

University of Maine at Fort Kent
Blake Library
Circulation Department

Annual Report
2003/2004



Compiled and Written by:
Stephanie Bresett

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Assisted Learning Station

The circulation staff is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the assisted learning station. This station is a computer system designed to help people with special needs such as seeing or hearing impairments. In fiscal year 2003 library staff completed research on the various software packages installed on the system as well as the system itself. Staff found the current software, though still usable, needed to be upgraded. Some upgrades were available online and have been downloaded and installed by library staff. Maintaining current software allows for optimum performance and latest features to be used by our patrons.

To help pay for new upgrades to the system's software, a list of software packages was given to the Director of Academic and Counseling Services, who is responsible for ensuring that students with special needs are accommodated. The director agreed to pay the entire cost of the upgrades. In April the orders were placed for Dragon Naturally Speaking from Computer Connection, Kurzweil 1000 and 3000 from Kurzweil, and Zoom Text Level 1 and 2 from Enablemart. All the proposed upgrades and installations have been completed as of January 2004. Staff continues to search for updates and latest software technologies for our clientele. A detailed list and costs of the software packages can be found in Table 1.

Currently Have	Upgrade Needed	Cost	Optional Hardware/Software Recommendations by USM
CCTV	None	\$0.00	Naturally Speaking
ZoomText 7.06	7.1 (levels 1 & 2)	\$125.00	Jaws
Kurzweil 1000 4.0	7	\$95.00	Braille Display
Kurzweil 3000 3.1	7	\$164.25	Braille Printer
Naturally Speaking 3.5	6	\$299.95	
Windows 98	Windows 2000	\$0.00	
Total		\$684.20	

In addition, the operating system was changed from Windows 98 to 2000. The CMOS (complementary metal oxide semiconductor) password had been removed, but in January 2004 the password was reinstated. Sometime between the removal of the CMOS password and January 2004, library patrons had downloaded software that interfered with the functioning of the assistive software. The CMOS password was reactivated to prevent further downloading of harmful materials. A CMOS chip is used to store important system information and configuration settings while the computer is off and on.

Attendance

Attendance is taken through our “gate count” which means each time a patron leaves through the gate at the front door the ticker goes up by one. However, our gate count does not include patrons holding the gate bar open for others.

Attendance this year is 52,054 as compared to last year’s 49,036. This is a 6% increase in attendance. Causes for the increase in attendance may be attributed to such things as increased enrollment, biathlon athletes, trainers and spectators. Another factor may be the mandatory use of the library by two education classes; Professor Mark Richard and Professor Jocelyne Schael during the spring 2004 semester. In addition, FY2004 has brought construction to Blake Library. Many more persons have been passing through the gate with equipment and supplies for construction purposes.

We do not consider the increase significant due to a consistent fluctuation in attendance across the years. For the past five years every other year, starting with FY1999, the attendance numbers are in the 40,000 range whereas in the alternate years the numbers are in the 50,000 range. If this fluctuation remains consistent, next year's numbers should be in the 40,000 range. More detailed statistics can be found in Appendix A.

Although this section discusses the attendance of individuals who physically enter the library, there are numerous students who enter “virtually”. In some cases, the virtual entrance is off-campus, such as from home or work. In other cases, the on-campus entrance is from a dorm room, campus computer lab or other campus staff office computer. In FY 2003, our library web page received a total of 12,372 hits from off-campus and 2,728 hits from on-campus. In FY2004, our off-campus hits increased to 17,581 and the on-campus hits increased to 4,158. This is an increase in off-campus views of 42% and in on-campus views of 52%. See Book Two for library web reports.

Circulation Staff

Full Time Employee

The Library Assistant II for the circulation department obtained an educational leave of absence for fall 2003. Stephanie was absent on Thursdays and Fridays beginning in October and ending in December. On those days that Stephanie was unavailable, Sofia, the reference librarian printed mail, answered student employee questions, assigned student employees tasks, and provided circulation services to patrons. Many student employees received limited training. This hampered efficiency and increased the number of errors and erroneous information produced by the employees. In addition, the reduction in circulation staff was cause for the postponement of some projects, such as inventory and shelf reading.

