Opportunities and threats for ILL staff in a period of dramatic change: Adjusting to new ways to facilitate information access

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Introduction
Practitioners have written about the future of interlibrary loan for years. Burch and Davies (1987) wrote about the possibility of a correlation between interlibrary loan and acquisitions in terms of whether or not reduced acquisitions led to an increase in interlibrary loan requests. They concluded that “there is no simple correlation between levels of acquisitions and levels of interlibrary loans” (p. 87). Over time, connections between these two library activities led to the development patron-driven acquisitions (PDA) programs followed by evaluation and discussion of the implications of such programs in the professional literature. Tyler, Melvin, et al. (2011) published an article examining whether library users are effective selectors while Kochan and Duncan (2016) examined a number of factors such as cost, requestor’s departmental affiliation and discipline among them, in order to “both evaluate the service and provide collection assessment data to subject librarians” (p. 64). These articles are just two examples of the various foci of recent research in PDA.

Not only have interlibrary loan activities evolved to include new kinds of cross-departmental cooperation, interlibrary loan management approaches have also changed. Jackson (2005) argues that “Library-centric policies, rules, and procedures are no longer acceptable in an environment that is increasingly customer-focused” (p. 213). Forro (2007) reports that the adoption of an operations management approach to ILL service at Michigan State University (USA) led to increased efficiency and improved turnaround times. Reighart and Oberlander (2008) advocate developing workflows that divide requests into four domains: free, borrow, buy, and rent. They recognize that “Information access today increasingly involves navigating through options,” and that “The key to molding the workflow is sense-making—that process the mind follows when filling requests” (p. 190). The Big Ten Academic Alliance (2017) a consortium of fourteen large academic libraries in the United States, recently published a final report envisioning “a future state where system interoperability and communication replace today’s silos” and describing requirements for development of such interoperability. (p. 1) The University of Wollongong Library (Australia) reported in 2015 that changes made two years previously resulted in an increase of unmediated requests, “allowing the Resource Sharing team to commit resources to other tasks and projects.” (Daly, 2015, p. 173). This paper will discuss changes occurring over time that impact interlibrary loan operations at the University of Arkansas (USA). Suggestions for managing integration of new services will be discussed.

While this paper is theoretically about opportunities and threats, the author does not find many actual threats, other than organizational resistance and funding availability. Most of what could be considered threats are merely perceptions that can be turned into opportunities for positive outcomes. The activity that is incumbent upon a newly arrived department head is to assess
workflow processes and look for areas of improvement. Another issue is workplace culture. When a new leader arrives in a culture that is not readily suited to rapid change, that person must learn how to advance necessary changes while working within the existing system. In the author’s experience, this process begins slowly with advocating for small changes. As one gains the respect of superiors who see the positive outcomes of these small changes, one can begin to explain and justify the need for bigger changes. In the case of the University of Arkansas, the necessary first step was to cultivate a departmental culture that is not afraid of mistakes, rather, one that accepts them as the occasional result of trying new things. It was necessary to encourage the development of different way to think about resource sharing, from saying “no” as a matter of routine to finding ways to say “yes.”

In developing this philosophy, it helps to view interlibrary loan as a funnel. It’s a place where user requests are sorted out and sent to the correct place so that they can be fulfilled. This may mean contacting Special Collections to facilitate access to a rare item; it may be pointing someone to a document freely available on the web; helping to verify a foreign or obscure citation; or purchasing a monograph that is not available to borrow, all of these being examples of tasks that were not considered routine in ILL departments in the past. The concept that is critical here is to make every effort to avoid sending the user to another desk, whether virtual or physical, in order to obtain the desired material.

It is true that funding issues can limit the ability to be a creative problem solver. The author has found that demonstrating successful pilot projects leads to consistent program funding. At the University of Arkansas Libraries a patron driven acquisitions pilot project was begun in 2013 and because it was well received by the initial cohort, faculty, it has become a regular part of the collections budgeting process. Please note that when referring to years, the fiscal year, running from 1 July to 30 June, is used. Pilot projects can also demonstrate that a proposed service is not possible within a given scenario. The author attempted to establish an on-campus delivery pilot project for physical materials but discovered that there were too many barriers both outside and inside the libraries, including lack of funding for an appropriate delivery vehicle and difficulties in determining whether campus mail services could be used for monograph deliveries. The service was simply not feasible at that time.

