

Many thanks to the TLC Education Continuing Education Council for the grant to support my attendance at the 2017 ACRL meeting held in Baltimore. I attended from March 23rd through Saturday, March 25th.

The panel discussions, poster sessions, and contributed papers were very good and offered many excellent ideas. Many of these items are now freely available on the ACRL conference website, and will continue to be available until March 2018. I will be taking advantage of this to revisit programs I attended and also to follow up on programs I was unable to attend. Below, I have detailed some of the highlights of a sampling of the sessions I attended.

Panel discussions:

Closing the data gap between Libraries and Learning: The Future of Academic Library Value... My

notes: This session emphasized that the goal for libraries is to integrate library data with institutional data. One way for the library to be a part of this is with Blue Star/Starfish – to have faculty flag students and refer them to the library/librarians for support. Persistence of these students can be determined and the significance of library support to retention and persistence factored in. This is a great way to monitor and measure library interactions in the student population.

Leading by Design: Creating a 21st Century Teaching and Learning Environment – My notes: Librarians explained how Auburn University surveyed and gathered information about their users (students, faculty and librarians) and then provided design recommendations for a merged library and classroom facility. They stressed the practice of EASL – Engaged Active Student Learning. The goal is for students to learn how to learn. They also created a space for presentation practice which was desired by the students and faculty. The library space incorporates much natural light as this was considered inspirational for learning. The main desk includes a ‘consult’ room for in-depth reference questions. All spaces are flexible with movable furniture, etc.

Taking a Different Tack: Adapting First-Year Information Literacy Instruction to the Online Environment

– Librarians revamped their online tutorials which were part of a required 1-credit “Architecture of Information” course when they discovered that 31% of students were failing the course which was taught in conjunction with a research class in Eng 102. After surveying students, they learned that students were not interested in reading the textbook for the class – the class was too text heavy. So they created videos to capture the content using Camtasia. Students also had trouble selecting topics and so they staged the various steps to developing a topic with required submissions along the way.

Navigating Transformation: Wikipedia, the Academic Library, and the Changing landscape of Information.

– My notes: The speaker, a long-time editor of Wikipedia, believes that then Wikipedia engages students with learning and research and supports inquiry-based learning and knowledge construction, as it facilitates engagement with editing and/or creating content. The panel offered some interesting ideas such as linking archives/special collections to a Wikipedia article the result of which is increased traffic on your library website. Students can create the article and in the process learn primary source literacy. Wikipedia is a product of our cultural heritage and democracy, as it relies on the review of many eyes and is freely accessible. Have students team up with faculty to write an article – Wikipedia can be a scholarly platform. Another idea the panel encouraged is to have a Wikipedia edit-a-thon session. The five pillars of Wikipedia resonate with library profession – encyclopedia – neutral point of

view, free content, respect and civility among editors, and no firm rules - malleable. The learning experience can further the library mission and extend the library into the community.

Posters:

"The ACRL Framework in the Virtual Reference Transaction: Mapping Questions and Answers to Threshold Concepts" - (Poster 26) Friday - This was particularly interesting. The virtual reference included a standard response template that would work for each research question. The librarians at Eastern Michigan University use Lib Answers (Springshare) to host their template.) The template, which can be easily tailored for each different research question, addresses the Framework as well. We are presently working on establish a robust virtual reference presence and will employ this template approach. Here is a link to the poster: <https://tinyurl.com/ltvfqwI>

"A Shift in the Stacks: Developing a Program driven Collection". (Poster 15) Friday - This was excellent and provides a terrific approach to collection development. Here is a link to the poster: <https://tinyurl.com/lhws7oe>

"Curriculum Mapping the New ACRL Framework: Building a Shared Understanding of Teaching Information Literacy" (Poster 41) – Affirmed the importance of developing learning outcomes, teaching plan etc. that is shared so that students, regardless of librarian instructor, are learning comparable search strategy, etc.

Featured Presentations:

Excellent presentation by Verna Myers – founder of her own company – The Verna Myers Company, a consulting firm she established that encourages diversity and inclusion. She also has a TED Talk.

She stressed that we have unconscious biases. She suggested that everyone take the Harvard IAI test – Harvard's Implicit Association Test. Here is the address: www.implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/demo

Bring your slow brain, not your fast brain to decisions. Question your conclusions, resist *priming* (attributes you hear about people from other people) and look for counter examples/contradictions to the priming in their behavior

She stated, Diversity is being asked to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance."

Interrupt when you witness bias – "what do you mean by that?" Don't laugh at mean jokes, correct inappropriate language. Speak up – don't be silent or you are enabling. Support and talk with the offended person – don't let things fester. Be actively anti-biased or you will be positively biased.

Don't Fall for It – Justin George – Crime Reporter for Baltimore Sun. My notes: George addressed the topic of fake news, stressing the importance of independent sources vs. self-interested sources and an acknowledgement that facts require evidence and objective reality.

Some troubling trends increasingly seen include the loss of fact checkers at the copy desk as well as the use of unnamed sources. Headlines are getting too catchy.

Americans are not reading critically – we are becoming unquestioning – we need to fact check more. Be aware of “reconfirmation bias”. Amazingly, 60% of Americans share articles they have not read themselves!

Journalism is a profession – provide investigative reporting – not held hostage by financial world/corporations.

Harvard has a great LibGuide on fake news.

Closing Keynote speaker: Librarian of Congress, Dr. Carla Hayden.

Wonderful talk!

What she is bringing to the Library -- Livestreaming and new programming – opening the library on weekends for special events and events attractive to teens. “In this time of what is real and not real, librarians represent trustworthiness – that is our strength. “ She talked about the treasure of the Library – Teddy Roosevelt’s diary entry following the death of his wife and mother on Valentine’s Day. A letter that Albert Einstein wrote to Sigmund Freud about the cause of war. – Freud – began his response with, “I don’t know.” Quoted Shelby Foote: “A university is just a group of buildings gathered around a library. The library is the university!” Her goal is the digitization of all of the treasures so that the people have access.

Fun Activities:

Meditation – the session I attended, which was led by a librarian from California, was a great introduction to meditation.

Chair Yoga – I am leading a “chair yoga” session at our library of the staff. The instructor, who studies/teaches yoga at Yoga Works in Baltimore, was great!