During FY 2003, it was determined that the circulation staff person would no longer provide Interlibrary Library Loan services. In FY2004, this responsibility was given to the Serials Department staff person.

Student Employees

For fall 2003 and spring 2004, the library was granted 14 student employee positions from the financial aid office. This equals 1.6 FTE student workers. The FTE (full-time-equivalent personnel) number is based on a formula devised by Educause Core Data Service and can be found at <http://www.educause.edu/coredata/>.

The new PeopleSoft time recording system was implemented this fiscal year. Students are required to input time electronically and time approval is also done electronically. This has significantly impacted supervisor time. This is a time-consuming process that requires attention to detail. The circulation supervisor approves time for two web services students, one serials department student worker, one reference department student worker and on average thirteen circulation student employees, for a total of seventeen student employees.

The circulation supervisor sends an email reminder to immediate supervisors on Friday morning. The immediate supervisor for 3 of the students provides the circulation supervisor with a printed, signed by supervisor, version of the student's punch card. Every Monday morning before 10 am, the circulation supervisor manages exceptions and approves time. If there are exceptions, the circulation supervisor does whatever is necessary to fix those before Monday at 12 pm.

The University of Maine at Fort Kent began to enforce an income tax law for non-resident aliens. International students are required to pay into the United States Income Tax Service. Each student pays a minimum of \$15.30 per biweekly check. This affected the number of hours that international students needed to work. In an effort to assist students with their financial situation, the library made sure to schedule students for eight hours or more per week. Of the library's 14 students, 7 are international.

There was no negative impact on the library this year, however in the future; staff will have to carefully monitor the number of hours that international students work. There will need to be a balance between the number of hours the student needs to work to cover the cost of taxes and the number of hours and length of time the library needs the student to work. For instance, the staff can not afford for student employees to work many hours each week to cover tax costs and then leave employment at the end of February because the student has run out of funds.

The University administration decided to eliminate federal work study monies for summer 2004 and use only University work study funds instead. Though staff feared that we would be allotted only two students for summer work study, on April 12, 2004, the circulation department was notified that it could hire 3 student employees for summer 2004. In addition to this change in student monies, the financial aid office has devised a new system for hiring student employees.

Student Employee Handbook

Although the previous target for a completed handbook has not been met, the circulation department staff continues its efforts to compile a student employee handbook. The goal is to

complete it by FY2005. In addition to the handbook, the student employee supervisor hopes to create a "Tour of the Library" video for training purposes.

Circulation Statistics (formerly Stacks)

There has been a steady decline across the previous four years in circulation transactions. This year marks a slight increase in the total number of transactions. Circulation transactions include checkouts, check-ins, renewals, holds, and recalls.

This year Blake Library staff experienced a 3% decline in checkouts whereas last year it was a 10% decline. FY2003 had a total checkout of 8,192 whereas FY2004 has 7,924 checkouts. FY2004 shows a 10% increase in the checkouts for Acadian Archives. This is most likely attributed to a community patron performing ongoing research and the primary sources assignment conducted by education students.

Although, it is only a .08% increase for FY2004, the young adult collection continues to have an increase in the number of checkouts. Our media collection has seen a decrease in the number of videocassettes (35% decrease) that are checked out, but an increase in the number of DVDs (3738% increase) and audio books (105% increase) that are checked out. The enormous increase in DVDs may be attributed to the growth of the collection and the faculty use for classes. Because DVDs are an easier format to use in lecture, they tend to be the desired format for purchase. See Table 2 for media checkout.

	Video	DVD	Audio Book
FY03	1342	13	58
FY2004	866	499	115

Students continue to have the highest number of check-outs; the number is surprisingly consistent with last year. 4,686 items were checked out this year compared to 4,688 items last year. It is interesting to note that in FY2004 the total number of items checked out is equal to 2.15 items checked out by students; or 2.80 items per FTE.