Local Environment

In fall semester 2005, the University of Arkansas enrolled approximately 15,000 students. This fall, the university enrolled 27,279 students (McCray 2017). This dramatic increase in students led to numerous construction projects to add classroom space and dormitory facilities. The university has five libraries on campus: Mullins Library (main), Fine Arts Library, Physics Library, Chemistry & Biochemistry Library, and the Young Law Library; however the law library manages its own interlibrary loan needs separately from the main library. These libraries together are known as the University Libraries. Mullins Library feels the impact of this large student increase in that study space, both group and individual, is currently insufficient to meet campus needs. The Interlibrary Loan Department is housed in Mullins Library and is responsible for processing lending requests and filling local document delivery requests from Fine Arts, Physics, Chemistry & Biochemistry, Mullins, and a remote storage location.
In 2016 the University of Arkansas hired a new chancellor, Dr. Joe Steinmetz. Working with students and faculty, eight guiding priorities were developed for the campus. (Available at: http://chancellor.uark.edu/campus-strategic-planning-process/index.php#guiding-priorities) Interlibrary loan services fit well with three of the priorities: enhancing our research and discovery mission, advancing student success, and building a collaborative and innovative campus. How does your library fit, especially ILL? Ask yourself, what are the goals of your university or community? What can you do to support them? How does what you are already doing dovetail with organizational goals and how can you add services or alter workflows to enhance support of those goals? In our case, the author believes that by providing fast and easy access to research materials, no matter how obscure they may be, we are helping to advance the university’s research and discovery mission and advancing student success. Through collaborations with other departments we are helping to build a collaborative atmosphere that encourages innovation. While technology has allowed us to obtain materials much more quickly than was possible twenty years ago, making an ILL request is not always easy and this is where there is great potential for improvement. Interlibrary Loan leaders must draw those parallels and express them clearly to those in upper management.

In 2005, the Interlibrary Loan Department consisted of an Interlibrary Loan Librarian, seven FTE and an average of ten student staff per semester. The department was divided into two units: Borrowing and Lending. Each unit had a supervisor and two staff reporting to each supervisor who then reported to the librarian. In 2013 the department was able to reclassify a lending position to one that is now known as Document Delivery Technician. This individual is responsible for ensuring that article delivery requests for items in local collections are fulfilled within our 48 hour turnaround time commitment. This service is locally known as Razor Rush, named after the university mascot, the razorback hog. The chart on page 7 shows Razor Rush turnaround time improvements over the most recent four fiscal years.

Departmental hours were, and still are, Monday-Friday 8am to 6pm, closed Saturday, and 12-4pm on Sunday.

Today the department employs a librarian, six FTE and an average of eight student staff each semester. The current staffing structure will be discussed later in this paper.

Positive changes have occurred over the course the author’s time at the university, beginning with some very small things and moving through to some upcoming changes that will alter the way we do most of our work. The majority of these changes fit into one of the following categories: technology, policies and procedures, and services.

**Technology**

As systems become increasingly intelligent and efficient, workload is shifted from traditional ILL activities to those that, previously unthinkable, are now becoming the norm for ILL departments across the United States.

Improving system interoperability allows more automation, freeing librarians and staff to think creatively about processes and to try new services and methods. The ILLiad interlibrary loan
management system, in use at Mullins Library from 2003 to the present, allows for the implementation of complex routing rules that automatically move requests through various stages of the process. The ability to implement various add-ons (GOBI, Amazon, etc.) removes the need to conduct separate searches on individual sites outside the ILLiad system. ILLiad also allows the user to construct complex reports that serve many purposes. For example, regularly running a lending “cancelled requests” report will allow staff to locate transactions that could have been filled, leading to improved staff and student training and increased fill rates and efficiency. As is by now well known, OCLC (Online Computer Library Center, Inc.) will replace ILLiad with a new cloud-based system known as Tipasa. (http://www.oclc.org/en/tipasa/features.html) Practitioners will be interested to learn how this new system will change, and hopefully improve, ILL workflows.

