

# **The Learning Commons in North America**

**by Barbara Tierney**

**JANUL Symposium, Univ. of Tokyo, Jan. 29, 2016**



# What is the Learning Commons service model in North America?

- ◆ New emphasis is being placed on the expanded role of the library in supporting student learning
- ◆ LC service desks are staffed by librarians who teach information literacy skills and IT experts who assist with technology
- ◆ LCs try to accommodate multiple learning styles and learning levels
- ◆ LCs provide “one-stop shopping” that offer students cutting-edge technology, a wide variety of software & digital resources, collaborative learning spaces, multimedia labs, librarians & IT staff, as well as satellite services for tutoring, writing, advising, career counseling
- ◆ Architecture, furnishings & physical organization are important to a LC because spaces are designed to be rearranged by users according to their needs

# Why is LC at forefront of 21<sup>st</sup> Century library service models in NA?

- ◆ The emergence of the internet & the world wide web as vehicles for delivering scholarly information has altered the way people use the library
- ◆ In order for academic libraries to thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, they must reshape their spaces, services & resources in support of technology
- ◆ Libraries now are becoming defined by their services & programs, instead of by their collections
- ◆ While the “traditional library” has collections at its core & is used for “knowledge seeking” by individual researchers... the LC has student services at the core of its existence & is used for “knowledge creation” by students collaborating with one another

# Why is LC at forefront of 21<sup>st</sup> Century library service models in NA?

- ◆ The emergence of the LC transforms the library's role from a provider of information to a facilitator of learning
- ◆ Today's students take courses that often are team-based and oriented to problem solving. Their coursework often involves the creation of "knowledge objects" such as multimedia presentations, design projects, lab data interpretations & power-point presentations
- ◆ While today's students appear to have a natural ability to use technology, they need to be taught how technology can be used for learning & critical thought

# How does a LC look and feel?

- ◆ Spacious, open, warm, inviting, comfortable.... in a high speed wireless environment
- ◆ Physical collections have been reduced and the reclaimed space is used for collaborative environments
- ◆ Pods of computer workstations supporting multimedia projects; clusters of high-backed chairs surrounding work tables; flat screen monitors; semi-private and private collaborative work spaces; food, beverages, and talking permitted
- ◆ Furniture-on-wheels... that allows users to move furniture around to suit their needs for collaboration
- ◆ Physical components include: integrated or adjacent services desks offering librarians and IT staff; computer workstations arranged in clusters or pods; collaborative learning spaces; digital studios; presentation practice rooms; electronic classrooms; visualization labs; gaming labs; academic support units; café and lounge areas; spaces for meetings and cultural events.

# Univ. of Calif., Merced

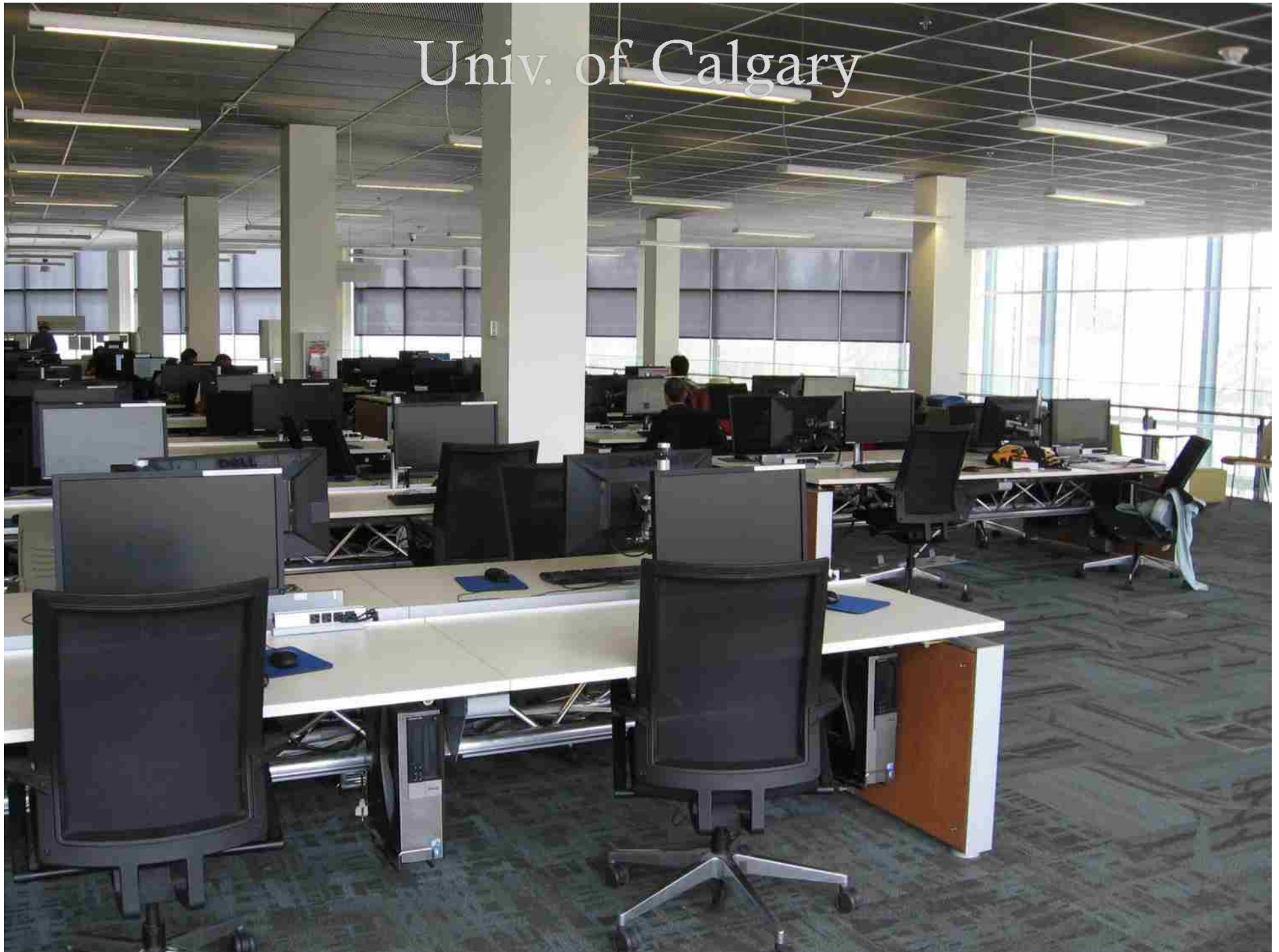




# Univ. Nevada, Las Vegas



Univ. of Calgary





What are the physical components of a  
LC?

