

# Reinventing Reference:

Changing front-line roles,  
Building new skills,  
Addressing management and  
leadership challenges



**Shirley Baker,  
Vice Chancellor for  
Scholarly Resources  
and Dean of University  
Libraries**



**Barbara Rehkop**



**Kristine Helbling**



**Melissa Vetter**

# Reactor Panel

**Jane Schillie**, Associate Dean of  
Libraries, Kansas State University

**Deb Carver**, University Librarian,  
University of Oregon

**You**



# 35 Years of Changes

- **Cataloging**
- **Interlibrary loan**
- **Collection development**
- **Now reference**



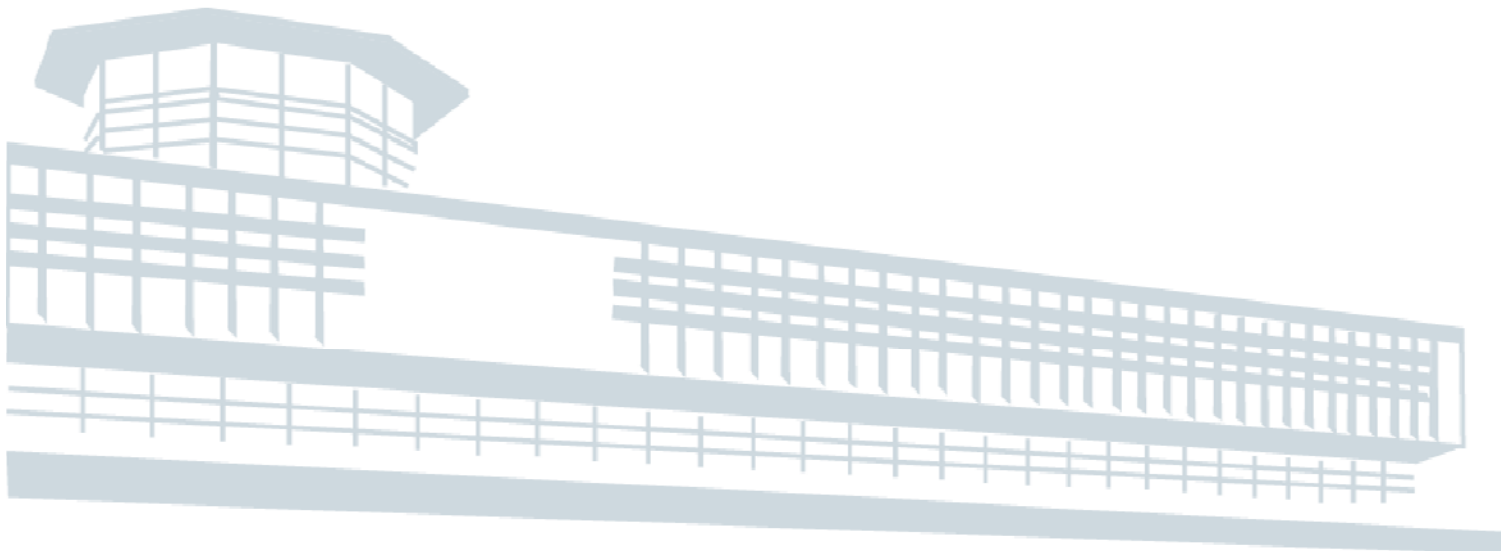
# Reference Situation

- **Declining in-person queries**
  - Better & more comprehensive catalogs
  - Google & Wikipedia
- **Death of the print reference collection**
- **Disconnect between user needs and librarian preferences**



# Responses from Reference

- Marketing instead of listening
- Devaluing Google & Wikipedia



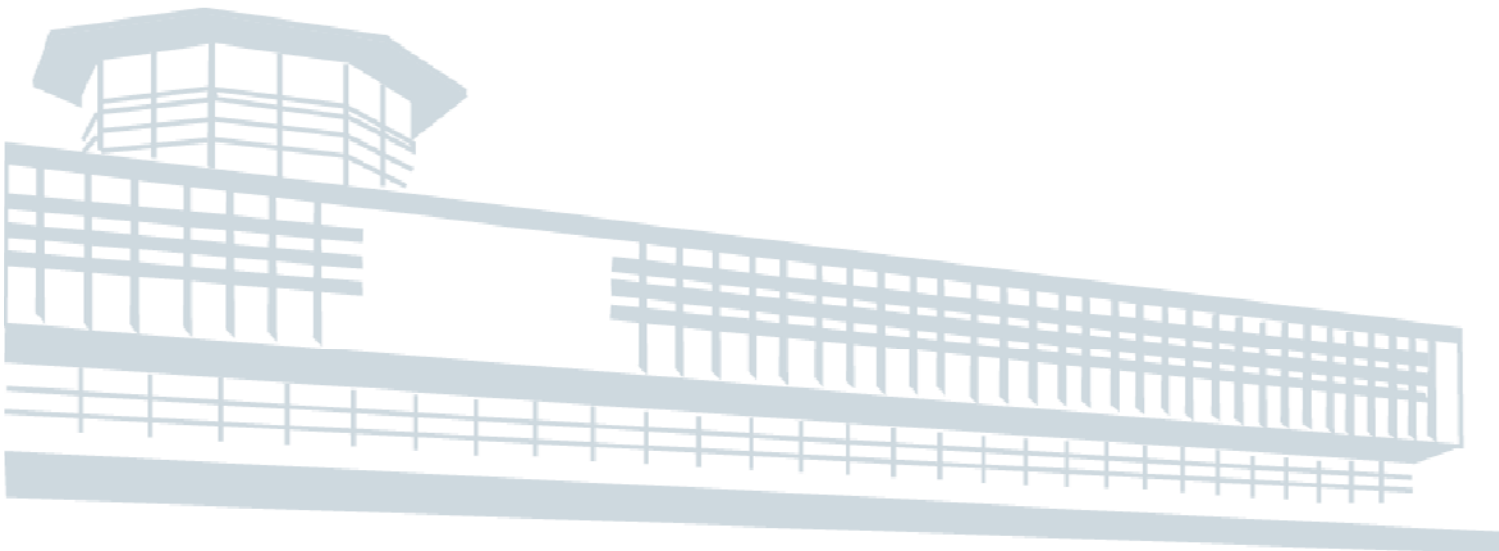
# Challenges in WU Libraries

- **Reference Collection**
  - Size, prominence, lack of use
- **Desk staffing**
- **Instruction quality**
- **Turnover among new librarians**



# Earlier Actions

- New reporting line
- Conference & workshop attendance
- Reduced print volumes by 25%





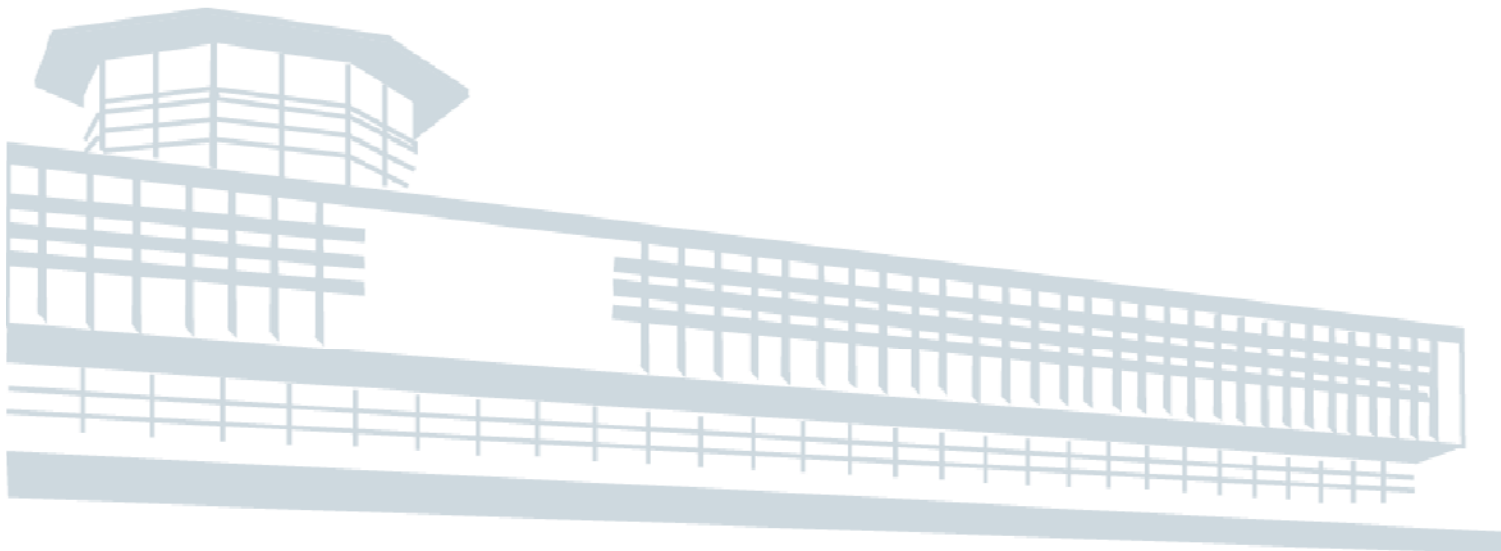
# Renovation Issues

- **Visibility of librarian offices**
- **How much print?**
- **Temporary separation of desk and collection**



# Impetus for Dramatic Action

- **New subject librarian model**
- **Slow progress on instruction**
- **New librarians**
- **New head of access**



# Actions 2003-2007

- Shared desk
- Reference/Access meetings
- Dean/associate dean/head meetings
  - Shared vision
  - Internal changes
- Set expectations for librarians



# Expectations for Librarians

- Acceptance of change
- Positive contribution
- Willingness to do hard things
- Responsibility for success of team
- Mentor & encourage new librarians
- Volunteer
- Give up some things
- Become *new model* subject librarian