Inhouse

Inhouse transactions (items taken off the shelves but never checked out) showed a 17% increase in FY2004. Regular stacks and curriculum collection materials were the primary areas of increase resulting in an 80% and 60% increase respectively. More detailed circulation statistics can be found in Appendix B.

Courier Service

In July of 2001, the University of Maine System contracted a courier service, Consolidated Delivery and Logistics, Inc. (CD & L). The University of Maine System has an agreement with CD & L for a five year contract, starting in FY2004, in which each party involved has to agree to the specifics of the contract each year.

The courier service is extremely beneficial to our needs. The service is consistent, which allows us to offer a fairly accurate prediction on the arrival of materials. The service is available when the schools are open, which reduces the number of holidays delivery would have been postponed if we had used the postal service. In August 2003 we determined that the plastic totes were too large for the amount of materials we ship out. We ordered 10 additional canvas bags to replace the plastic totes; which we returned to the vendor.

A detailed table showing what types and number of packages and where they were sent can be found in Appendix C.

Loan Rule Issues

The library staff wanted to change circulation policies and billing for videos, DVDs and audio books. Videos and DVDs circulate for 3 days and accrue fees at a rate of \$1.00 per day. Audio books circulate for 1 week and accrue fees of 50 cents per day. In making these changes to the loan rules for these particular items, we discovered that we, in fact, were affecting the circulation policies and billing for the curriculum and Acadian Archives circulating collections as well. In order to rectify the situation, a closer look at the loan rule determiner table was needed, and loan rules 170 and 171 were created and added to the loan rule determiner table. With the assistance of the system librarian, who traveled to Fort Kent to meet with us, we realized that the loan rule determiner table was not as streamlined as it could have been and this was the origin of our loan rule issues. The system librarian aided in making “band-aid” modifications to the loan rule determiner table, while we wait to complete the final streamlining in summer 2004.

Maine Info Net

“The Maine Info Net Statewide Catalog combines and links library collections. A single search scans more than 2,500,000 unique titles and nearly 6 million items. Starting with 60 of the largest libraries in Maine, the system is expected to include more than 300 library collections.”¹ One issue the library directors will be addressing is fines for late books and replacement costs for lost items. To date, there have been discussions but no resolution. Another issue is the way in which statistical information is broken down. The system provides general statistics for the twelve URSUS libraries as a whole. Individual statistics are not yet available, however Blake’s circulation staff maintains its own individual statistics by manually counting the paging slips accompanying requested books. This year, the circulation staff has been able to provide more detailed statistics about which Minerva and Holdings Database libraries materials were borrowed from or lent to. Although the system has not yet been able to provide specifics as stated above, the paging slips produced when a person requests items provides the name and location of the library Blake is doing transactions with. The Maine Info net libraries have begun discussions about policies and procedures that have been in effect for some time, but have yet to be written into a manual.

Statistics for Blake Library increased for borrowing, but decreased for lending. In FY 2003, 13 items were borrowed from and 188 items were lent to other libraries. By comparison, the

¹ The Maine Info net Statewide Catalog. (n.d.). Retrieved April 25, 2003, from <http://130.111.64.9/screens/About.html>.

number of items borrowed in FY2004 is 65 (400% increase) and the number of items lent to other libraries is 145 (23% decrease). The overall statistics for all of URSUS has increased in both borrowing and lending. The increase in numbers might be attributed to the fact that in December 2003, the Minerva libraries began to be included in the statistical reports. Over 100 items are added to all transaction figures for each subsequent month. It can also be attributed to the reference department's bibliographic instruction sessions. More detailed statistics can be found in Appendix D.

Millennium

This is the fourth year the circulation department has used the Millennium Software from Innovative Technologies. This year update Release 2002 Phase 3 has addressed many of the past issues.