Joining the RapidILL article requesting service (http://rapidill.org/) with its automated processing, load leveling, and routing capabilities led to a reduction in time spent processing article requests for both lending and borrowing operations. RapidILL, combined with the addition of Bookeye scanners using BScan software, signaled the end of sheet by sheet scanning on flatbed scanners. Over several years, beginning in fall 2007 when the Libraries joined RapidILL, the department obtained three Bookeyes. The purchase of these scanners was supported by data showing in steady increase in requests for scans; however, because such requests have now declined, the department is planning to move one scanner to a new remote storage facility presently under construction. The above mentioned changes led to an average article borrowing turnaround time that was 3.3 days in 2007 and 9.8 hours in 2017. Lending article turnaround time, defined as the time from when the request was imported into ILLiad to the time the request is marked “finished” improved from 21.4 hours in 2007 to 1.7 hours in 2017. Recently the University of Arkansas Libraries joined RapidR (Rapid Reumables) along with the majority of the members of the library consortium to which the University Libraries belong, The Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA http://www.gwla.org/). This will facilitate the exchange of materials between member libraries. The beauty of RapidR is that it provides real time availability checks, meaning the number of requests received for checked out items is reduced. Real time availability is the one critical piece that interlibrary loan departments have lacked, particularly those without a statewide or consortia subsystem that operates on a shared catalog philosophy. Because the department just began participating on 28 August 2017, there is no data to report at this time.

Technological advances have made it increasingly possible to collaborate with other departments within the library. For example, the PDA program involves communication and cooperation among, ILL, acquisitions, cataloging, and circulation. This involves several systems, ILLiad, Sierra (integrated library system or ILS), online monograph ordering systems, and the circulation module of the ILS. While these systems do not necessarily communicate with one another, the transactions are managed with system generated emails throughout the life of the request. The Libraries’ PDA program will be discussed later in this paper.

**Policies and Procedures**
When the present Interlibrary Loan Librarian arrived in 2005, some staff were following the practice of filling requests once or twice per day. That is to say that requests that were in the “inbox” in the morning were attended to while requests that came in throughout the day generally were not, unless there was perceived time to do so. There was a belief that lending items had to be prepared in time to meet the pickup times of the several shipping services used. That meant that retrieval slips for monographs and for copies were separated and monographs were retrieved first. The practice was changed to ensure that as each batch of slips is printed throughout the day, all of the items in that batch are retrieved, no matter the material type. This allows all requests to be processed in the order received. Sometimes student workers would fail to scan article requests according to the date and time received, meaning that older requests were not consistently attended to before newer requests. By encouraging the adoption of a continuous processing philosophy, staff and student workers became used to checking the various ILLiad queues for incoming requests throughout the day and attention was paid to the date and time of request receipt. There was no longer a culture of waiting until some sort of critical mass was achieved before going to the stacks to retrieve items. By emphasizing that there is a person on the other end of the request waiting for that specific item, a sense of urgency developed. It is important to state that urgency does not equate with panic. Operating with urgency means understanding that by processing requests as they come in throughout the day, the department can achieve better turnaround times and greater efficiencies which leads to happy users. It should be emphasized that borrowing libraries are included in the term “users” because they also use departmental services.

It has long been the tradition or actual policy of ILL departments to cancel requests for locally held items. Johnston (2016) reports on a study to investigate why library users continue to request such items. The study revealed an interesting problem found through analysis of EBSCOhost search data: “Patrons were immediately choosing the “Request Item from ILLiad” link on the detailed record instead of utilizing the “Find Full Text” link” (p. 4). This problem was addressed by removing the request from ILLiad link from the EBSCOhost detailed record. Follow up analysis showed a 61% reduction of that type of request via that resource from one month to the next (Johnston, p. 5). This type of analysis that illustrates the difficulty users have in understanding the numerous options presented to them and offers a data driven method that helps reduce options for error. It also represents a broadening of interlibrary loan research that shows the need to collaborate with other departments in order to facilitate ease of use.

