

# Blake Library

## 2021 Annual Report

Blake Library staff provide information services at the University of Maine at Fort Kent for the campus community, students and faculty at a distance, and the St. John Valley community. They administer traditional and electronic resources and services that are available to patrons on and off campus.

Library staff also support Information Technology (IT) services, the Acadian Archives, Audio-Visual Services, and Distance Education. Additionally, Blake Library is part of a University of Maine System consortium that allows staff to share resources and services, which in turn augments what is available to all UMFK and Fort Kent patrons.

### Overall department report for the year

The COVID-19 Pandemic took front seat this past year. Library services opened up again to faculty, staff, and students at the end of August but with severe restrictions. Additionally, the ability to borrow and lend from and to other libraries in the system resumed with quarantining measures in place. Similar to what was happening across campus, directional signage on floors and instructional signage on walls were placed to make sure those who entered followed the rules.

Social distancing, face coverings, hand washing were all part of the campus's attempt to keep the spread of COVID at a minimum. In the library, library staff had to deal with students not wearing their masks or wearing them inappropriately. They also had to keep a watch out for people not following the social distancing rules of six feet apart. Eventually, students did better following the rules in the library, and only a slight remark or gesture was needed to get the students to adjust their masks or move apart.

Faculty taught classes online or in person with restrictions and/or accommodations. Many employees worked from home due to the pandemic. Library staff initially worked from home but eventually needed to work at the library so they could maintain library hours and not be short staffed. Fall hours reduced to a 4:30 closing after Thanksgiving due to students finishing the semester from home. The spring semester had reduced hours, closing at 9pm during the week.

Unfortunately during this time, the regular community patrons were not allowed into the campus buildings. Eventually, Curbside Service got underway, which helped patrons gain access to library materials. In June 2021, library staff were finally able to let community patrons in, though under strict guidelines. Patrons had to show their vaccination card to prove they had been vaccinated or show a negative test result during the same week of entering the library. In addition, patrons still had to wear a mask, as did everyone on campus.

By spring everyone was getting tested on a weekly basis, vaccinations were starting for lower age groups, and there seemed to be a light at the end of the tunnel. Throughout fall and spring, library staff did an exceptional job maintaining their day to day tasks, keeping up with various projects, keeping the students' moral up, and generally doing what they do best, helping where and when they can.

Finally, in June of 2021, the Associate Director was offered the role of Director of Library Services. She accepted, and July 1 will be her new start date.

### Library interaction with external

The Library's Director<sup>1</sup> (now solely the Executive Director of Academic Support Services), with her many hats, worked with the Maine CDC, Northern Maine Medical Center (NMMC), and others on a regular basis. Her work with these external entities allowed her to provide guidance to campus, oversee student testing, make sure communications were clear, and much more. In doing so, the Director was able to provide the campus a clear sense of what needed to be done.

### Library interaction with UMS

The library's Director<sup>1</sup> and Associate Director<sup>2</sup> kept up their work with their various committees across the system. The Director worked with the other University of Maine System Libraries (UMSL) Directors to put together NECHE's "Standard 7 Substantive Change Request" as well as build a Strategic Plan for the UMSL. Their work helped the system's librarians assigned to NECHE's Standard 7.22 to write that part of the NECHE report.

The Associate Director worked with a number of committees over the year at the system level: Information Literacy and the Badges program, Kaltura media sharing, and NECHE's Standard 7 committee. All three projects are expected to be completed by fall if not sooner.

### Library interaction with campus

Due to COVID, everyone attended meetings on and off campus through Zoom, a video conferencing program.

Library staff chaired the Open Educational Resources (OER) Committee. This committee worked across the year to develop the initiative of making faculty more aware of OER and hopefully willing to use it in their classes. The end result for FY21 was support from the President to fund grants for faculty to encourage them to adopt or adapt materials. The OER Grant Program guide went live and the announcement went out this June.

The Director pushed new data to the Reference staff to update the "Returning to Campus" guide so that the campus community could have a single site for up-to-date information on the pandemic protocols. This was only one small piece of the whole that the Director oversaw and or managed around the COVID-19 campus strategies.

### NECHE

The system library team completed the Library portion, 7.22, in late May.

### Staff development and service

**Sofia Birden** represented UMFK through: **NAHSL** (North Atlantic Health Sciences Libraries, Inc.) 2020 Conference Committee; **UMS** NECHE self-study; UMSL Reference Group (Interim Chair); **UMSL** Badge/Micro Credentials Committee; **UMSL** Information Literacy Committee (Chair); **UMSL** Electronic Resources Committee; **UMSL** Tech Cabal Committee; **UMSL** Kaltura and DVD Committee; **UMFK** Open Educational Resources (OER) Committee (Chair); **UMFK** Salaried Operations Team (Secretary); **UMFK** Scholars' Symposium Committee; **UMFK** three Search Committees (Computer Science Dept., Community Education, Acadian Archives).