There are still some functions that do not work properly or that need to be modified. For instance, there is a security issue involved when staff clicks the Millennium icon at the top of the circulation menu. On the other hand, issues such as printing notices, in the proper format, to a networked printer have now been corrected. A complete log of problems reported can be found in Appendix E.

The Move

The library staff has successfully moved the entire library. All the stacks have been dismantled and rebuilt according to plan. The circulation area uses one side of one range for mail, reserves and supplies. Five back panels were purchased for the range to separate the circulation materials from the reference materials on the backside. Since the circulation area configuration does not allow for a traditional door, a plastic chain and magnets were purchased to provide a stop-gap into the circulation area. The University carpenter has built a mailing label station. The station has 36 slots for mailing labels. The entire unit is attached to the end of the work station used to process mail. It facilitates the search for mailing labels and places them at our convenience. Here is a photo of the shelving in the circulation area.



New back panel for shelving

All circulation furnishings are in their place according to the floor plan for the circulation area, but there are still some pending projects. The wiring at the new circulation desk needs to be recessed into the walls, and outlets need to be installed. The construction of the circulation desk did not take into account the tractor-fed paper for the printer, so one shelf has to be notched out to allow the flow of printer paper. The circulation area is scheduled to be painted in the near future. Again, the date for commencing this project is yet to be determined. In addition, designs for a new desk for the circulation staff person have been

made. It is the staff's hope that this desk will come to fruition in FY05. See Book One Section Two under furniture/equipment for more details.

The circulation area has seen some changes in equipment. A 17 inch Dell flat screen monitor sits at the front desk. The student computer is sited for an upgrade of its CPU during FY2004. In an effort to accommodate the staff's growing need for scanning reserves, and other work related documents, an Epson Perfection 1670 was purchased and placed at the student desk in the circulation area. Due to the distance between circulation and the other staff offices, the old Royal cash register has returned to the circulation area.

Operation Clean Sweep

The circulation staff devised a process for organizing all the delinquent patron accounts. This process clears out old patrons who owe money and moves other patrons into various stages of the fine paying process. The first "sweep" was completed in July 2002. The circulation staff plans to continue this process every summer for Fort Kent patrons.

The circulation staff completed fine swaps with several UMS libraries. In October, the library assistant attended a circulation heads' meeting and discussed the fine swapping process with the entire group. The system librarian pointed out that the library directors were cautious about aborting a revenue producing option like that of collecting fines. It was also pointed out that the old patron records will remain in a computer file that will be accessible to staff for collection purposes. The circulation heads thus decided to forgo the swapping of fines, but promised to print patron statements at least once a year.

Requestor

Due to staff changes at the system office in Orono in FY2002 September statistics were never created. The lack of statistics affects our ability to compare annual borrowing and lending activity. In answer to this problem we have averaged the September numbers from FY2001 and FY2003 to create a fairly accurate estimated statistic for September FY2002.

Lending activity has remained consistent for the past four years with only a slight (5%) increase in numbers for FY2004. Borrowing activity still remains high and this year shows a 19% increase in requests. The increase may be due to the reference librarian's bibliographic instruction sections. It may also be due to a handful of students and community patrons who are avid users of the requestor feature as evidenced by the number of books the staff handles for these patrons. Table 3. shows the lending and borrowing activity for the past five years.

Table 3. Requestor materials loaned and borrowed in the last 5 years.					
	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004
Lending	1028	794	784	758	795
Borrowing	1338	1243	1595	1540	1829

More detailed requestor statistics can be found in Appendix F.