As resource sharing has evolved, more practitioners have adopted the philosophy that the request should be filled no matter where the item is located, some while facing opposition from within their organizations. In 2013, with the cooperation of the ILS (Sierra) manager and the circulation and ILL departments, changes were made so that users can place electronic holds on locally held items. At that time, ILL staff began placing holds for users on locally held items that were submitted as ILL requests, whereas those requests used to be returned to the library user in the form of a cancellation message. More recently staff began sending direct links to requested articles that are available online, reducing the number of cancelled “we owns” from 4,220 (8.8% of total requests) in fiscal 2014 to 1,868 (5.7% of total requests) in fiscal 2017. The 2017 figure is misleading because the department has only recently stopped marking these requests
cancelled,” rather, they are now marked “finished” because the user is, in fact obtaining access to the item via the direct link provided by ILL staff through email. This further enables the department to provide a more accurate accounting of the actual work conducted. This procedural change illustrates the interesting question, “What makes an ILL request an ILL request?” The author maintains that any request submitted to ILL is an ILL request, whether the item is found in local collections or at a different institution. How requests are counted is important because doing so helps practitioners explain their work, but the blurring of traditional ILL lines could eventually lead practitioners to count requests as “filled from outside source” or “filled from inside source.” Even that kind of distinction could eventually become unnecessary.

Textbook borrowing is another long standing issue facing academic libraries. Libraries manage textbook requests in a variety of ways. Wichita State University (Wichita, Kansas, USA) developed a textbook collection in response to user requests, as have other academic libraries in the United States (Blackburn, Tiemeyer 2013). The University of Central Missouri (Warrensburg, Missouri, United States) employs a similar program that places textbooks for the most popular classes on reserve (Ruleman, Riley, 2017). Some libraries cancel textbook requests, while others may cancel and offer other options in the cancellation message such as textbook rental websites. In their study, Politz, Christie, and Middleton (2009) found that “sixty-seven percent (56/84) of the libraries responding to our survey did not buy any required textbooks…” (p. 467). An updated study would be useful to the literature in this area.

In the interest of fairness, the University of Arkansas Libraries does not borrow textbooks. The disposition of these requests has evolved over the last several years. In 2005, users were sent a cancellation notice with no alternatives offered. This led to confusion, telephone calls, and email messages complaining about the policy.

Several methods for dealing with textbook requests were tried over the past twelve years but some requests were still falling through the cracks and users were not consistently receiving the necessary follow up messages. The most recent plan, implemented in summer 2017, demonstrates good potential for success. When a request for a book that is on the current semester textbook list is received, that request is forwarded to the User Services Librarian for purchase consideration. The requestor is notified by email that this has occurred and the message includes that librarian’s contact information. The User Services Librarian will purchase the monograph and place it on reserve as well as managing communication with the requestor throughout the process. Since 1 August 2017, sixteen requests have been forwarded to User Services. Of those, two were requests for the same book from the same person and the book was already on reserve, one was for a title available at the law library, and eight books were purchased for the reserve collection (Lehman, personal email communication, 28 August 2017). The five remaining requests were not purchased because the requestor never replied to the User Services Librarian’s email inquiring whether the individual still wanted the book. The critical element is that communication with the user is continuous throughout the process. This is another example of cross--departmental cooperation that results in improved service.

Another interesting element that can affect interlibrary loan processes is Open Access (OA). Baich (2015) analyzed borrowing requests and found that, over time, increasing numbers of
requests were able to be filled via OA. Rather than viewing this phenomenon as a threat to resource sharing, Baich concludes that the “discovery problems surrounding information retrieval do not align with users’ need for convenience and ease of access and may result in a greater reliance on ILL to locate information” (p. 74). At the University of Arkansas, interlibrary loan staff routinely search for open access materials, not only to serve users but also to avoid paying for items that may be freely available online; however, the quantitative impact of OA on local ILL operations has not been studied.

Services

Desktop Delivery/Scanning

Something that seems so commonplace now was once rather controversial. Librarians attempting to implement desktop delivery of locally held journal articles were met with some resistance from library colleagues and classroom faculty who believed that users needed to experience coming to the library, locating the journal volume on the shelf and making a paper copy. Considering that ILL staff were responsible for electronically delivering articles and book chapters from volumes located in the offsite storage facility, it seemed inconsistent to restrict that service to one location. It should be noted that at that time, the requested volumes in storage were brought from that location to the ILL department for scanning and then were returned to storage, a time consuming process. In spite of initial resistance, a faculty-only desktop delivery pilot project was begun in 2009, filling requests for items held in the main library only. Over a period of several years, the program was quietly expanded to include all students, faculty, and staff as well as all branch libraries and was branded Razor Rush. In 2016 a Bookeye scanner was installed in the remote storage facility and the Stacks Unit staff members responsible for traveling there to retrieve items were trained how to use ILLiad and the scanner to fill requests from within the that facility, thereby eliminating the need to move volumes back and forth between the two locations. Though the department promises 48 hour turnaround time, the average turnaround time in FY 2017 was 13.8 hours. The chart below shows average turnaround time from 2014-2017. 2014 was the first year the service was available to the entire campus community, therefore data from previous years are not comparable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Razor Rush Activity</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submitted</td>
<td>10332</td>
<td>6522</td>
<td>5478</td>
<td>4620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filled</td>
<td>9936</td>
<td>6425</td>
<td>5387</td>
<td>4588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnaround time (hours)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>13.8</td>
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</table>