# Service desk(s)

- ❖ Services are combined at a single desk or at adjacent desks
- ❖ Desks are staffed both by librarians who teach information literacy skills & IT staff who assist with technology
- ❖ Staff help students complete a series of tasks.....from identifying, locating & evaluating information resources to creating multimedia end products
- ❖ Librarians & IT staff provide one-on-one consultations

# Univ. of Missouri, Kansas City



# Univ. of Central Florida



# Univ. of Calgary





# Univ. of Calgary



# LC computer workstations

- ❖ Concentrated in clusters or pods
- ❖ Many types of arrangements: serpentine, clover leaf, Y shape, circular, square, octagonal, curving, straight
- ❖ Computers are loaded with wide variety of productivity software and digital resources
- ❖ Lots of space for students to spread out

# Univ. of Calgary



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# SUNY Binghamton



# SUNY Binghamton





# Univ. of So. Calif.



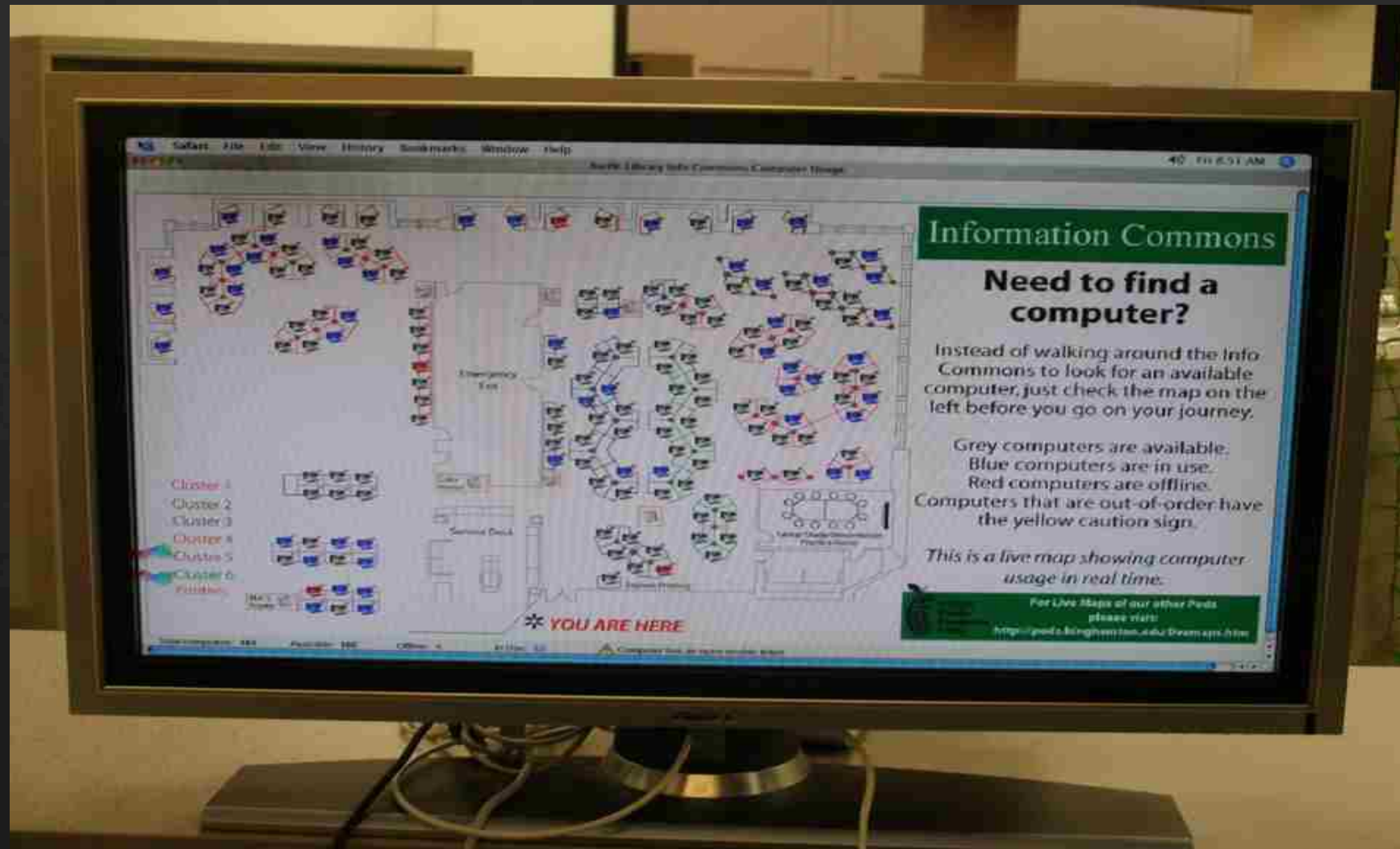
# Emory Univ.



# How to find available computer workstations in a LC.....

Source: Bailey, Russ and Barbara Tierney. Information Commons Case Studies. Chicago, ALA Editions [to be published 2007]

# SUNY Binghamton



Source: SUNY Binghamton

# Dickinson College





# Collaborative learning spaces

- ❖ Computer workstations that are large enough for two or more users
- ❖ Furniture with central electrical outlets
- ❖ Enclosed group study rooms with computers & whiteboards
- ❖ Unenclosed collaborative spaces
- ❖ Food, drinks and talking are allowed

# Indiana Univ., Bloomington



Source: Photos courtesy of Indiana Univ. Bloomington

# Univ. Missouri, Kansas City



# Univ. of Calgary



# Univ. of North Carolina, Charlotte





# Univ. of Central Florida



# Univ. Nevada, Las Vegas



Source: <http://jhenning.law.uvic.ca>

# North Carolina State Univ.



# Univ. of Central Florida



# Emory Univ., Atlanta





# Univ. of Mass., Amherst



Source: Photos courtesy of UMass/Amherst

# Univ. of Calgary



# Herman Miller Moveable Walls



# Dartmouth College News Center



# Univ. of Calgary





# Multimedia Labs

- ❖ Advanced technology facilities that support the development of multimedia projects
- ❖ Includes mix of high-end PCs & MacIntosh computers with full suites of image & audio editing software

