information resources and classroom technologies, by assisting users in finding, evaluating, and utilizing those resources and technologies effectively, and by using library space creatively to enable learning/teaching opportunities first for the campus and secondarily for the broader community. Those guidelines are now available on the library's web site at: <http://www.nelson.usf.edu/guidelines/>

Distance Learning

In addition to more traditional library services, the Poynter Library also maintains the Instructional Media Services (IMS) department. The IMS staff can assist with film showings, videotaping services, portable public address systems, and other audio/visual support for University events. The department also trains and assists faculty in creating media-enhanced online courses and assumes responsibility for those courses being archived and delivered to students. The Library is hosting meetings with the Deans of the Colleges to develop a long-term strategy for a campus program of distance education to ensure that we have the resources we need to support the campus in this area.

Serving all students

The University is admitting more students from differing backgrounds, including students who are returning from military service, as well as students who face some physical disabilities or learning challenges. Many of these students come to the Library in the hope that we can help them find and use library materials, as well as assist them with their class assignments. The library does provide assistive technologies in a quiet study room setting for those with special visual needs and also works closely with Student Disability Services to point other special-needs students to the institutional resources available to them. The Dean of the Library is now working with the Vice-Chancellor of Academic Services and the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs to try to find ways to serve these students better.

The Poynter Library Makes Connections

The Library has been very active in hosting events of interest to the campus and the broader community. We have also been working to create or update information or promotional materials. *Some* of our efforts this semester have been:

- Reception for new graduate students on the Library Terrace, August 20
- Faculty lecture by Dr. Lachlan Whalen on "Contemporary Irish Prison Writing: Writing and Resistance" in the Poynter Presentation Corner, September 30 (in commemoration of the American Library Association's Banned Books Week)
- Book talk and signing by faculty member Dr. Sheramy Bundrick for her new novel "Sunflowers: A Novel of Vincent Van Gogh" in the Poynter Presentation Corner, October 15
- Luncheon for the Dedication of USFSP's Harborwalk and Sembler Family Fountain, held in the Library's atrium, October 30
- Design of coffee mugs for the Library's special events using a logo designed by one of our talented staff. The mugs are perfect for future fundraising
- Creation of a Facebook site for the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library to reach students through one of today's most popular social networking sites
- Revised glossy brochures highlighting the Library's services
- Update of many of the Library's web pages to keep them accurate and fresh
- Design and creation of a 14-month calendar using historic Tampa Bay images from the Strand Camera Shop now housed in the Poynter's Special Collections and Archives. This calendar is being used as a gift to donors and friends of the University. More calendars, greeting cards, and reproductions could be used for future fundraising (see one of the images from the calendar below)



Staff Highlights

Jerry Notaro, Media Librarian

Jerry served as the Interim Dean of the Library before Carol Hixson arrived. Below are his thoughts about that experience:

Shortly before Dean Kathy Arsenault retired from the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library, the campus administration asked if I would serve as Interim Dean of the Library. A search for a new Dean was in progress, and we hoped it would take about three months for a successful conclusion and the arrival of a new Dean of the Library. Though not on the Search Committee, I was actively involved and impressed with the quality of candidates the campus and library had attracted. Knowing serious budget cuts were looming, I was also energized by the challenges and opportunity to, at least for a short time, work closely with all of the library's staff and faculty in a leadership position. These were all people whom I already respected.



Almost immediately we had to deal with budget cuts and the possibility of losing more positions. Though we did have to cut the budget overall, we were able to keep all of our staff and faculty using federal stimulus funds. The next big project, after hearing the campus was in good standing with SACS, was to write and submit the Library's documents for SACS reaffirmation. The reaccreditation visit from SACS is one of the most important works in which the campus is now engaged.

Then came the good news that Carol Hixson, Dean of Library at The University of Regina, had accepted the Dean of Library position here at USFSP and would arrive in August. Upon beginning her tenure here, Dean Hixson quickly formed important liaisons with the campus and community, demonstrating that the Library was indeed in good hands. Having been here at the beginning of SAPL, I'm sure those members who have met with Carol agree and are as excited as we all are about the future of the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library. I have happily returned to my position of Media Librarian after an exciting three months with an increasing perspective and esteem for all of my colleagues.

Interview with Jerry Notaro

Tell us about yourself

Born in Buffalo, NY. Oldest of five children.

What is your educational background?