# VIEW FROM THE FRONT LINES

# Reinventing Reference: Veteran's Perspective

**Barbara Rehkop**

**Subject Librarian, Government  
Information, Political Science,  
Economics**



# The Way We Were

- **Reference Unit**

- Help Desk
- Reference Collection
- Bibliographic Instruction

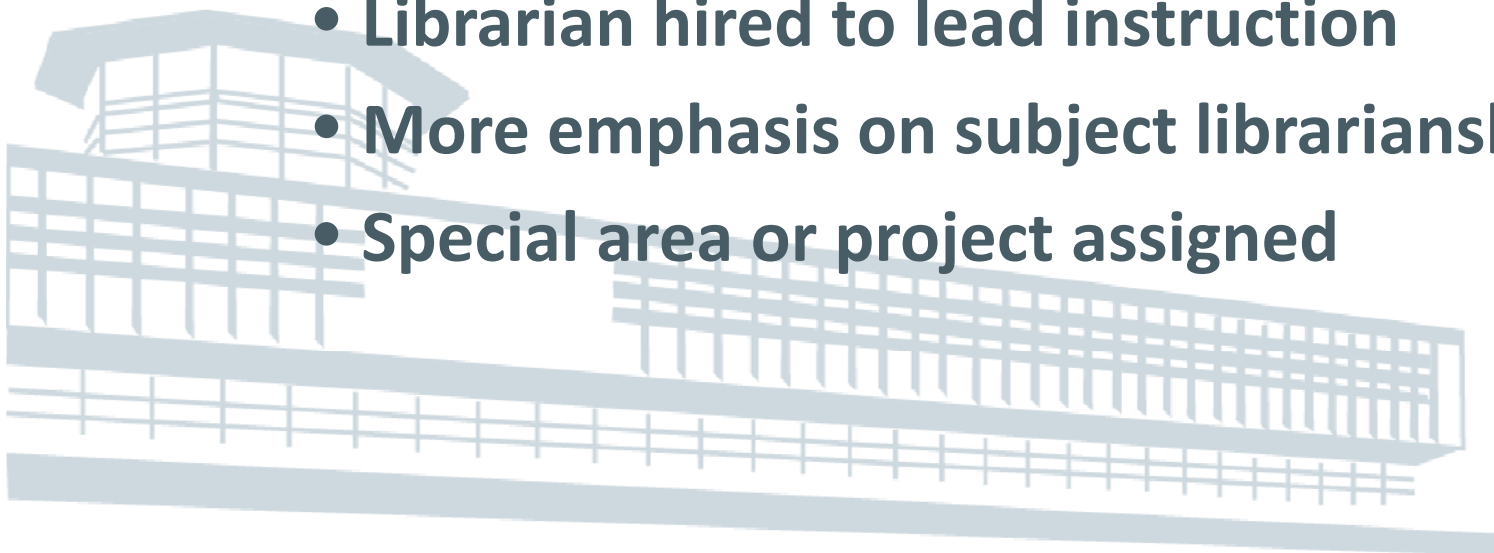
- **Access Services**

- Circulation
- Shelving
- Interlibrary Loan
- Reserves



# And Then ...

- **Unit reprimanded and disbanded**
- **Given assignments and deadlines**
  - Reference collection reduced by 85%; more electronic resources
  - Position of Reference Desk Manager created
  - Librarian hired to lead instruction
  - More emphasis on subject librarianship
  - Special area or project assigned

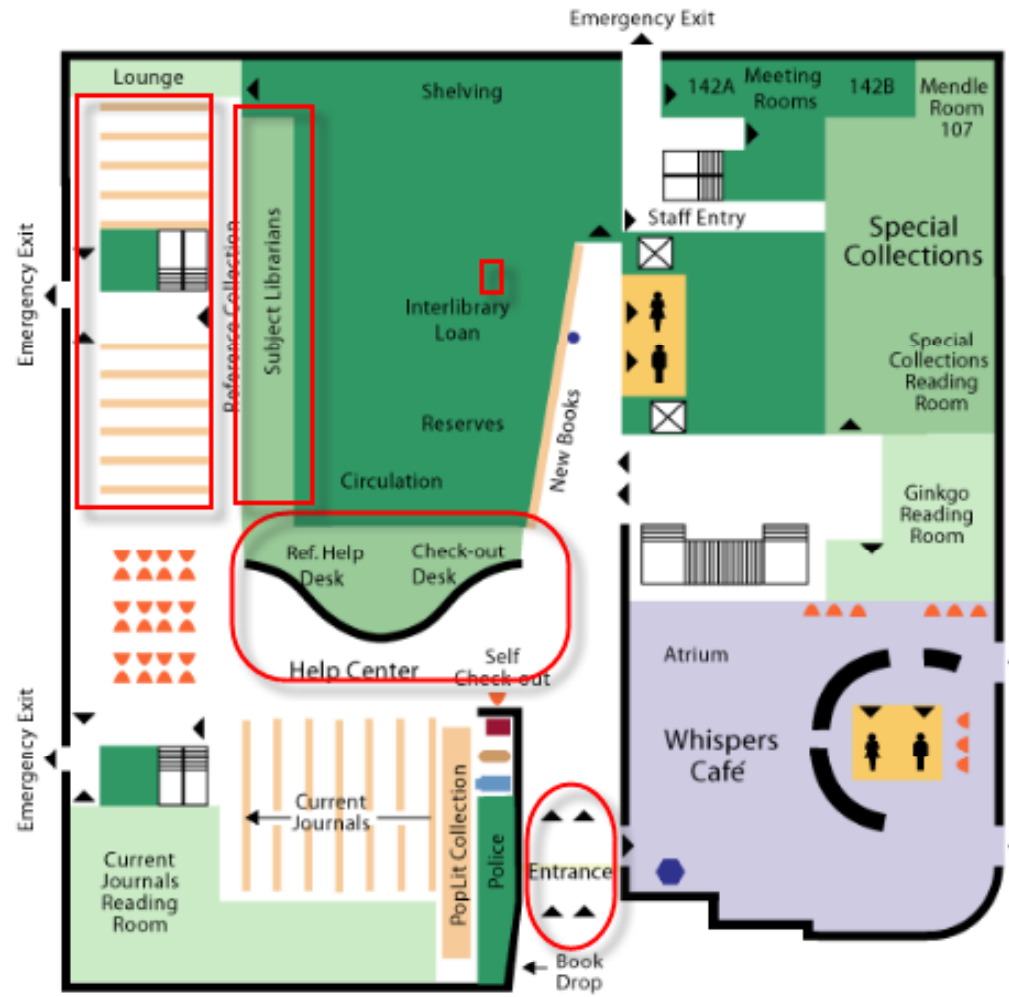




# Combined Desk

- **Culture**
  - Access Services as ‘Rules-Based’
  - Reference ‘Looser Interpretation’
- **Space**
  - “Ours” and “Theirs”





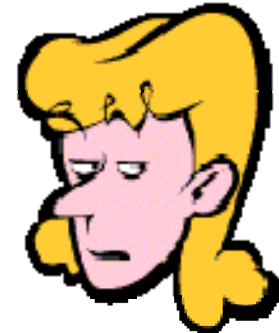
# Level 1

Olin Library

- ▶ Entry/Exit
- Staff Area
- Service Area/Desk
- Shelving
- Copier
- ▼ Computer Workstation
- Water Fountain
- Copy Card Machine
- Change Machine
- ⊠ Elevators
- Stairs
- ⊙ N