# Univ. of Calgary



# North Carolina State Univ.



# Presentation practice rooms

- ❖ Provide video & sound recording devices to allow students to see & fine-tune their own presentations

# Colorado State Univ.





# Georgia Tech. Univ.



# Electronic classrooms

- ◆ Essential to information literacy instruction in the library
- ◆ In 2015, the Assoc. of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) adopted:
  - ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education.*  
(Chicago: Association of College & Research Libraries, 2015).
  - ◆ Expanding the definition of information literacy to include multiple literacies
  - ◆ Supporting multiple types of learning & skills to find and retrieve information
- ◆ Usually have 20-30 workstations;  
additional classrooms may be smaller or designed for laptops
- ◆ Includes microphones, screen sharing software, document cameras, recording & broadcasting technology, clickers, SMART boards, and video conferencing technology
- ◆ Best to construct classrooms with moveable walls that can be opened up for student use when classes are not in session

# Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor



# Univ. of Calgary





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# Visualization Labs

- ❖ Serve as educational tool and showcased for research
- ❖ Provide floor to ceiling display-walls that facilitate collaboration through visualization of data

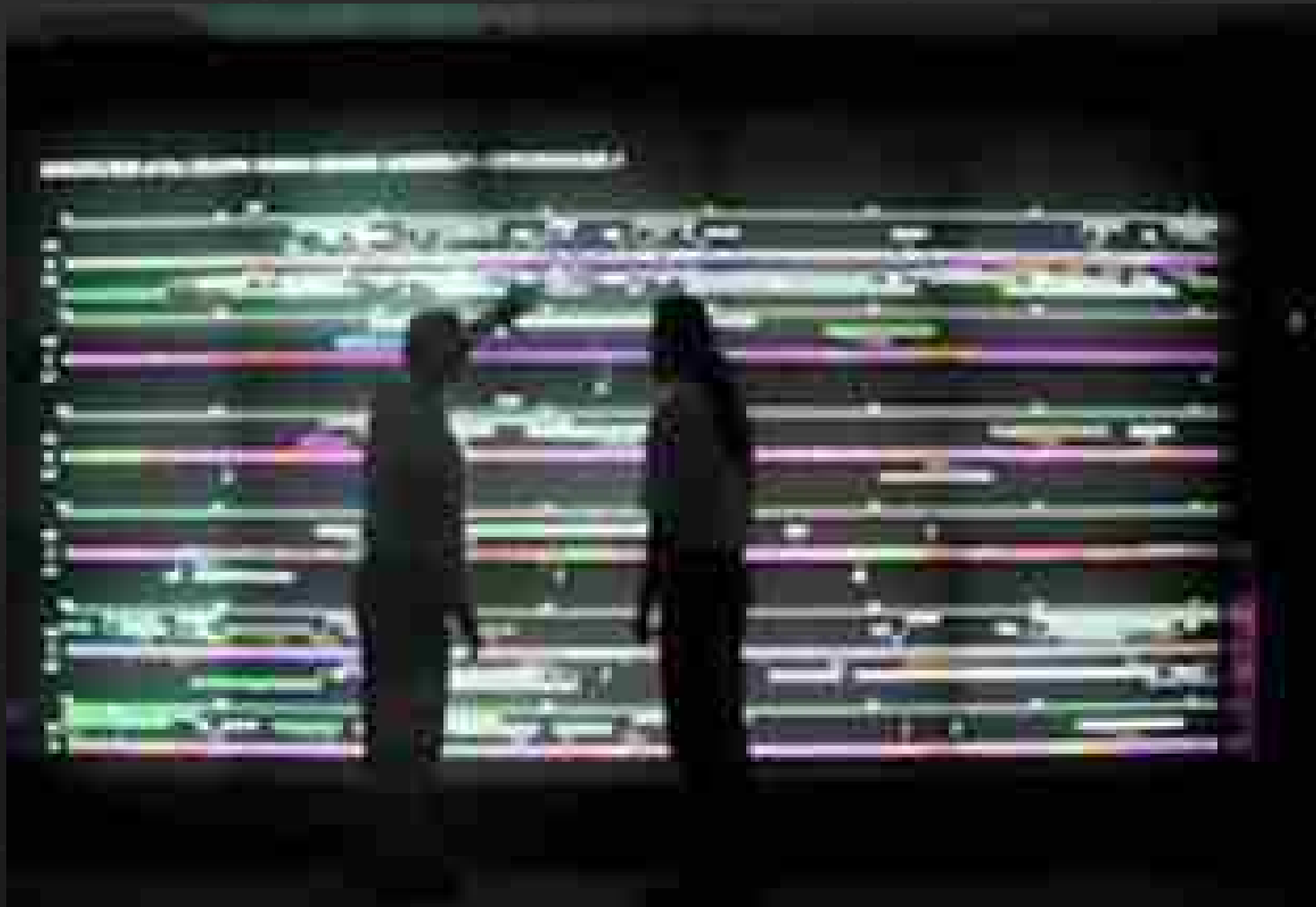
North Carolina State Univ.  
Health Sciences Library: weather  
patterns