**Deb Durkin** represented UMFK through: **UMSL** Circulation Group. **Development:** Fred Pryor – Managing Employees.

**Brenda Pelletier** represented UMFK through: **UMFK** Wellness Committee. **Development:** TBD

**Leslie Kelly** represented UMFK through: **UMS** ETAC; UMS Brightspace Core Team; **UMS** Asymptomatic Leaders; **UMS** Symptomatic Leaders; **UMS** Safe Return Planning; **UMS** Incident Commanders; **UMS** System Wide Advising Group; **UMS** Student Success; **UMS** Navigator; **UMS** Students Systems Steering Committee; **UMS** Coronavirus President Check-in; **UMS** Waste Water Testing Weekly Check-in; **UMS** T3 Operations and Logistics; **Library Consortium** URSUS Directors Meetings; **UMSL** Directors Meetings; **UMFK** President's Cabinet; **UMFK** Academic Leadership Council; **UMFK** Emergency Operations Team (EOT); **UMFK** Space Utilization Committee; **UMFK** Campus Assessment, Resource & Education Team (CARE); **UMFK** Strategic Enrollment Management council (SEMC) (Co-chair); **UMFK** Commencement Committee; **UMFK** Scholars' Symposium Committee; **UMFK** Academic Advising Committee; **UMFK** General Education Council; **UMFK** Acadian Archives Advisory Council; **UMFK** One search committee (Acadian Archives).

### Goals and future plans

The library website, though not as imperative as it had been, is still in need of a facelift. Until then we removed the splash screen that was the first landing spot of the site.

Library staff will continue to chair the Open Educational Resources (OER) Committee and hopefully broaden the scope of the new OER Grant program to include Created work.

This year, due to recent retirements, two positions will be filled after one and then the other search is completed. The positions are the Director of the Archives Director and then the Acadian Archives Archivist/Cataloger.

We continue to want to make the library space presentable and functional: adding artwork; paint the circulation and reference walls; and rearrange reference station are part of our future plans.

### Reference Department report

Information Literacy sessions in class and one-on-one help in the library were low due to COVID-19 conditions. However, email requests were up. Reference staff helped create guides for DE concerning Brightspace and for Administration concerning "Returning to Campus" and the information needed to be shared across campus. Staff also worked on updating Orientation and library specific tutorials.

Reference staff chaired the committee and continued work on the UMFK OER Initiative and ultimately created a plan that was funded to provide grants to faculty for moving from commercial texts to OER. Finally, Reference staff helped work on the revamping of information literacy focused on the new Badge/Micro Credentials initiative. A group of librarians across the system are working on this initiative and hope to have it completed for fall 2021.

### Circulation Department report

Across the summer there were fewer documents scanned for reserves due to changes in COVID-19 rules. In addition, and also based on COVID-19 rules, Circulation staff oversaw changes to how in-print reserves were used so that safety to students and staff could be maintained. Throughout most of FY21 community patrons were not allowed to enter the library, however, in October, Circulation staff organized and started a "Curb Side" service that allowed community to request materials online or by phone and schedule a time to pick the materials up outside.

Finally, Circulation staff completed a collaborative project with the Forestry Department that provided the department with cataloged forestry inventory. The purpose is to provide the forestry department a way to lend its equipment on-site and as well as monitor equipment use.

## Tech Services Department report

The Tech Services Department continues to be a staff of one overseen by the Associate Director, now the Director. Tech Services staff continue to work with acquisitions and serials. An original cataloger is still needed, however, the new cataloging position at the Acadian Archives will handle cataloging at both the AA and the library. Until then, or in addition to the new cataloger, our Tech Services staff is learning copy cataloging so that she may fill in as needed. Though few items were purchased over the fiscal year, there were still a number of donations that needed to be handled and cataloged if they were accepted.

With COVID-19, most of the serial print was not renewed. Staff will reconsider their licensing in FY22. Additionally, we discontinued the use of EBSCO subscription services since our list of serials had dwindled down enough over the years that our Tech Services staff is able to manage the subscriptions individually through the publishers.

<sup>1</sup>For the purpose of this FY21 report, the Director refers to Leslie Kelly

<sup>2</sup>For the purpose of this FY21 report, the Associate Director refers to Sofia Birden

## APPENDICES

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