

Xavier University
Library Resource Center
Annual Report for 2005-2006

The following is a summary of activities and accomplishments by Library Resource Center personnel during the 2005-2006 academic year. In spite of the four-month interruption of university operations and the loss of several employees to layoffs and retirements, the Library's faculty and staff had a very productive year during which collections grew and service improved in all departments.

The Library's activities were funded this past year by a combined budget of \$860,000.00. Approximately 78% of it was spent on new books, serial subscriptions, and continued access to thousands of e-journals, e-books, and electronic databases.

Serial publications continued to be our largest single expense (\$445,509.28, or 51.8%), and the smallest expense continued to be books and reference books on standing order (\$44,687.03, or 5.2%). Costs for electronic databases and electronic journal publications are growing significantly as we move toward more digital resources and away from traditional print materials. Those resources cost us \$132,610.99 in 2005-06, or 15.4% of our budget. As fears over loss of revenue diminish, publishers will undoubtedly make it possible for academic libraries to acquire more digital information at a cost significantly lower than traditional print resources.

Departmental Book Buying at Xavier

The four-month interruption of the fall semester, coupled with the accompanying loss of faculty in all departments, dealt a considerable blow to our efforts to involve teaching faculty in collection development during 2005-2006. Seven out of twenty departments, including both COP Divisions and the Graduate School, ordered no books during the past fiscal period. Only a handful of departments that did submit orders managed to use up their entire budgets. Many submitted orders as late as the end of June. As a result, departmental orders amounted to only 517 new books. As of this writing, 456, or 88.2% have been received and cataloged into the collection.

Departmental Activities

The Library Resource Center, like other University departments, began 2006 with fewer employees. Two faculty members were lost to retirement and two more were laid off. Two long-time staff members also retired, and an additional five were laid off. In spite of that loss of manpower, Library faculty and staff performed admirably upon their return. Absenteeism and tardiness were at all-time lows between January and August of 2006, as nearly everyone floated from one department to another as needed. Indeed, I have rarely seen a more collegial spirit than has been evident since the Library reopened.

Circulation/Reserve Services

In spite of a growing list of resources available to Xavierites through the Library's web resources page, we still see a significant number of traditional book circulations among our population. During the two semesters of 2006, we saw over 2,000 traditional circulations:

Staff Borrowers	68
Faculty Borrowers	365
Student Borrowers	1,710
Others	12
Total	2,055

The use of Reserve material, however, seems to be on the upswing. During 2005, only 1,562 reserve transactions took place, but during the first eight months of 2006, there were **5,031 reserve transactions**. An additional **228** reserve transactions took place in the Pharmacy Library.

During the Spring semester of 2007, we plan to begin offering digital reserve services. It remains to be seen how this will affect future library use by students.

Access Services

Although the Reference Department exists for the express purpose of assisting students and faculty with research questions, such activities are the business of nearly everyone working a service desk. Access service desks also exist at Government Documents (second floor),

Interlibrary Loan (third floor), and the Pharmacy Library (fourth floor). Inquiries are qualified as short (five minutes or less) or long (five minutes or more), telephone, e-mail inquiries, or computer assistance.

	Main Reference	Gov Docs	ILL	Pharm	Totals
Short	2,271	904	1,039	35	4,249
Long	87		459	4	550
Phone	61				61
Comp Asst	312			216	528

Totals	2,731	904	1,498	255	5,388

Interlibrary Loan

Interlibrary Loan continues to be one of the busiest offices in the Library. During the past year, Xavier initiated **306 requests** to other libraries. In turn, we received **1,369 requests** from other libraries, nearly four and a half times as many as were borrowed for Xavier patrons. This is a trend that has been building for at least ten years, probably influenced by a serious ongoing effort to improve Xavier's library collections.

Government Documents Department

Designated in 1991, Xavier is well into its second decade as a Federal Depository. Plans are underway to install moveable shelving in order to accommodate this growing collection and to provide for better access to state

and city documents. At present we receive just under 20% of the Federal Government's publishing output, including paper, microfiche, and electronic formats.

During the year we added **1,494** new documents, bringing the collection total to **26,625**. The loss of nearly the entire documents collection at Tulane University, perhaps the city's largest academic depository, places an added value on the collection at Xavier, which has a special focus on environmental and energy issues.