# North Carolina State Univ. Health Sciences Library: Chemistry



North Carolina State Univ.  
Health Sciences Library:  
Biochemical Pathway



# North Carolina State Univ., Health Sciences Library: Physics



# Gaming labs

- ❖ Learning through gamification



# North Carolina State Univ., Hunt Library Game Lab

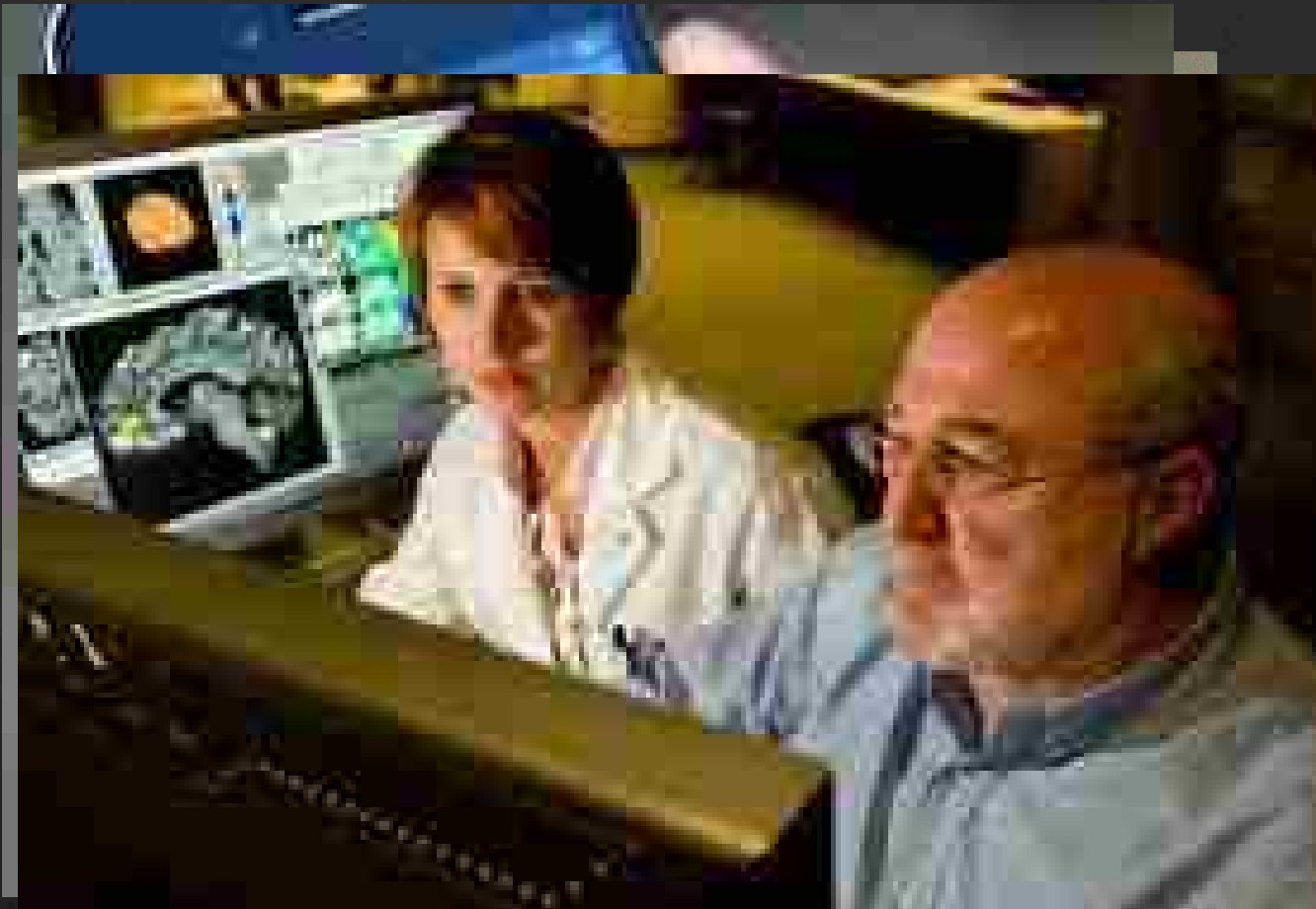


Students develop software  
in the Hunt Library Game Lab.

# Graduate & faculty commons

- ❖ Often tied to a library's Scholarly Communication or Digital Scholarship Center
- ❖ Provide assistance with copyright, publication, grants and dissertation research

# Univ. of North Carolina, Charlotte



# Academic support units

- ❖ North American LCs provide one-stop services for students
- ❖ The LC provides physical space for satellite offices of:
  - Writing Center
  - Tutoring Center
  - Career Counseling Center
  - Academic Advising

# LC Writing Center



# LC Tutoring Center





# LC Academic Advising Center



# LC Career Center



# Café and lounge areas



# Temple Univ.

## Internet Lounge

- e-mail access
- quick Web browsing
- customized furniture



# LC Assessment

- ◆ A survey of 66 North American ARL Libraries found that LC service models had increased student productivity and usage of the library.
- ◆ LCs generated positive feedback from faculty, staff and students

Beagle, Donald. *From Learning Commons to Learning Outcomes: Assessing Collaborative Services and Spaces*, (Research Bulletin). Boulder, CO: EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research, (September 27, 2011)  
<http://www.educause.edu/ecar>.

# Spaces for meetings, programs...

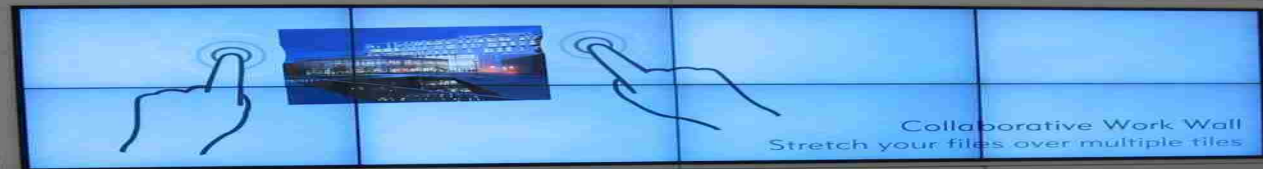
- ❖ LCs are platforms for many types of programming to support learning & inspire students such as: presentations of student work, author talks, exhibits, workshops, lectures
- ❖ Encourages students to be part of the scholarly community
- ❖ Provides new ways for students & faculty to interact
- ❖ Puts library at the heart of the university community



# Student research is showcased in the LC



# Univ. of Calgary



# Planning a Learning Commons

- ❖ How does a library plan spaces that are student-centered?
- ❖ Some North American libraries begin their planning by studying students

# Rochester Univ.

Foster's and Gibbon's 2007 report.....

“Studying students: The undergraduate research project...”