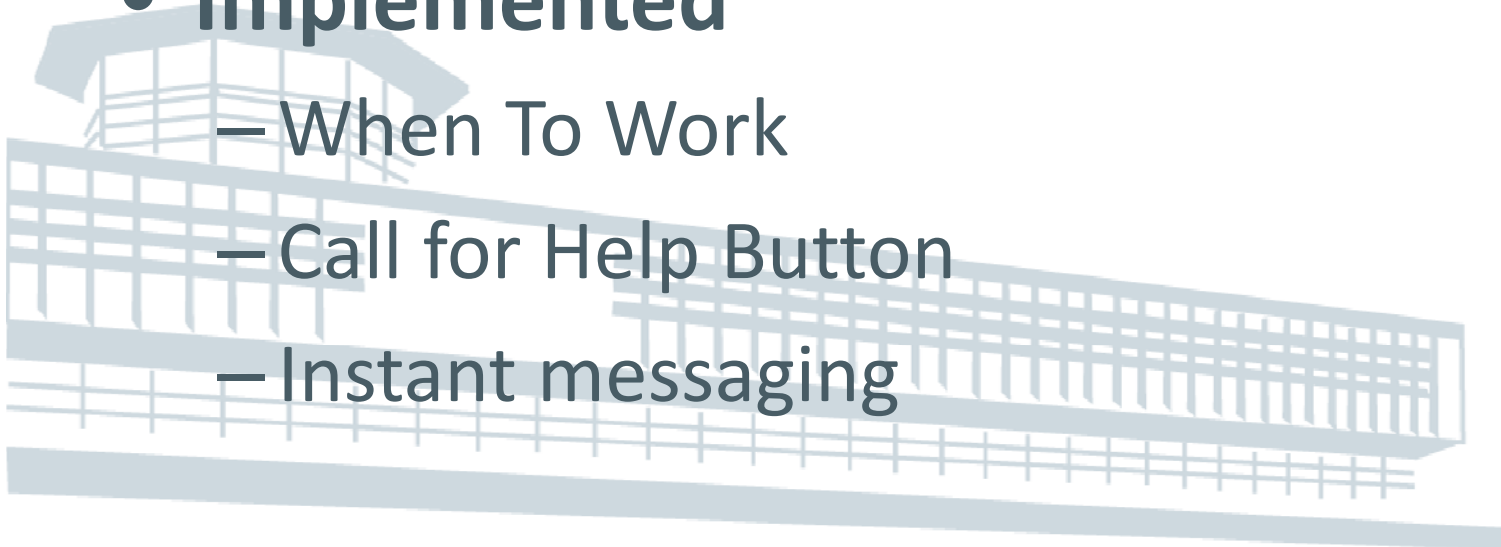
# Reactions

- Reactions
  - Reference staff
  - Other library staff
  - Users



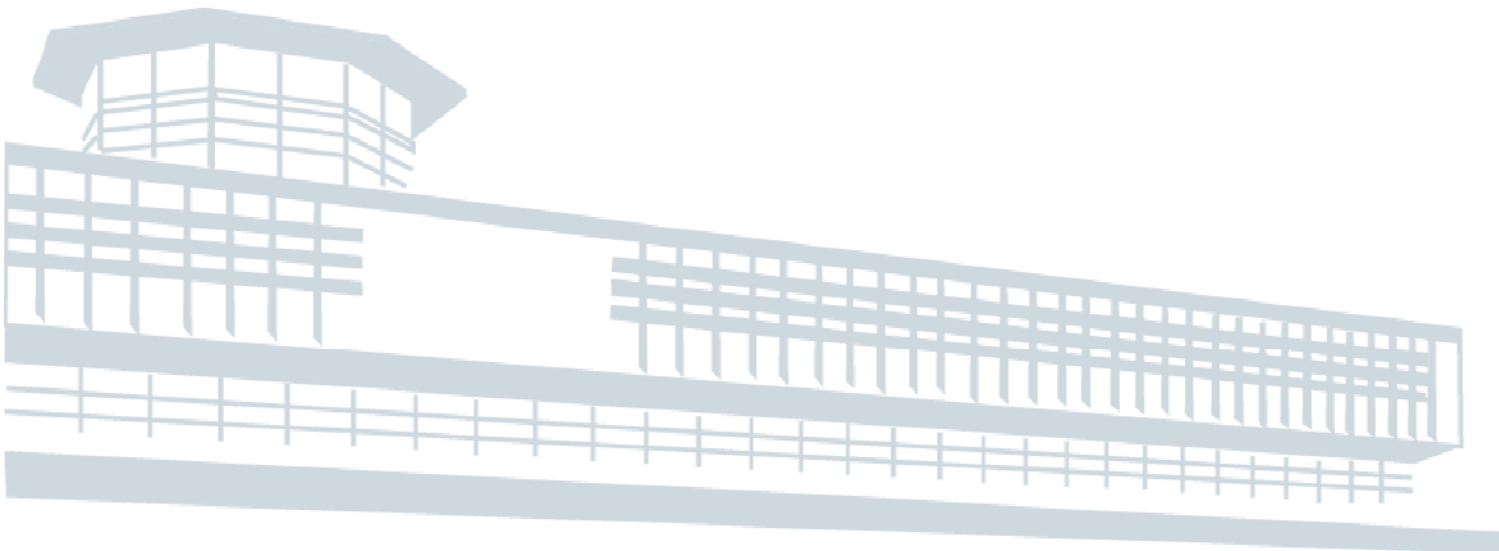
# Help Desk

- **Hired & trained more students**
- **Looked at statistics to maximize professional time**
- **More on-call for professionals**
- **Implemented**
  - When To Work
  - Call for Help Button
  - Instant messaging



# Plusses

- More time to work as bibliographer or subject librarian
- Answering more 'real' questions
- Time to work on special assignments



# Plusses

- More informal group discussions, networking, problem-solving
- Easier access to associate deans & decision-making
- Goals and performance reviews are more reflective of my job
- Marketing for the Help Desk a thing of the past

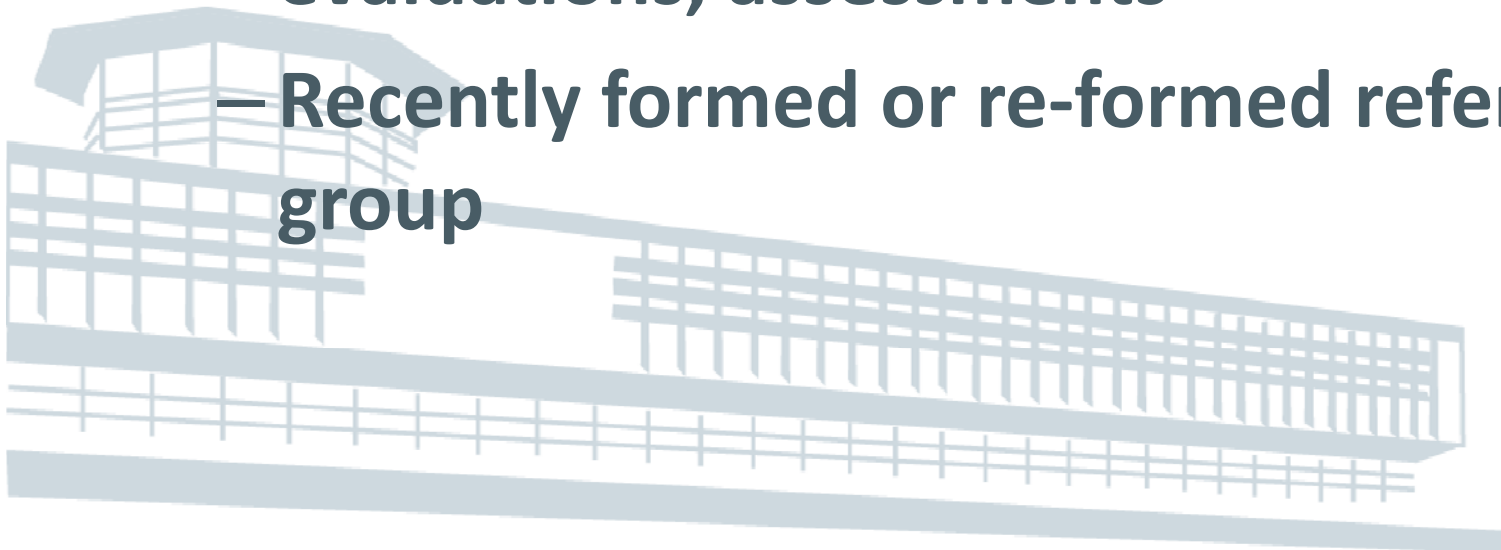
# Challenges

- **It's the economy, silly...**
  - Professional staff still at the help desk
  - Information commons
  - Closed two departmental libraries;  
librarian now in Olin



# Challenges

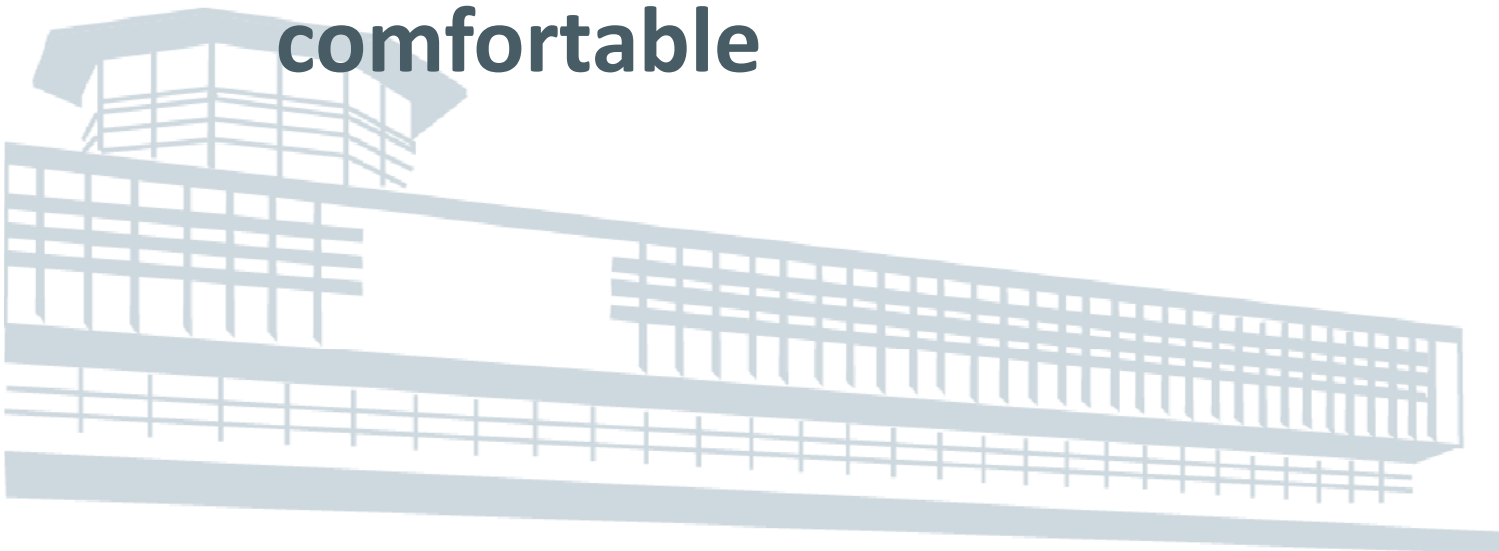
- **Organizational Challenges**
  - Meshing a non-traditional unit with more traditional ones
  - Managing reporting structures, goals & evaluations, assessments
  - Recently formed or re-formed reference group