University Archives and Special Collections

Although this is the most specialized of collections in the Library Resource Center, the faculty members assigned here work closely with the Reference Department to serve the entire Xavier community and the greater community of scholars outside the campus. The Archives delivered the following services during 2005-2006:

Visitors - 193

Telephone Queries - 102

Mail Queries - 28

E-mail Queries - 161

Total Transactions - 484

The archivists' major job is concerned with accumulating and placing in order the records of the university and providing information from them to faculty and university administrators on demand. A recent two-stage

retrofit of the stacks area with compact moveable storage enabled the archivists to comfortably add 65.6 new linear feet of records from 15 different campus departments.

The secondary, and perhaps more glamorous task, is the administration of manuscript special collections and rare books. Five-point-eight feet of manuscripts from several Xavier faculty members, African-American author R. Baxter Miller, and Xavier Review Press joined this part of the collection, along with 183 new book titles.

Even as we recovered from Hurricane Katrina, some exciting new materials were added. Perhaps the most notable is a manuscript collection that includes correspondence between the celebrated jazz musician, Bunk Johnson, and the equally celebrated jazz historian, William Russell. We also acquired a published speech by Marcus Garvey and rare first editions by Langston Hughes and Arna Bontemps.

Technical Services

This Library division, which includes Cataloging and Serials, had to deal with more than its share of Katrina-related problems. After Xavier's re-opening in January, the Library suddenly became the recipient of numerous donations of books and serials from other libraries, retired scholars, and other organizations who mistakenly believed that Xavier's library collection had been destroyed by floodwaters. Considerable manpower was required to unpack

and sort through the donations to ascertain what, if any, of this influx could actually be used to support Xavier's teaching and research. It took until late August of 2006 to finally complete this task.

We began buying new books as soon as we could and simultaneously began receiving book orders that had been placed back in July and August of 2005. A priority was placed on cataloging this material, since it consisted of requests by Xavier faculty and members of the Library faculty. In all, the Cataloging staff added **2,012 new titles** to the collection, along with **six audiovisual titles**.

We have resumed a collection-wide weeding project that was begun early in 2005, which resulted in the elimination of a number of worn-out or obsolete volumes from the 000s, 100s, 200s, and the Reference Collection. During 2006 we de-accessioned **2,069** volumes from the collection. Not included in that figure are at least eighty-year runs of **Biological Abstracts** and **Chemical Abstracts** and a twenty-year run of **Physics Abstracts** that were also de-accessioned. These venerable research tools have been replaced by electronic versions available twenty-four hours a day via the Library's web page.

The interruption of third class mail into New Orleans placed a particular burden on the Serials Department, reduced from a staff of three to one person upon our return.

We learned that we'd essentially lost all journal issues sent between late August 2005 and January 2006. Some late summer 2005 issues made it to Xavier's temporary headquarters in Grambling, Louisiana, but getting later issues became dependent on EBSCO's ingenuity. In early January, EBSCO Subscription Services began sending boxes of new journal issues via United Parcel. This continued through spring 2006, when regular mail deliveries were resumed by the U. S. Postal Service.

Since then, the Serials Librarian has been using various services to locate and re-acquire back numbers of journal titles and then arrange completed volumes for binding. Altogether, she collected and sent **3,829** volumes to the bindery between January and August 2006.

Use of Library Class, Conference and Study Rooms

In spite of the Library Resource Center's lack of centrality to the campus as a whole, it continues to be a popular meeting place for student study groups and small group meetings. The building features small group study rooms on the second, third, and fourth floors that will accommodate six students at a time. There are seventeen of these rooms in all, but five of them are currently unavailable due to various administrative necessities. We hope to return at least two of them to service over the next year.

Usage of the remaining twelve rooms has been restricted to groups of three or more, but, even at that, demand is considerable. The numbers below reflect the number of times an individual group has requested to use a room:

2nd Floor 1,655

3rd Floor 123

4th Floor 852

Total 2,630

The Instructional Media Center

The Instructional Media Center has been a Library division for more than thirty years, but in recent years the demands upon it have changed, partly due to changes in technology and partly due to the requirements of the university. Films and tape recordings have given way to digital technology, often conveyed through computer hardware. Although the Media Center continues to collect and store recorded music and both educational and entertainment video, the largest contemporary demand has been for classroom space.

Enclosed within the Center are Rooms 400F and 407A, and Rooms 417A and B are located just outside.

Prior to January 2006, the Center also administered Library Rooms 321A, B, and C, located on the third floor just adjacent to the University Archives. These latter three rooms were borrowed by the Dean of Arts and Sciences

in January as a temporary headquarters. Although the move was not seen as permanent, repair on the ground floor of the University Administration Building has prevented the Dean and his associates from returning to their traditional suite.