- ❖ An ethnography study of how Rochester students use the library to do their work

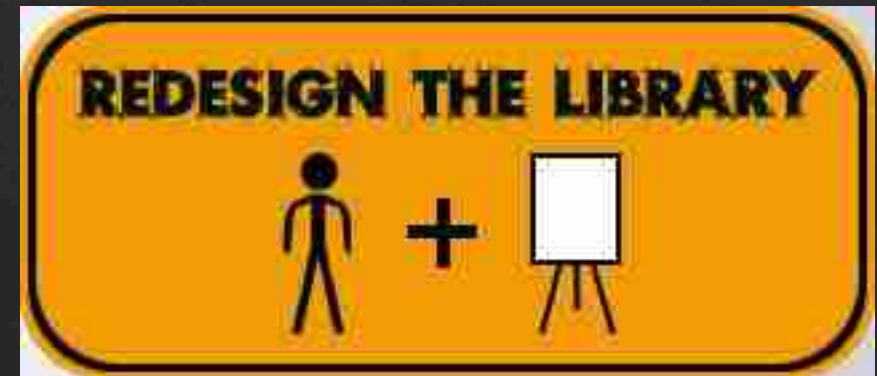
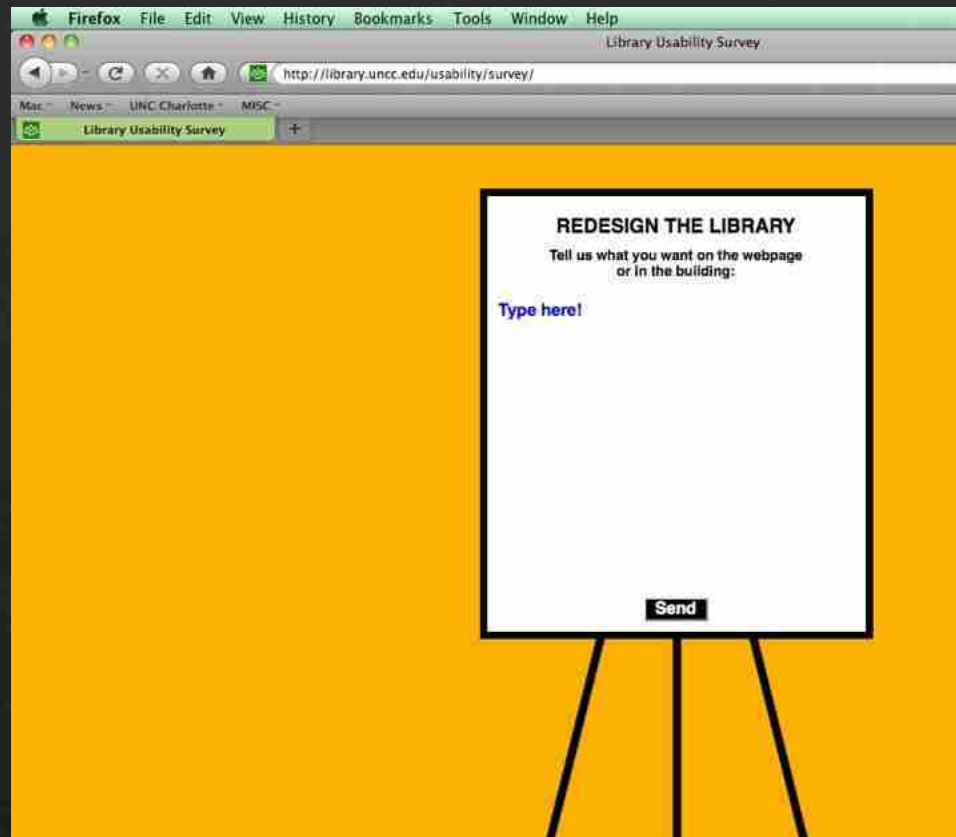
# University of North Carolina, Charlotte

- ◆ In 2009 a new Library Director came to Charlotte, North Carolina from Rochester Univ.
- ◆ His first hire was an Anthropologist to study & report on how students used the library to do their work.
- ◆ The anthropologist:
  - took photos that showed how students used the library
  - placed easels around the library and set up a special library web page to collect feedback from students about re-designing the library
  - conducted interviews and panel programs with students

# University of North Carolina, Charlotte







# Univ. of North Carolina, Charlotte

- ◆ As a result of these studies UNC Charlotte :
  - ◆ Created a Student-Advisory Board that allowed students to present their ideas at library meetings
  - ◆ Combined three service desks into one with a blended staff of librarians & IT experts
  - ◆ Began a “Personal Librarian” program that included outreach to students & faculty via: electronic newsletters & postcards, Subject Librarian Web pages, information literacy classes & drop-in workshops



J. Murrey Atkins Library

Home  
Contact Us  
My Library Account  
[Login to Remote Access](#)

## Barbara Tierney

Head of Information Services

### Contact Me

Phone: (704) 687-3098

E-mail: [btierne@uncc.edu](mailto:btierne@uncc.edu)

Dept: Information Commons

Office: Atkins 114H

### What Can I Do For You?

As Head of Information Services I supervise:

#### The Information Desk:

This is the first public service desk that patrons encounter when they enter the library. This desk provides information and referral about library resources, services and staff.

#### Presentation Support:

The Presentation Support Desk provides technology support and assistance to patrons in the Library's computing labs and classrooms. In Atkins Library labs, patrons can type a document, create a spreadsheet or slide presentation, or edit a video or multimedia presentation.

#### Instructional Services:

Instructional Services library faculty partner with academic faculty to provide library instruction for academic classes that include library-related assignments. Instruction usually takes place in the library although sometimes it can be arranged in another space.

In addition, I serve as Science Reference and Liaison Librarian. I provide research assistance and library instruction in the subject areas of Biology, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Mathematics, Nanoscale Science, Otoelectronics and Physics and Optical Science.



Barbara Tierney

# Emails to Individual Students

## **IT'S CRUNCH TIME... Need help with your final paper or project?**

**Contact your Atkins Library  
Subject Pro, [Barbara Tierney](#),  
to save time and find the best  
research information!**



**I'm the librarian assigned to your major—Reach me via email  
([btierne@uncc.edu](mailto:btierne@uncc.edu)), phone (704-687-3098), or schedule a visit.**

**Additional work resources are LIVE CHAT – a general research question  
service and the Writing Resource Center, with their satellite office lo-  
cated on the library's main floor, Room 109. And don't forget, Atkins Li-  
brary goes to 24/7 from Friday Dec. 10th through Thursday Dec. 16th!**

***Good luck!***

**Barbara Tierney**



**[Find us on Facebook](#). Share thoughts, get updated informa-  
tion and announcements or tell us what you'd like to see!**



### **Dear Chemistry Faculty,**

I am pleased to serve as the liaison librarian to the Department of Chemistry.