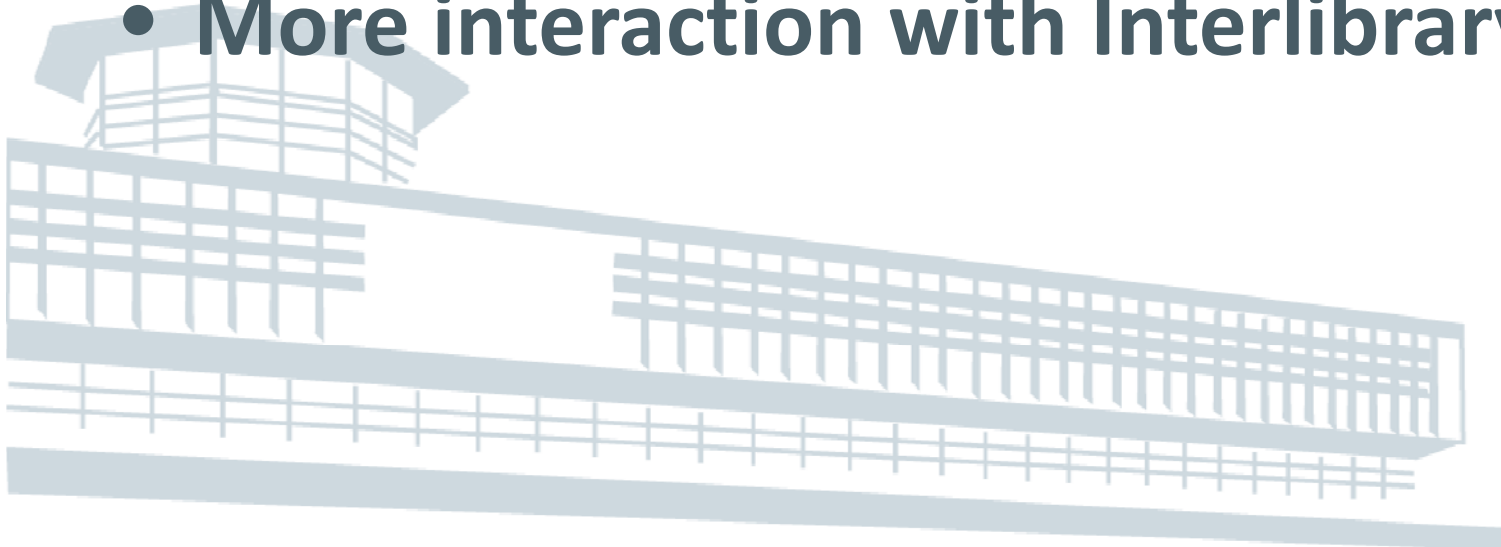
# Challenges

- **Keeping up the momentum**
  - Continuing to work with Access Services
  - Tendency of people to want to get comfortable



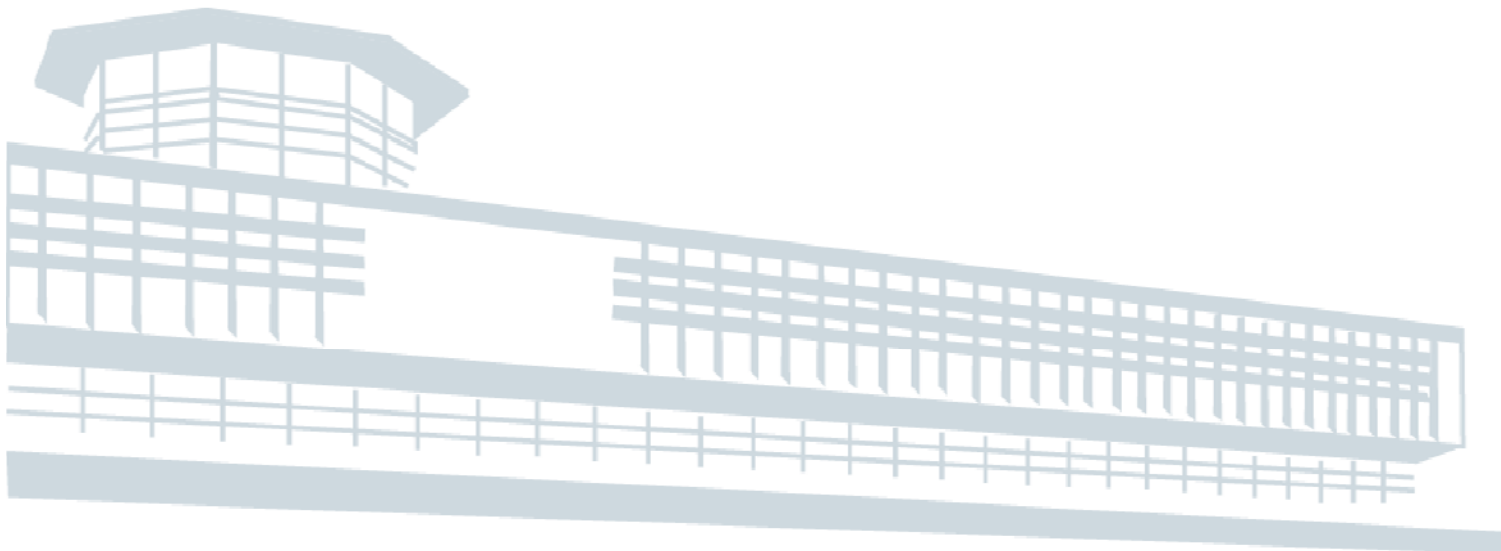
# Dreams

- **Group of subject librarians whose collections are in Olin**
- **Group who organize service points in Olin & departmental libraries**
- **More interaction with Interlibrary Loan**



# Challenges

- **Constantly need to remember that the goal is to serve USERS, not librarians**



# Reinventing Reference: New Librarian's Perspective

**Kristine Helbling**

**Subject Librarian, English and  
American Literature**



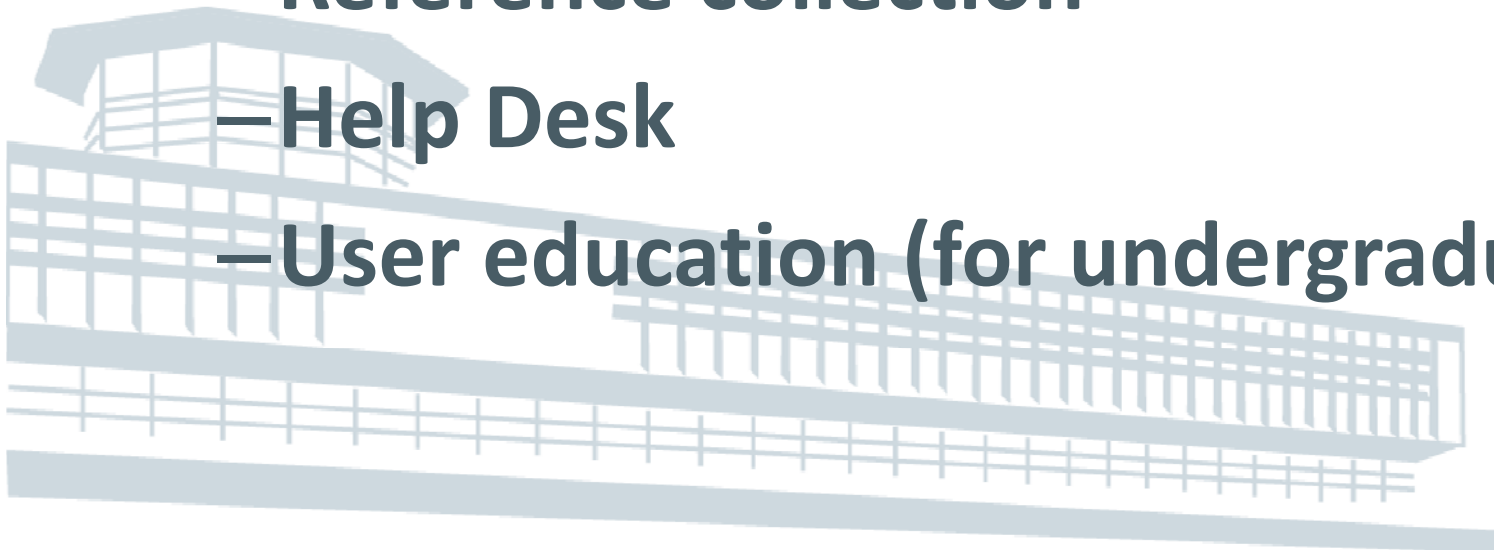
# Personal Context

- High school teacher
- Career-shifter
- Special skills I brought



# Entry to the University

- **Hired as subject/reference librarian**
- **Unit head**
- **Three working teams**
  - **Reference collection**
  - **Help Desk**
  - **User education (for undergraduates)**