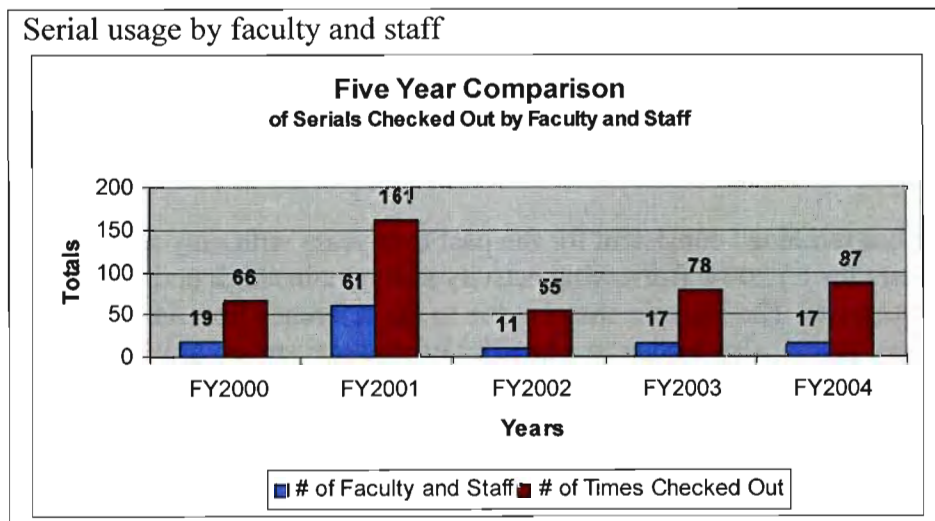
Reserves

A total of 13 faculty placed material on electronic reserve in FY2004. This is a decrease by one faculty member, which is not statistically significant; however the number of documents placed on reserve has decreased significantly. In FY2003 a total of 297 documents were scanned and in FY2004 a total of 193 documents were scanned. This is a 35% decrease in documents. The decrease may be attributed to the fact that this year, 27 faculty made use of our regular reserve system as opposed to 20 in FY 2003. The length and/or quality of the material to be placed on reserve were not conducive to electronic reserves. Therefore, faculty placed items on regular reserves. See Appendix G for more details.

The circulation department has begun establishing a rotating faculty reserve feature. Library staff will maintain a filing system that records faculty name, course title, semester offered and library materials to be placed on reserve for each course. Before each relevant semester, library staff will send a list of anticipated library materials to the faculty for review. Upon faculty approval, library staff will proceed with placing the materials on reserve. This process is in its infancy stage, but the library staff expects that it will increase efficiency in the processing of regular reserves.

Serials

In FY2004, 17 faculty/staff accounted for 87 check-outs of 27 serial titles whereas in FY2003 17 faculty/staff accounted for 78 check-outs of 41 titles. Some faculty members have serial titles routed to them directly from the serials department; those statistics are not reflected here.



More detailed statistics on serial check-outs can be found in Appendix H.

Stacks Maintenance

During the fall and spring of FY2003 and summer of FY2004 the entire stacks were moved. After this was completed, the circulation staff resumed shelf reading the collection.

A spreadsheet is created which provides a systematic approach to shelf reading. The spreadsheet allows staff to keep track of student's progress, time, and location of the last read shelf. A shelf list is printed for individual sections, and the spreadsheet is used to tick off the books on the shelf. This system combines both shelf reading and inventory elements that offer a more thorough look at the shelves. Circulation staff plans to update and refine the spreadsheet for FY2004. To see a sample of the shelf reading spreadsheets refer to Appendix I.

Due to the theft of a number of DVD's from the library, the library obtained a locking cabinet from the Acadian Archives in FY 2003. After a short time, the staff determined that we lacked the space to house this cabinet and that the cabinet did not meet our needs because of its dimensions. In FY2004, we obtained a different shelving unit. This cabinet did not lock but was more suitable to our designated space and allowed patrons to read the case for information about the movie. One issue remained. The DVD's were still being stolen. The staff decided to change the methodology for shelving and checking out DVDs. The empty DVD case is labeled and placed on the shelving, so that patrons can continue to read the case. The DVD itself is stored in a separate case and shelved at the circulation desk. Patrons bring the empty case to the front desk, and then the DVD is checked out and given to the patron. This has decreased the number of thefts.