I look forward to working with you and your students this fall.

### **SERVICES**

#### **Library Research Instruction**

- Classes will be tailored to fit the parameters of your assignments
- Will serve as an "embedded librarian" in your Moodle or Blackboard
- Will teach at Atkins or Burson
- Individualized and/or group instruction

#### **Consultations**



UNC CHARLOTTE  
J. Murray Atkins Library

<http://library.uncc.edu/>  
Atkins Library Help  
Desk: 704-687-2241

# Univ. of Central Florida Subject Librarian Program

- ◆ Barbara Tierney became Head of Research Services at UCF in Jan. 2013.
- ◆ One of the first initiatives was to create a Subject Librarian service model

## Subject Librarians

VEN BASCO

**Ven Basco**

As the Engineering Librarian, I provide research assistance, library instruction, and collection development for the College of Engineering and Computer Science.

[Busaventura.Basco@ucf.edu](mailto:Busaventura.Basco@ucf.edu)  
[My Research Guides](#)

CORINNE BISHOP

LINDA GOLDING

RICH GAUSE

SHALU GILLUM

RICHARD HARRISON

ANDY TODD

PATI MCGALL

HAL MENDELSON

RENEE COLE MONTGOMERY

RACHEL MULVHILL

MISSY MURPHEY

KELLY ROBINSON

TERRIE SYPOLT

JOHN VENECEK

### We are here to help!

Subject librarians provide research support to students and faculty to help them achieve their educational and academic goals. Subject librarians assist students at all levels with curriculum and research assignments. They are available in person, online, and by phone for consultation on how to find and use the best information for research projects and academic assignments. Subject librarians are also available to assist faculty members by providing instructional sessions for their courses, being available in Canvas, and by creating course-specific resource web pages. Subject librarians provide assistance to faculty members in their own research endeavors and also serve as a link to [collection development](#) for academic programs.

### Browse Librarians by Subjects

--Select a Subject-- ▾

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Go

## Engineering: Electrical Engineering Guides

- Engineering: Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

## Engineering: Electrical Engineering Librarians



Ven Basco

## Databases &amp; Guides by Subject Groups

- ARTS & HUMANITIES
- BUSINESS
- EDUCATION
- ENGINEERING
- HEALTH, MEDICINE & NURSING
- HOSPITALITY & TOURISM
- MISCELLANEOUS
- PUBLIC AFFAIRS & LAW
- SCIENCES

Engineering: Electrical Engin...

Limit to eBooks, videos, etc.

All Vendors / Providers

All | A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z #

127 Databases

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found

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Full text of all ACM journals and conference proceedings.

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a comprehensive bibliographic database of scientific and technical engineering research available, covering all engineering disciplines.

[more...](#)

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tracks every relevant source of information necessary to keep abreast of this complex, highly competitive discipline.

[more...](#)

## Engineered Materials Abstracts (ProQuest) (1986+) Best Bet

The growing importance of polymers, ceramics, and composites in a variety of structural and other advanced applications requires the in-depth coverage provided by Engineered Materials Abstracts.

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delivering full text access to the world's highest quality technical literature in electrical engineering, computer science, and electronics. Includes most IEEE journals, conference proceedings, and standards.

# Meet the UCF Subject Librarians

RICHARD HARRISON



## Richard Harrison

I am the Subject Librarian for Communication, History, Judaic Studies, Music, and Philosophy/Religious Studies. I provide research assistance, library instruction, and collection development for these subject areas.

### Ask Me About ...

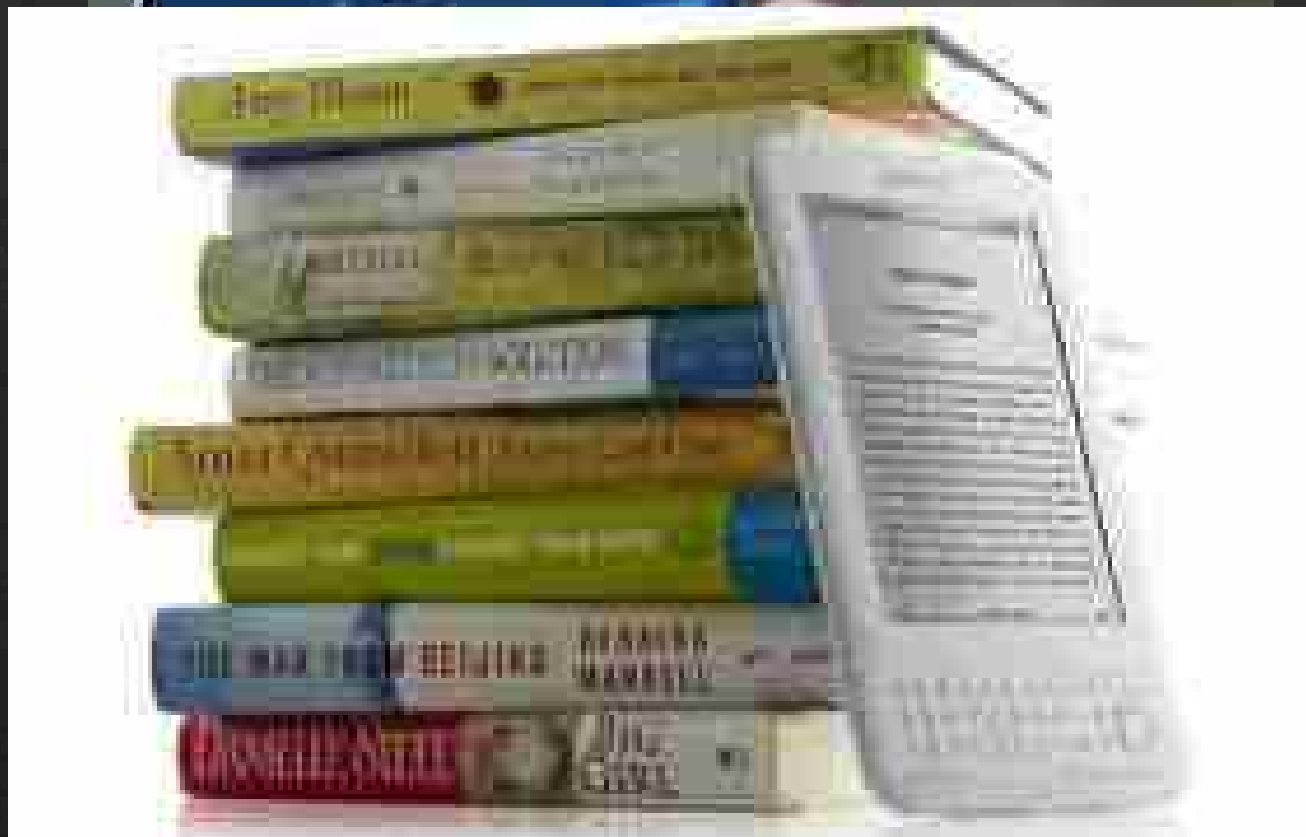
- Library resources for Communication, History, Judaic Studies, Music, and Philosophy/Religious Studies
- *Bibliography of Bioethics*
- Showcase of Undergraduate Research Excellence (SURE)