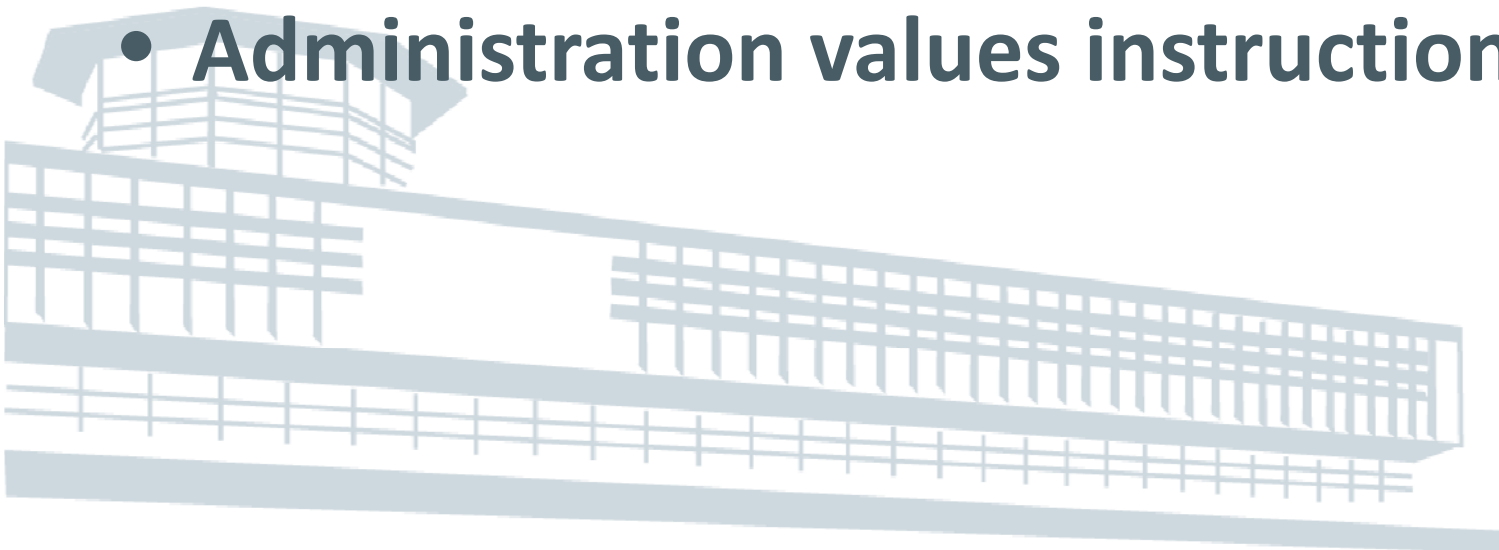
# Structural Problems

- Layers of resistance
- No authority to make decisions



# July 1, 2008

- **Subject librarians plus new responsibilities**
- **Vote of confidence in me**
- **Administration values instruction**





# Year One

**Strengthen our role in the freshman  
Writing 1 program**



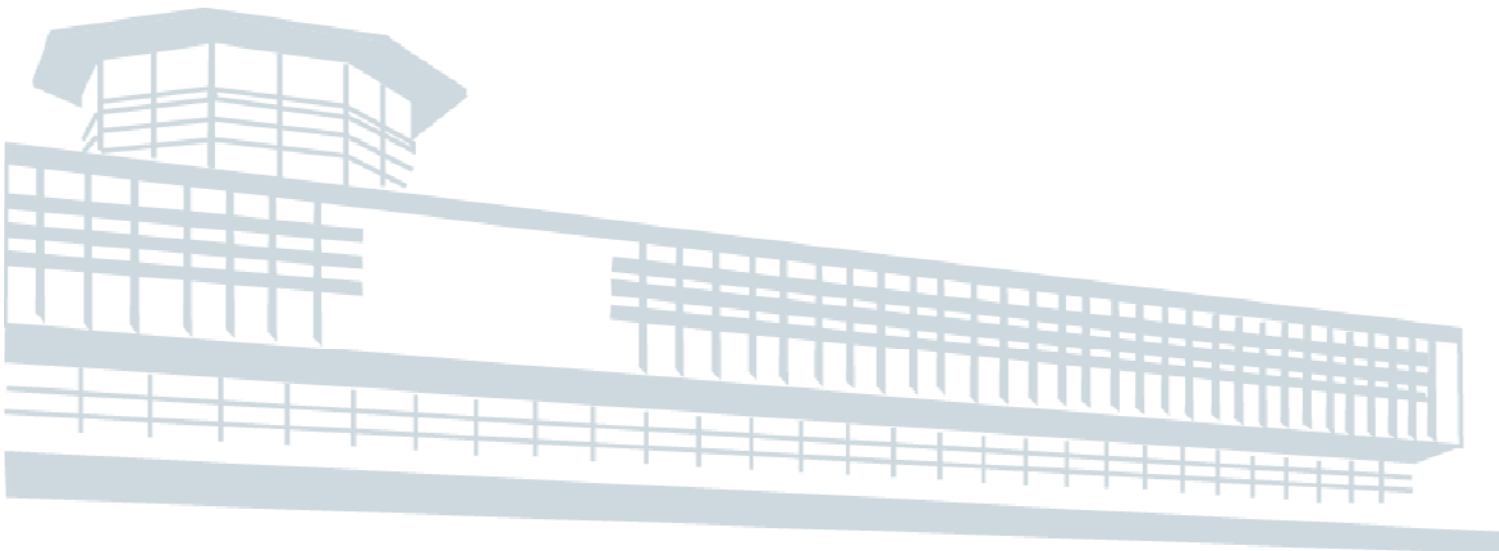
# Writing 1

- **What is it?**
- **Libraries' history with the program**
- **Lack of clarity**
- **Lack of confidence**



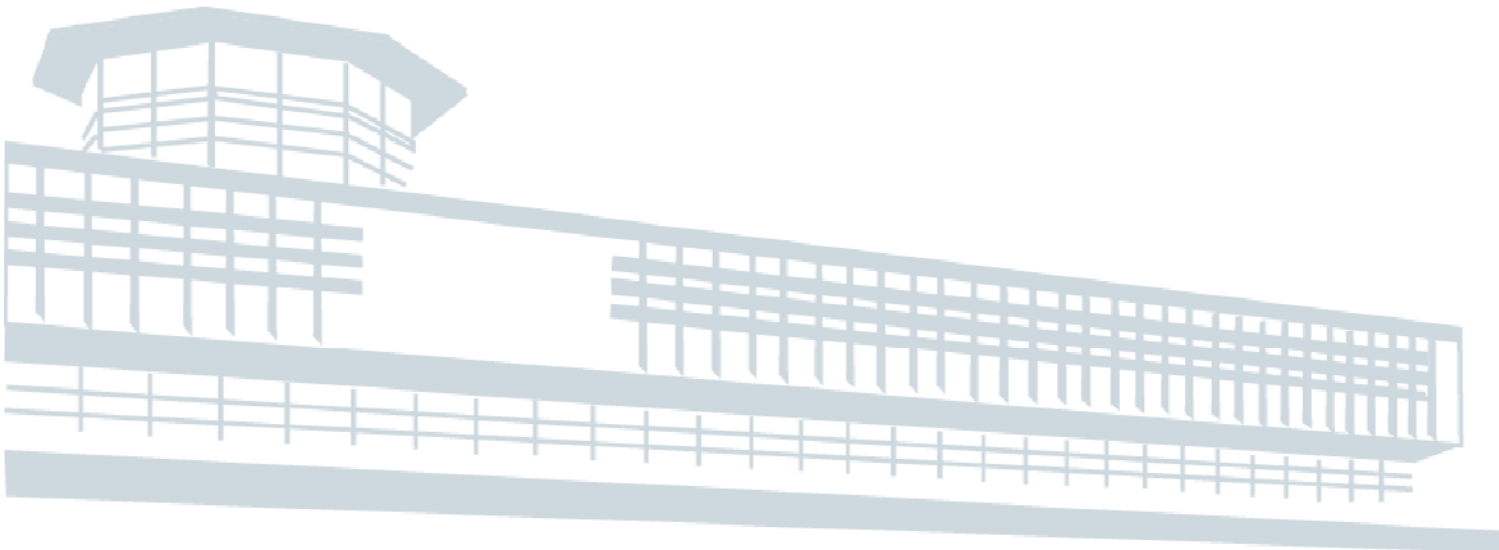
# First Year

- Relationship with writing program directors
- Librarian involvement



# Making the Program Work

- **Supporting librarians**
- **Personal attention**
- **Professional development**



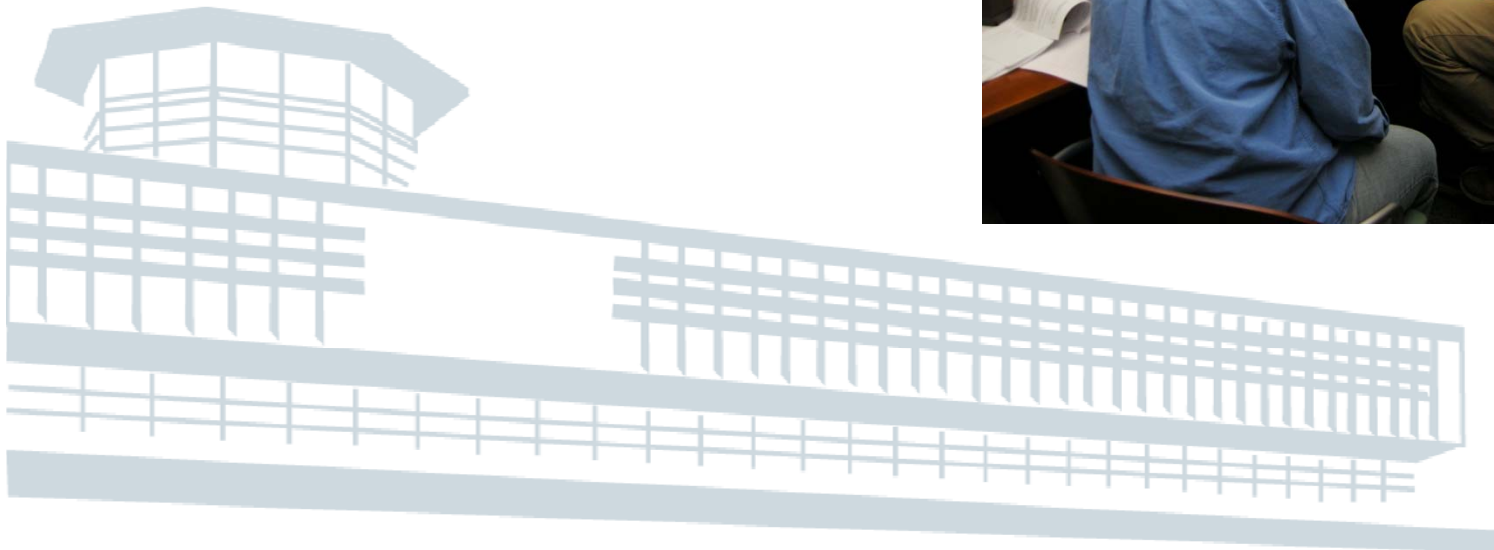
# Helping Librarians Succeed

- Semester kick-off
- Teaching support
  - Lesson plans
  - Assessment tools
  - Texts of emails to send
  - Extra help for new instruction librarians