Damage to other campus classrooms prompted the Registrar to begin assigning Media Center classrooms 400F, 407A, 417A, and 417B to faculty on a semester-long basis. This has resulted in a significant upturn in the use of these rooms, as the numbers below indicate:

Days Used - 107

Events Scheduled - 519

Total Hours Used - 859

The use of the Media Center's collection and portable equipment was significant over the past six months, but not out of the ordinary:

Media Checked Out - 139 items

Equipment Checked Out - 77 items

The Media Center also offers a room equipped with electric-powered study carrels. Most of these have been equipped with VHS player-monitor combos or DVD or CD-playing equipment. These continue to attract a considerable number of students who wish to view or listen to materials on their own.

Carrel Use - 794 students

Educational Technology Support

Working out of the Media Center, Dr. Elizabeth Rhodes acts as a consultant to the teaching faculty, principally in the utilization of Blackboard software. With minimal support from the Library, she interacts with a significant number of teaching faculty, as this past year's numbers reflect:

Scheduled Training

- ***Your Hurricane Plan and Blackboard (7/19-7/20) - 12
faculty members attending***
- ***New Faculty Orientation (9/5/06) - 14 faculty***
- ***Respondus training (3/24/06) - 10 faculty***
- ***Blackboard and Bubbly (9/7/06) - 20 faculty***

Total Scheduled Contacts - 56

Walk-in Trainings - 40

Phone walk-through Training - 500

E-mail Questions - 320

Total Unscheduled Training Contacts - 876

Library Literacy Education

The arrival of Hurricane Katrina unfortunately caused the cancellation of fourteen literacy classes during the fall of 2005. The suspension of University 1010 meant that

the opportunity to reach over 1,000 students in approximately twenty classes was lost.

In spite of that, several classes were still held between January and August 2006. They included the following:

<u>Subject</u>	<u># of Classes</u>	<u># of Students Reached</u>
Chemistry	1	6
Communications/Speech	2	44
English	3	78
Psychology	1	45
Reading	2	46
U/Grad Research	2	12
High School	1	2
Totals	12	233

Corporate Generosity

Along with the donations of books and journals from individuals concerned with Xavier's welfare, we saw some noteworthy generosity on the part of large publishers in the post-Katrina months. *Annual Reviews*, Incorporated, gave us a free year's electronic access to all 32 of their titles, a number of which Xavier has never subscribed to. Likewise, the H. W. Wilson Company provided unlimited access to their popular **WilsonLine** database, which includes access to **The Readers Guide to Periodical Literature**, **Book Review Digest**,

Science and Technology Index, and the other literature indexes familiar to so many student researchers.

Other vendors, such as **LOUIS**, forgave the entire membership fee for 2005-2006, or, like **JSTOR**, pro-rated the access cost to their services, thereby saving us valuable dollars for other things. Perhaps the largest show of publishing industry generosity came in June, during the annual American Library Association Convention, held in New Orleans. At that time, the multi-national publisher, Springer-Verlag, gifted Xavier and other local academic institutions with *perpetual* access to their 10,000 volume science and technology e-book collection. Priced at more than a \$100,000.00, this gift is without precedent in publishing history. It was a considerable shot in the arm to Xavier's science and technology collections, which have suffered as prices in this sector of the publishing industry have risen more sharply than our budgets could comfortably accomodate.

Library Operation in the Aftermath

Xavier's Library Resource Center faired relatively well in comparison with other area academic libraries damaged by Katrina. We lost very little in the way of library holdings and only one piece of electronic equipment was lost to flood. A significant number of chairs were lost on the ground floor, but larger pieces of furniture, such as

tables, dictionary stands, and the wooden end panels attached to the ends of shelving ranges were saved through some skillful millwork on the part of an unknown carpenter. No metal shelving was lost to damage.

In spite of this, a considerable amount of confusion had to be worked through, and new ways of operating departments with fewer people had to be developed. It is remarkable that, a year later, the Library Resource Center is operating more efficiently and effectively than before the storm. It says a great deal about the dedication of returning Library faculty and staff and about their collegial spirit in the face of work disruption and the disruption of their personal lives. At this writing, only a third of all Library employees are living in their own homes, yet I hear very little complaint and see a continuing commitment on the part of all. In closing, I can only say that it is a privilege to work with people such as these.

Robert E. Skinner

University Librarian

October 24th, 2006