During the move our audio collection shelving increased by one wooden shelf. As for the remainder of the media collection, we will need to look at additional shelving for the video collections as it continues to grow. We are also discussing options for shelving oversized media items such as videocassettes.

Inventory

In summer 2004, circulation staff will evaluate Biblioplan and The Shelf Space Manager software that can be used for inventory and shifting of stacks. Blake Library has had a Percon Inventory scanner for several years, but staff has not been satisfied with its performance. Stephanie and Laura Gallucci, at the system office, worked extensively on figuring out how to correct some of the problems. The result is that Innovative Interfaces developed the software to use the call number first when comparing the shelf list, and since we are a consortium, we share call numbers and are unable to simply pull out those relevant to Fort Kent. A fix for this can only be done through a software enhancement at Innovative Interfaces. In the meantime, a student employee has created a macro in Excel that allows a list created in URSUS to be converted to an Excel spreadsheet that can then be printed and used to perform inventory.

The procedure for completing inventory on a section of materials is time consuming. A list is created in URSUS for the particular section that needs to be inventoried. After sorting the URSUS list, it is sent via FTP to Stephanie's hard drive, where staff uses an Excel spreadsheet to convert the file into a spreadsheet that can be saved and manipulated.

Circulation staff prints the spreadsheet. The student employees then use the spreadsheet to perform the initial phase of inventory. They confirm that the book is on the shelf, and that call number, title and barcode on the book and the spreadsheet match. Call number, title and barcode anomalies are brought to Stephanie's attention and resolved, mostly with the assistance of the cataloguer. Books that can not be located on the shelf and whose status in URSUS says "available" are considered "on search". The book information is copy/pasted from one spreadsheet to a second spreadsheet that is a tally of all books that are "on search". Circulation staff enters into each URSUS record and changes the "available" status to one of "on search". When the students have completed their portion of the inventory process for a given collection, staff prints off a list of the books that are "on search". Students use the list to double check the shelves for these items. The students search in all collections and confirm that they have done so by completing a worksheet and initialing it. Once the students have done a thorough search, Staff takes the list of "on search" items and performs the same search for the items.

Although inventory is a time-consuming process, it is important to complete it yearly. This process helps library staff identify and correct errors in call numbers, labels, and barcodes. It also identifies items that are missing, lost, billed or in need of repair. Staff can then take the necessary steps to resolve the issues brought forth by the inventory process. Having a program or a working scanner system would help the inventory process become smoother and more efficient.

Finally, in March 2001, it was determined that items would remain "on search" for six months; then the status would change to "missing". This status would remain in place for 1 year. The second year, the item would be considered lost (or billed) and then finally, in year 3 items would be moved to acquisitions for replacement or deletion from the system. In FY2004, the process was reevaluated. The original time outline was considered too long. In summer 2004, we hope to propose a shortened time outline.

For examples of the worksheet and spreadsheets used for inventory, see Appendix J.

Statements

As noted above, Blake Library will continue to process statements for all patron types. Fort Kent patrons owing money and/or books will receive K-blocks and ISIS holds. Aside from this process, the circulation staff will assess the feasibility of mailing out all statements to all patrons. Factors affecting feasibility, that might be assessed, are percent of statements that get returned undeliverable, percent of statements that actually result in being paid, and length of time fees have been owed. If determined to be feasible, circulation staff will begin processing statements on a regular basis in fall 2004.

Student ID processing

The circulation staff in conjunction with the student services office devised a system to facilitate the insertion of patron images and barcodes into the circulation system. This was done to resolve the problem of students not having their barcode inserted into their library record thus keeping them from requesting books online or accessing databases from home. The following solution was highly successful.

Students have the barcode assigned and photo taken at the student services office. That office then FTP's the images to a server and sends the actual ID to the library. After the Library staff receives the images, they upload them and insert the barcodes into patron records. Once the process is complete, circulation sends the ID to Nicki Ouellette in Academic Computing. Staff verifies that students have activated their campus email accounts. Once the accounts have been activated, the student obtains their ID.