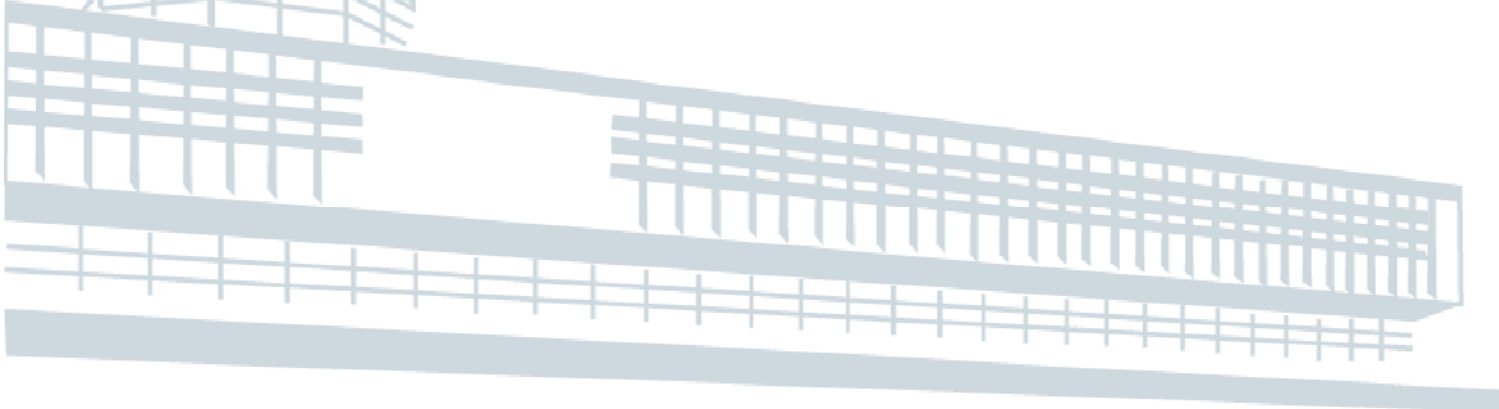
# Personal Attention

- Email check-ins
- Personal check-ins
- Self-evaluation



# Professional Development

- Peer coaching
- Workshops to improve teaching skills
- Writing 1 presenters
- Expanded use of intranet



# Supports I Benefit from

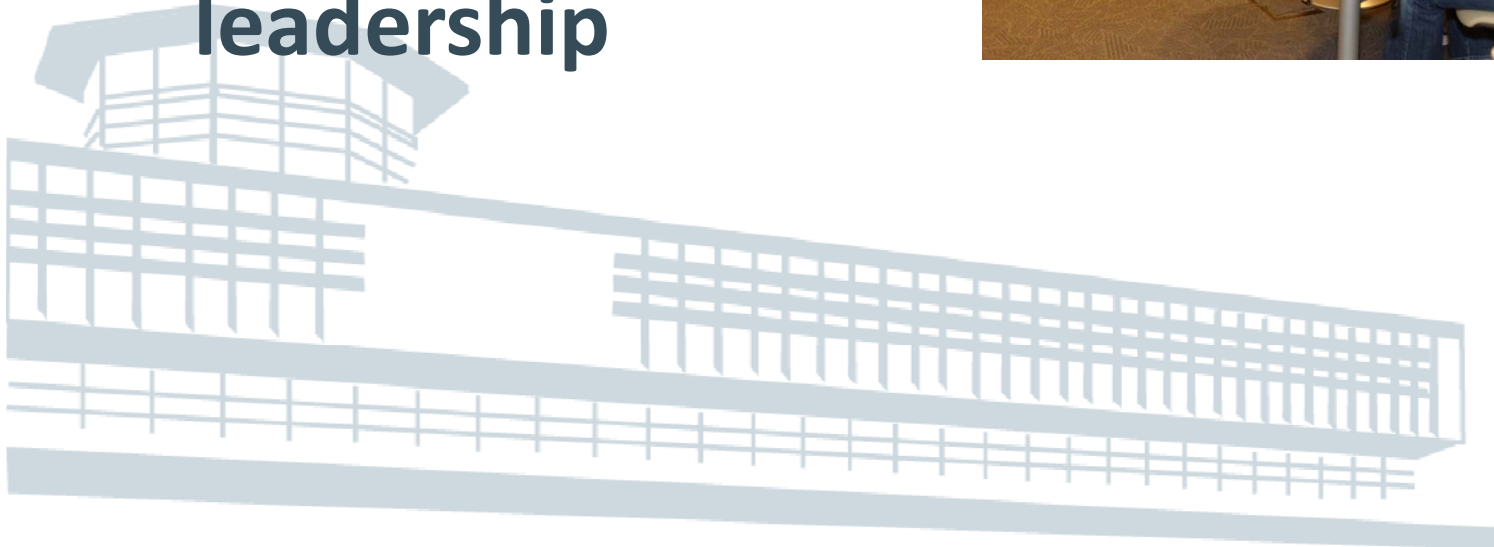
- ACRL Immersion
- Assessment Team
- Bi-weekly meetings with associate dean
- Collaborative working groups
- Fluidity and trust





# Ongoing Challenges

- Pedagogy
- Supporting larger numbers
- Sharing leadership



# Continuing Goals

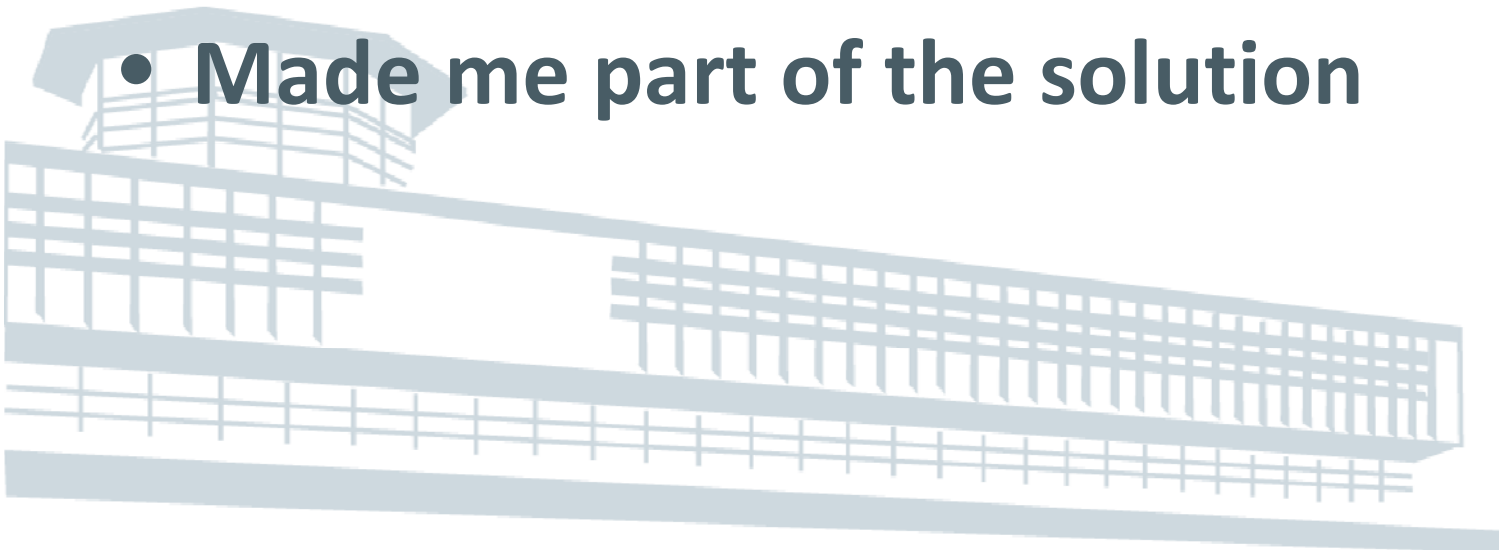
- Educational scan
- Articulate instruction across undergraduate to graduate years
- Create learning outcomes
- Expand peer coaching
- Provide further professional development opportunities



# Final Evaluation

## The reorganization

- Allowed change to happen
- Short-circuited personal frustration
- Used an existing skill-set
- Made me part of the solution

