

Report on Activities, 2008/2009

May 28, 2009

Library Advisory Committee for the Humanities and Social Sciences (LACHSS)

The purpose of LACHSS is to provide a forum for effective communication between the Library and the Humanities and Social Sciences community at Queen's University. The membership consists of representatives from the Library including the subject liaison librarians, the Departmental Library Representatives, and, graduate and undergraduate representatives. Two meetings were held in the 2008/2009 academic year – October 22, 2008 and April 1, 2009. Further information about LACHSS and the minutes of the meetings are available at the [LACHSS website](#).

Highlights 2008/2009

- At the October 22, 2008 meeting we had a major discussion on E-books: the Good, the Bad and the Ugly. Generally it was felt that there are positive reasons for purchasing books in an electronic format but unfortunately the delivery platforms do not make their use particularly easy. E-books are useful if you want to consult rather than read a book, they are excellent for undergraduates, especially for those in large first year classes who may be working on the same topics for research projects, and they are available at anytime. The delivery platforms, however, are not particularly user friendly – in most cases downloading is not allowed, printing is difficult, and it is difficult to read an entire book on the screen. The purchasing of e-books is also challenging for the library as packages, with the exception of Springer books, often do not include the publisher's front list; packages purchased through CRKN include selective titles only; and, the quality and availability of MARC records for loading into our own catalogue varies greatly. The discussion was highly useful for the library and was our first experience in gathering information directly from the Queen's community regarding their opinions on electronic books
- At the April 1, 2009 meeting we discussed the impact of the budget reductions on library services, collections and access to collections. The collections will be affected in two ways – there will be no increase in the acquisitions budget which effectively amounts to a decrease when inflation and exchange rates are taken into account; and, the library will be reducing staff largely through attrition and retirements thus leaving fewer staff to select, process and maintain materials. The library will have to purchase more materials through shelf ready approval plans, reduce the number of print journals, and possibly consolidate some services and locations. The library is committed to providing high quality collections and access even in times of financial constraints. It is essential for departmental library representatives to keep the liaison librarians and the collections coordinator informed of changes to curriculum content and courses, and to new delivery methods, research and methods of assessment in their departments so that the library can continue to ensure that the collections are relevant for teaching and research.

Other activities

- The [*Library Statement on Open Access*](#) was introduced and endorsed with minor changes. Preliminary plans for Open Access Week, 19-23 October 2009, were introduced and suggestions for activities, speakers, etc. were elicited.
- The document, [*The Role of Departmental Library Representatives*](#), which had been reviewed in 2008/2009 was revised and accepted.
- [<odesi>](#) (Ontario Data Documentation, Extraction Service and Infrastructure Initiative), a web-based data extraction system, was introduced. The project is a collaborative initiative of the Ontario Council of University Libraries with the long-term goal to provide a “one-stop shopping” experience for research data.
- Highlights of the Center for Research Libraries (CRL) Workshop that was held at Queen’s in September were presented to LACHSS. CRL is now providing digitization on demand which means that instead of sending paper materials through the mail for interlibrary loan, they will make them available electronically if they can make digital copies within five business days. CRL will also work with member libraries to digitize parts of member library collections that are considered unique and have broad research appeal. CRL also provides a customized research service to assist researchers in finding and using CRL materials. Queen’s University is a member of [CRL](#).