Defying Borders: The Library's Role in a Global University

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Defying Borders: The Library’s Role in a Global University
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“... in almost every country, research universities are among the most globally connected of all sectors. Knowledge, the free currency of higher education, flows anywhere and everywhere, like quicksilver on a metal table..." 1

In 2009, Library Global Initiatives was formed to:
- Build and sustain international collaboration with campus partners
- Implement library-led global outreach
- Create awareness of resources and services for global study and research
- Leverage library expertise on a large decentralized campus

What is the role of the library in education and research at an institution which is increasingly looking beyond its physical boundaries?

Global outreach on campus and abroad
- Networking!
- Environmental assessment
- Assessing global information resource needs
- Curriculum-integrated information literacy
- Research collaborations
- Faculty development

Curriculum Integration & Workshops including:
- Increased information literacy instruction in global study courses
- Nursing /Women’s Studies: Perspectives in Global Health
- UC 178 course: Global Understanding
- Center for Global Health’s “Foundation in Information Skills” workshop series
- International Grantseeking Workshops
- Teaching Open Access Resources

Leveraging Library Expertise & Services
- Librarian Subject Specialists
- Creating awareness of resources and library services for global study and research across disciplines
- Marketing services and collections to global programs, including mobile resources and Ask A Librarian chat/email/text

Where in the world?
During Feb 2009 and Feb 2010, UM librarians responded to email reference from 22 countries: Algeria, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Netherland, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and United Kingdom

Outreach: Global Students
- Library collaboration with U-M’s International Center to assess information needs of global students
- Customized workshops and library office hours designed for international students
- Involvement with international student organizations

Outreach and Events
- Library Global Information Week, 2010 & 2011

- Library’s first Study Abroad field site: Teaching Technology in Rural Kenya, Summer 2011 (Field librarians: C. Ransom, L. Mbabu)
- Increased Library presence in global engagement events and lecture series
- Representation on campus-wide Provost’s Council on Global Engagement
- Participation in the Provost’s Seminar on Educating Globally Competent Students

Future Plans...
- Future Library-sponsored study abroad activities
- Further MLibrary’s global connections
- Develop research and instruction collaborations
- Investigate connections with sister libraries
- Develop theme-based MLibrary global programming e.g. UN Millennium Development Goals