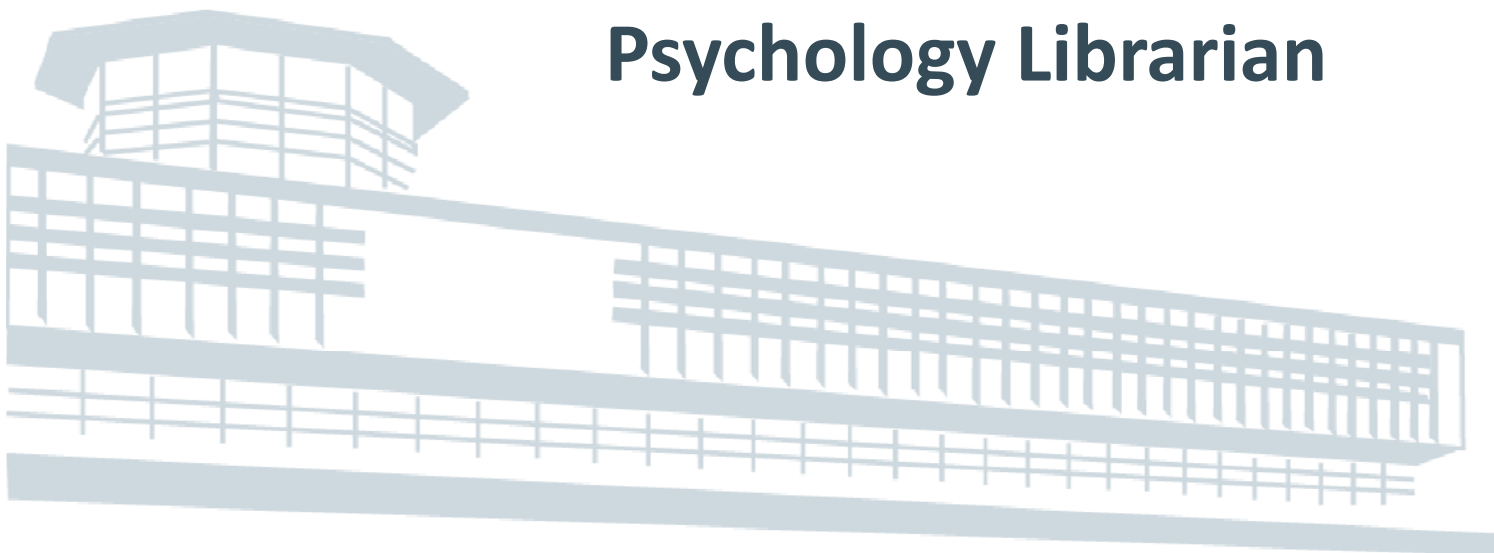


# **Reinventing Reference: The New Subject Librarian Model**

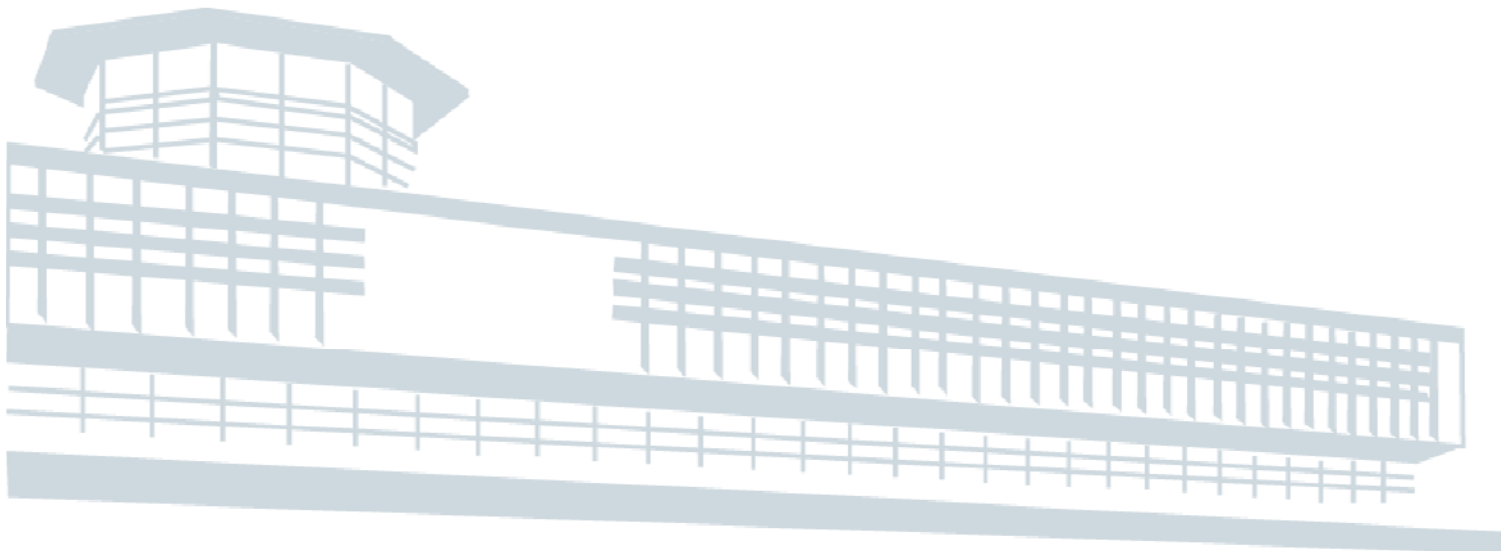
**Melissa Vetter**

**Coordinator of Subject Librarians,**

**Psychology Librarian**



# Reaching out to our disciplines





Library Services for the  
East Asian Studies Program

Azusa Tanaka, Subject Librarian  
atanaka@wustl.edu- 935-5155

Research

# Subject Librarian Service Cards

Washington University Libraries

Save Time! Ask Us

WU Libraries Home » Research Guides Home » Jaleh Fazelian, Subject Librarian Admin Sign In

## Jaleh Fazelian, Subject Librarian

Last update: Sep 08, 2009 | URL: <http://libguides.wustl.edu/jaleh> | [Print Guide](#) | [RSS Updates](#) | [SHARE](#)

**Islamic Studies** | **Writing 1**

**Islamic Studies** | [Comments \(0\)](#) | [Print Page](#) | Search | [Guides](#) | [Go](#)

### Guides I Recommend

- Islamic and Near Eastern Studies Research Guide
- Learning Arabic
- Learning Persian
- RefWorks Guide
- [Comments \(0\)](#)

### Special Responsibilities

In addition to being the Islamic and Near Eastern Studies Librarian, I am

### I can help you with ...

#### Research

Let me...

- Save you time by identifying the best books, articles, and resources
- Provide personalized service related to your research

#### Teaching & Learning


Let me...

- Customize library support for your courses.
- Provide personalized service for you and your students

#### Collections

Let me...

### Subject Librarian



**Jaleh Fazelian**

#### Ask a question

jfazelia is offline  
leave a message

LIBRARIES

# Receptions in the Libraries



# New Research Guide Software

- **LibGuides**
  - Increased collaboration
  - Better communication
  - Built in assessment tools
  - URLs in signature lines





# Blogs



Washington University Libraries

Library News for  
German Studies

Newsletter for Faculty and Students in Germanic Languages and Literatures

## GERMAN LINKS

[Brian Vetruba, Subject Librarian](#)  
[German, Comp Lit, European Studies](#)

[Research Guide for Germanic Studies](#)

## Chemistry Library News



Washington University Libraries

Philobiblion

Library News & Notes for Philosophy, Classics, and Linguistics at Washington University in St. Louis

## PHILOBIBLION

[Colin McCaffrey](#)

[WU Libraries: Classics](#)

[WU Libraries: Linguistics](#)

[WU Libraries: Philosophy](#)

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## CATEGORIES

[Books](#)

## New Medieval & Early Modern Studies Research Guide

The Library now has an online research guide devoted specifically to Medieval and Early Modern Studies:

<http://libguides.wustl.edu/medieval>

Recommended for those researching the Nachleben of classical antiquity and the cultural background to medieval and early modern philosophy.

September 01, 2009 in [Classics](#), [Philosophy](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) | [TrackBack \(0\)](#)

[Technorati Tags](#): [WUSTL](#)

## Two Useful Tools for the New Semester



## LIBRARIES

[Journals](#)

[Publications](#)

[Books](#)

[Sources](#)

# The Personal Touch

To: Faculty members, Department name  
From: Subject Librarian name, email address, phone number  
Date: September \_\_, 2009  
Re: New Library Catalog, available at [libcat.wustl.edu](http://libcat.wustl.edu)

I'm writing to let you know that the Washington University Libraries have a new online catalog. The Libraries have a new catalog that gives users more relevant and substantive, highly targeted results. In the library world, this is a big deal. We want to make sure our users know about this change and how it can benefit them. The new catalog is available today (available at [libcat.wustl.edu](http://libcat.wustl.edu)). We hope to rely on user feedback from students and even to colleagues who may not yet have tried the new catalog.



Washington University Libraries

Library News for  
German Studies

Newsletter for Faculty and Students in Germanic Languages and Literatures

## GERMAN LINKS

[Brian Vetruba, Subject Librarian for German, Comp Lit., European Studies](#)

[Research Guide for Germanic Studies](#)

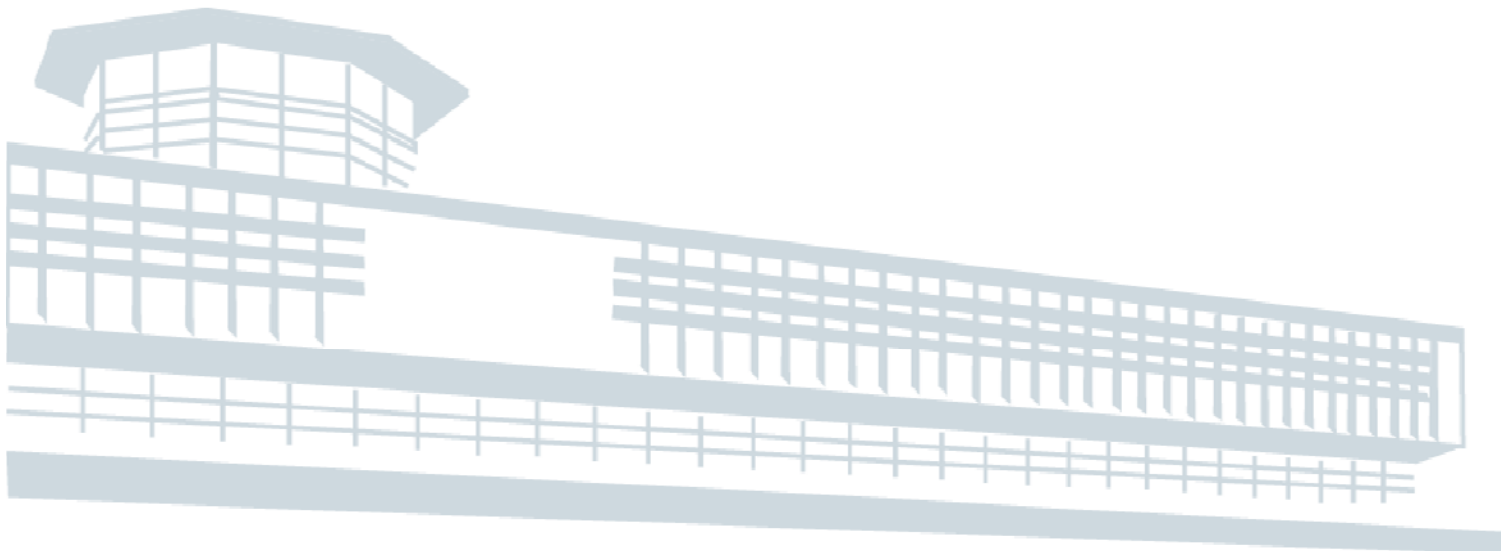
[Department of Germanic Languages &](#)

September 09, 2009

## Manage your Citations w/ RefWorks--1-hr. workshops-9/24 & 10/2

Brian will be offering one-hour workshops to get you started with using [RefWorks](#), a citation manager. Remember, [RefWorks](#) is FREE and available on- and off-campus.