Richard.Harrison@ucf.edu

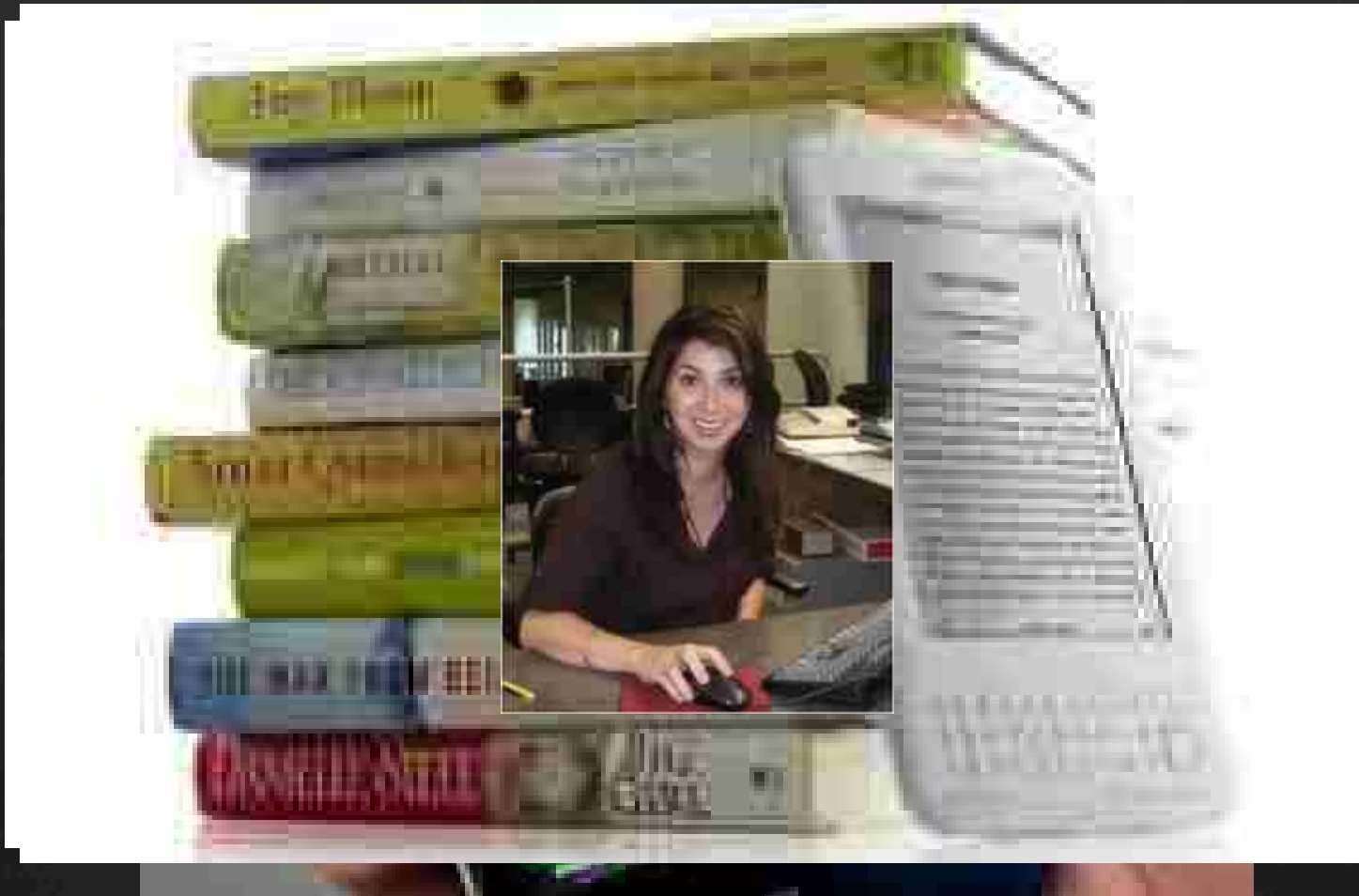
# New emphasis on UCF Subject Librarians becoming more mobile



# UCF Subject Librarians and collection development



# UCF Subject Librarian Training





## Subject Librarian Toolkit

Compilation of readings and presentations from the May 10, 2013 Reference Services Retreat

Last Updated: Aug 2, 2013 | URL: <http://guides.ucf.edu/subject-librarian-toolkit> | [Print Guide](#) | [Email Alerts](#)

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This Guide

### Subject Librarian/Personal Librarian Initiative at UCF Libraries

#### Subject Librarian/Personal Librarian Initiative at UCF 2/19/13

##### What is a "Personal Librarian"?

At UCF a "Personal Librarian" would be the Subject Librarian who is most closely aligned with the students and faculty of a particular academic department. Thus, a student's "Personal Librarian" would be the Subject Librarian aligned with the academic department in which the student is a major, a faculty member's "Personal Librarian" would be the Subject Librarian aligned with the academic department for which the faculty member works. The primary Subject Librarian for an academic department would be the librarian who provides library instruction and consultations for an academic department and, frequently, also performs collection development and "new course/program collection analysis" for an academic department.