Canisius High School (with friend Tim Russert) and Canisius College. B.A. in English Education. SUNY Buffalo, M.L.S., post grad, USF Tampa.

Why did you decide to become a librarian

Librarianship found me. I had been active in HS in the library club and worked at the downtown public library in Buffalo through high school and college as a page. After one year of teaching Jr. High School English and Reading I found the repetition of the same classes daily to be boring. But I loved education and as a certified teacher I decided the natural next step was to become a School Library Media Specialist

What other positions have you held besides your current one?

I was a Media Librarian for Franklin College for four years, a School Library Media Specialist for four years, and a Reading and English teacher for three years.

What do you like about your position at USFSP

The students, the faculty and staff, the location, the challenges, the size of the campus.

How long have you worked at USFSP?

Come June 14th it will be 25 years here at USF St. Petersburg. I have stayed because I love the campus and my work here.

What challenges do you see for the Poynter Library in the next five years?

Financial support and stability and the increasing demands on library services.

What service would you like to see the Library add, expand, or change?

Support for greater digitization of our unique historical resources.

What would you like to see SAPL focus on in the future?

Getting the word out to the community about what a wonderful resource the Library is to the area.

*Interview with Kaya van Beynen***Tell us about yourself**

Though originally from Montreal, Quebec, I grew up just outside of Toronto, Canada. For the past ten years I have lived in the United States: in Washington DC, Hartford, Connecticut, and for the last six years in the Tampa Bay area.

**What is your educational background?**

I received my B.A. in Anthropology from McGill University in Montreal, Quebec. I earned an M.A. in Geography in the program of Environment and Health from McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. Later, I completed an M.Sc. in Library and Information Studies from Simmons College in Boston, Massachusetts.

Why did you decide to become a librarian?

I knew I wanted a career that combined research, helping students, and university life. I also needed a portable profession that I could balance with my family life. With this in mind, I decided to become an academic librarian.

What is your job now? What other positions have you held?

As a Reference and Instruction Librarian I help students and faculty find the resources that they need. I teach LIS 2005, a three-credit library research course. As the liaison to the College of Education and Criminology program, I oversee their collection development and provide specialized support. I help the Dean of the Library with the library service and resource assessments and work on marketing and promotion.

Before becoming a librarian, I was involved in several different professions. Immediately after my undergraduate degree, I travelled to Vietnam to teach English as a Second Language. After returning, I worked for the Smithsonian Institution in the Institutional Studies Office, the office responsible for evaluating museum exhibits. I also worked at a non-profit social service/research organization on youth and environmental health grants and in program evaluation.

What do you like about your position at USFSP?

The most fulfilling aspect of my position is working with students, getting to know them, and

learning about their coursework and interests while seeing them develop into mature junior scholars. It's great to work with supportive and dedicated colleagues. Finally, I love watching the morning waters sparkle or seeing a dolphin frolic in the harbor.

How long have you worked at USFSP?

I first started working for USFSP as a Visiting Librarian in 2003. Then in 2006, I was hired in a full-time position.

What challenges do you see for the Poynter Library in the next five years?

It's commonly cited that the advantage of USFSP is that it's a small campus that provides friendly and individualized support to students while drawing upon all the resources provided through the larger USF system. This is particularly true for the Nelson Poynter Library, as the librarians get to know the students and assist them through various stages of their university careers. However, given current budget restrictions, a major challenge will be to continue to provide this high quality service while meeting new teaching, resource, and technology demands.

What service would you like to see the Library add, expand, or change?

I would like to see the continued improvement of our Information Commons. Currently, the Library has the busiest computer lab on campus. Students come for a combination of reasons: our excellent research and technology support, and our open, friendly atmosphere where students can socialize and learn. However, during much of the day, there are not enough computers to meet demand. Eventually the Reference desk will need to be reconfigured to accommodate the expansion of the computer lab. Additionally, faculty have asked the library to provide more specialized software for student learning on our computers; these requests require the librarians to stay current and to acquire new skills to support complicated computer applications. In this respect, I would like to expand the library's capacity to provide increased computer hardware and software resources and support, while continuing with my professional development to meet these ever increasing student and faculty needs.

What would you like to see SAPL focus on in the future?

I would like SAPL to help the Nelson Poynter Library maintain the ability to remain vibrant, valuable, and relevant to the students, faculty, and USFSP community.

Society for Advancement of Poynter Library

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