# Improving Ourselves



# Coming Together



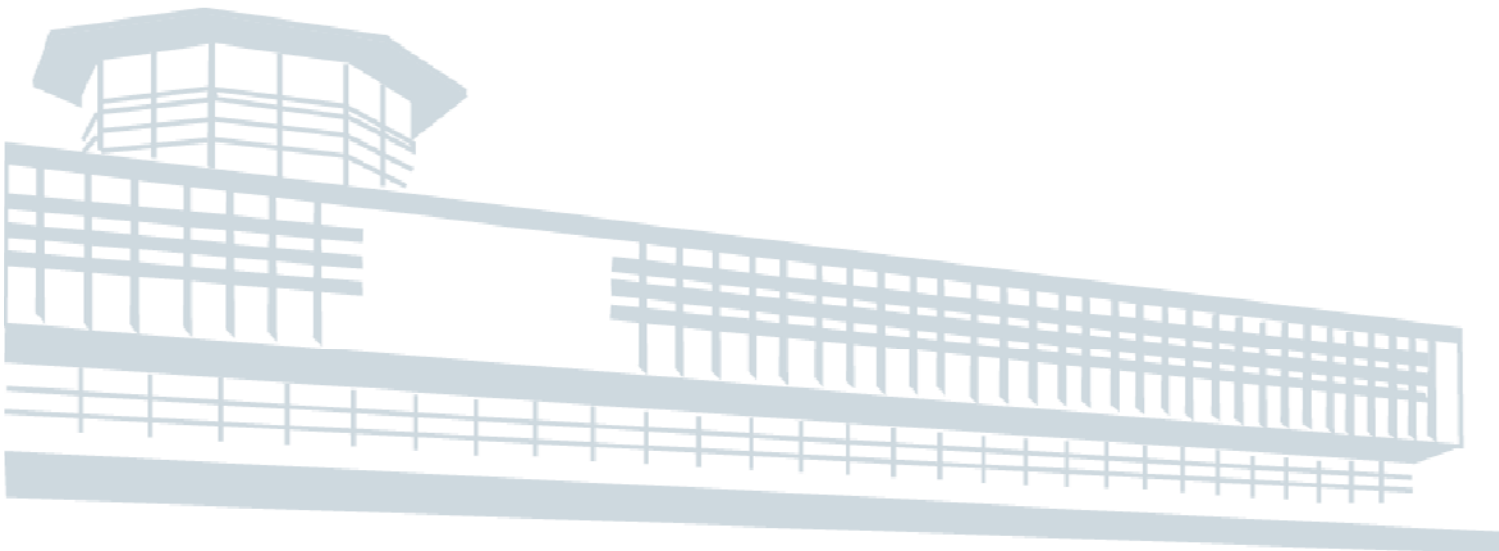
# Opportunities for Growth

- *How to Work a Room and Craft Elevator Conversations*
- Article discussions
- New areas of expertise
- e-Learning

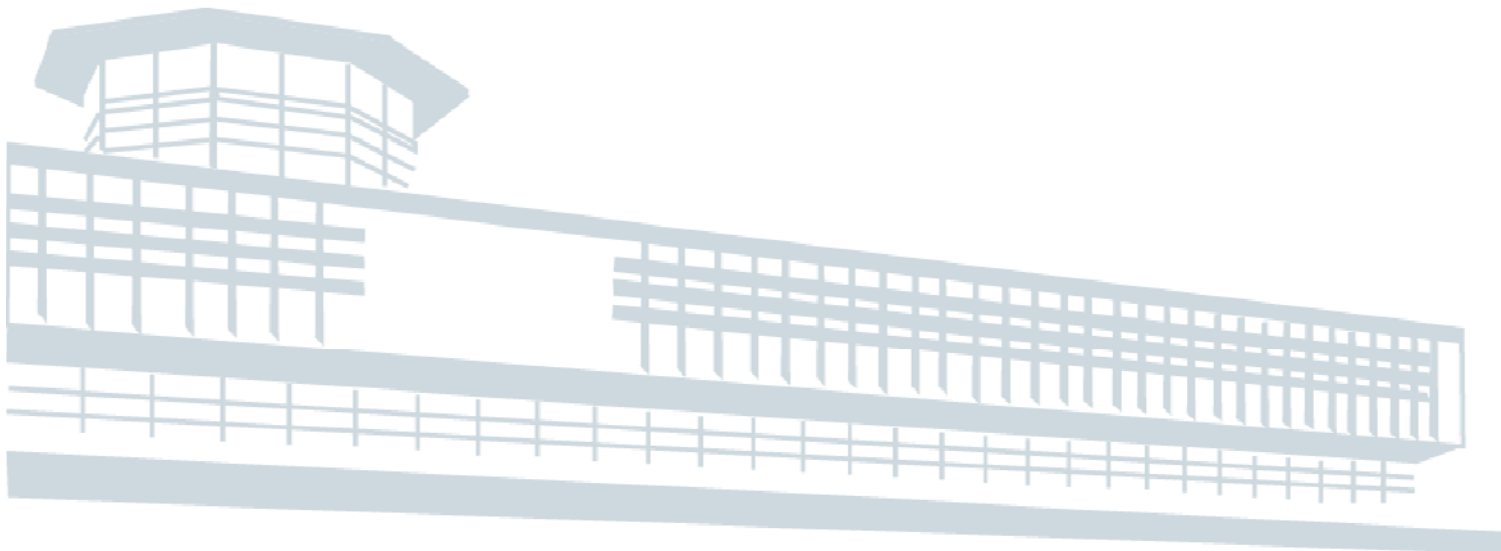


# Final Thoughts

- **New model for subject librarians**
- **Subject Librarian Coordinator role**
- **Greater collaboration**
- **Users know their librarians**

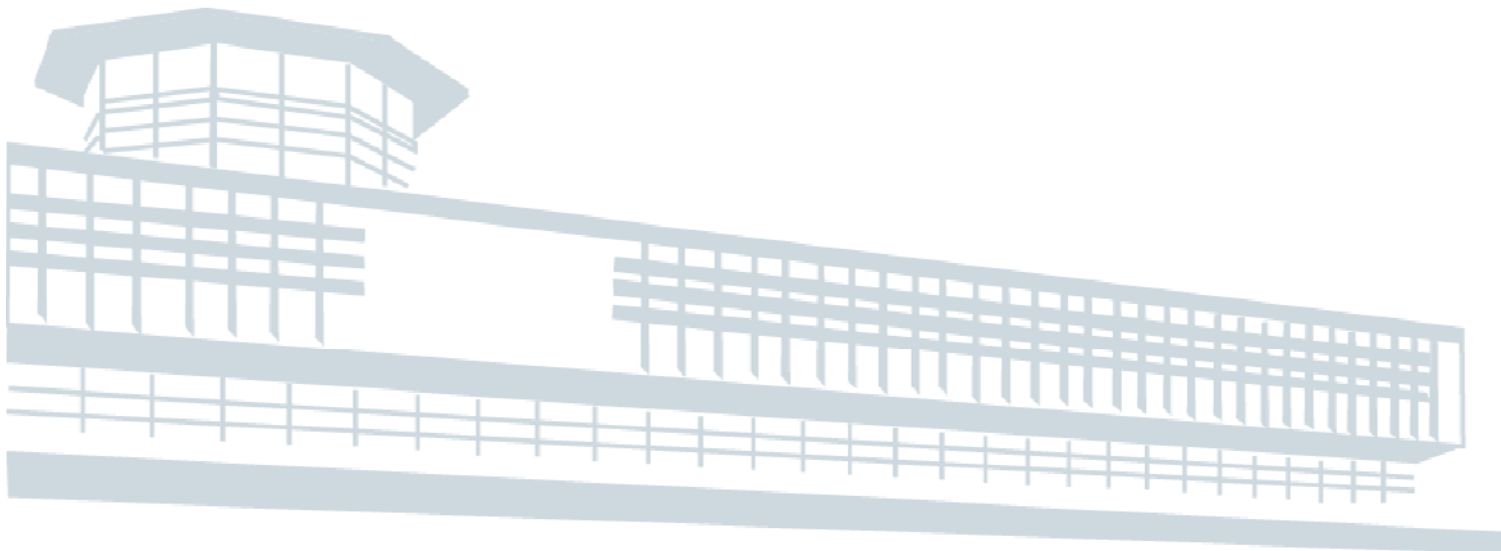


# Back to Dean Baker



# Remaining Challenges

- Consensus management
- Mid-level leadership
- 'Class' division at the desk





# Expectations of Leaders

- Analytical
- Confident
- Energetic
- Fair
- Brave
- Confidently egalitarian



# Reactor Panel

**Jane Schillie**, Associate Dean of  
Libraries, Kansas State University

**Deb Carver**, University Librarian,  
University of Oregon

**You**