##### Rationale for a "Subject Librarian/Personal Librarian Program"

It is increasingly important for the library to prove its "return on investment" by demonstrating its impact on student recruitment, engagement, learning, retention, graduation, and job success as well as its impact on faculty teaching, research, grant success, and the accreditation of university programs.

There is a need for Subject Librarians to be more fully integrated into the university infrastructure. The days of sitting behind a desk waiting for questions are fading, requiring librarians to be proactive in seeking opportunities to develop interdepartmental relationships and increased liaison roles.

There is a greater emphasis on Subject Librarians getting out of the library building. Subject Librarians need to go where their users are. This means leaving the library building to go to academic department meetings, visiting instructors in their offices, participating in university-wide committees and setting up office hours outside of the library.

There also is a need for Subject Librarians to spread the word to academic departments regarding UCF Libraries' Scholarly Communications program. When librarians proactively collaborate with scholars and assist them with copyright and intellectual property issues, they better understand how to embed themselves in the research process and in the scholarly workflow.

When a "Personal Librarian Program" is initiated, Subject Librarians will become more recognizable and accessible to both students and faculty. Students and faculty will be

### Subject Guide



Barbara Tierney

#### Links:

[Profile & Guides](#)

# Engaged Librarian framework

- ◆ At UCF we use the “Engaged Librarian” framework to guide our Subject Librarian service model

[http://library.osu.edu/staff/administration-reports/Engaged Librarian Framework Dec2011.pdf](http://library.osu.edu/staff/administration-reports/Engaged_Librarian_Framework_Dec2011.pdf)

- ◆ Engaged Librarians are Subject Librarians who have high-quality interactions with their assigned faculty, students & academic programs
- ◆ Subject Librarians constantly reach out to their assigned faculty & students to establish new partnerships, programs & services



# Historical Context of LC in North America

- ◆ In the early 1990s, the emergence of the internet & world wide web caused the increased use of online search engines and databases.
- ◆ The increased use of databases caused libraries to create student computer labs in or near their reference departments to provide increased access to databases.
- ◆ Libraries also created special units (such as Media Services) to assist students with new media formats & technologies.

# Evolution of the LC model has been driven by several forces including:

- ◆ In the 1990s & early 2000s, the Information Commons (IC) model began emerging as a new service delivery model in academic libraries.
- ◆ The IC went beyond the “access & retrieval” function of traditional reference service & supported the full range of information literacy activities (“continuum of service”) helping students to access, evaluate, manage, integrate & create knowledge.
- ◆ Beginning about 2005, the IC model began to evolve into the LC model... shifting the focus from information retrieval to learning; shifting from being library-centric to collaborating with other student support services such as tutoring, writing, academic advising & career counseling.
- ◆ Although the terms IC and LC are often used interchangeably, it is useful to understand them as different levels of a similar concept. IC is the earlier term (dating from the early 1990s); LC is the present term (dating from about 2005).
- ◆ On some campuses, libraries first successfully implemented ICs & later, expanded their services & facilities to include collaborative programs of learning support, renaming them LCs.

# Since about 2005, hundreds of LCs have evolved in response to Web 2.0

- ◆ The driving force for universities to place student services within the library are caused by two major reasons:
  - ◆ The reduction of space needed to house print materials (which are of less use to students & faculty compared to digital resources)
  - ◆ Libraries frequently are in a prime location on campus, often located at the center

Where are Japanese academic libraries now with regard to LCs?



Front View

# Evolution from a traditional library service model to the LC model?



Reading Room(1F)



# Changing from collection-centered to student-centered?



Reference Room

# What will the future bring?



Reading Room(3F)



Just for fun....  
Walking computer workstations?



# Just for fun.... Group Study Yurts?



Cube dwellers can cluster in these futuristic yurts, whose Corian shells muffle noise.

BY STEEL CASE

# Just for fun: Group Study Couches?



Source: <http://mocoloco.com/archives/002607.php#more>

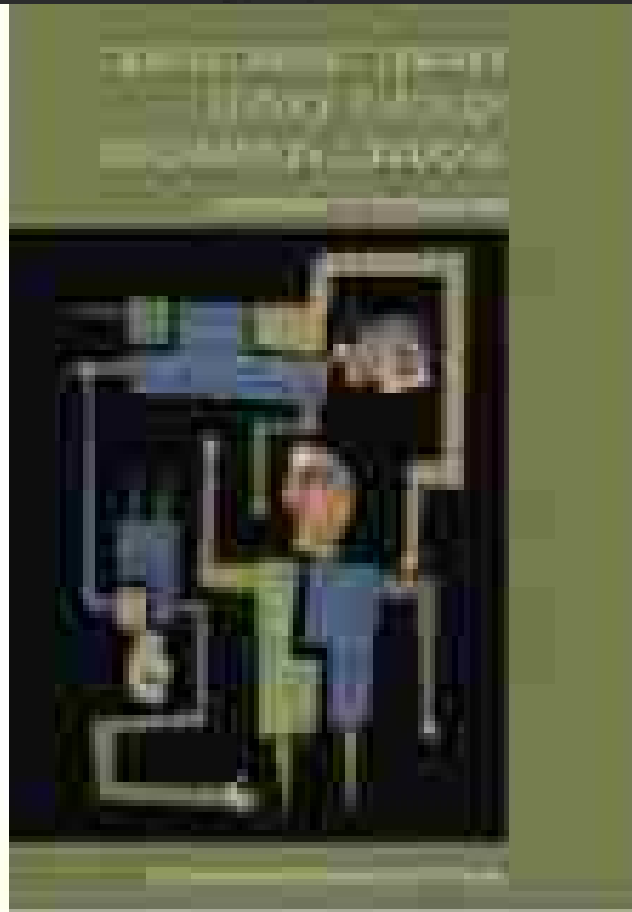
# Sleeping computer workstations?



Source: <http://www.flyingbeds.com>

The End  
Questions?

# “Transforming library service through Information Commons” ..by Bailey & Tierney



# “The Information Commons Handbook” by Beagle, Bailey & Tierney