Patron Driven Acquisitions (PDA)

Several articles in the literature question the effectiveness or appropriateness of patron-driven acquisitions (PDA) programs. Walters (2012) argues that “PDA programs are unlikely to improve the quality of academic library collections” (p. 199). Sens and Fonseca (2013) are highly critical of PDA programs and call into question the work of several writers. They disagree
with Tyler, Xu, et al. (2010) when they write that “PDA is immediately cited as a solution, with no credence given to the real possibility that the implication of their language is that the problem could just as likely be academic librarian passivity” (p. 361.). In reading Sens and Fonseca closely, one will notice that they are writing about e-book PDA programs in which publisher records are loaded into the library catalog and e-books are then selected for purchase by library users with no mediation. The reader should note that Tyler, Xu, et al. (2010) were writing about monograph purchases, not e-books. Therefore, Sens and Fonseca are making a false comparison. PDA programs for electronic books are not the same thing as those for monographs.

Van Dyke’s (2011) thought provoking article contributes to the discussion about PDA models and their associated costs. It is true that we do not have a full picture of the full cost of these activities and that not enough research has been conducted in this area. Rather than labeling it as misleading, however; the author believes that most of the literature on this topic, except for that which compares apples to oranges, has something to contribute to the fabric of the whole. Nothing has yet been found the literature suggesting that PDA programs are the answer to all collection development woes, nor has anything been found that suggests academic libraries should adopt a single collection development model. Rather, most of what the author has read and observed involves a balanced approach using a variety of collection development models, as may fit the individual institution.

In 2013, the interlibrary loan department was able to begin a $10,000.00 pilot project to determine whether a PDA program for monographs would be useful. There was some concern expressed from a few subject selectors that irrelevant materials from non-reputable publishers would be purchased or that their specific expertise was in question. The department head developed the following purchase parameters:

- Monographs must published in the current calendar year;
- Must cost under $150.00. Those over $150.00 could be purchased with approval from the Director for Collection Management;
- Must be requested by faculty;
- May not be self-published or from an unverifiable publisher;
- Must be relevant to curriculum or research.

Incoming borrowing requests are screened for current year imprints which are routed to a special queue and an email containing details of the request is sent to the Interlibrary Loan Librarian. The librarian then compares the request to the above listed criteria and decides whether to purchase. If the librarian cannot verify that the requested material is of an academic quality, the item will not be purchased and the user receives an email indicating the reason. This is a rare occurrence. If the monograph is purchased, as the majority are, the requestor is notified by email that the item will be purchased and that she or he will be notified when it becomes available. An email is sent to the acquisitions department requesting the purchase and indicating that the item is to be charged to the fund code assigned to the program. These monographs are then rush-purchased. When the book arrives, it is circulated to the user based on a temporary catalog record created by ILL staff. When the user returns the book, it is sent to cataloging to be formally cataloged and labeled.
The initial $10,000.00 was spent in eleven months. In 2014, it was determined the pilot would be extended for another year and funded at the same level. Parameters were altered to include graduate student requests. Data, including titles purchased and average cost per item, was shared with subject selectors. These data are presently sent to selectors via quarterly reports that show the monograph title, requestor status (faculty or graduate student), departmental affiliation, and item cost. In 2015, the department head was able to secure $15,000.00 and the same amount was granted in 2016. By 2015, the price cap was raised to $200.00 per item and the “pilot” designation was no longer used. Items that cost over $200.00 are forwarded to the relevant subject selector for purchase consideration. In 2017, $20,000.00 was given to the program. The chart below shows the number of books purchased, the total cost, and average cost per book for the most recent four fiscal years. The reader will note that in 2016, the department exceeded the allotted amount by $1364.32. Fortunately, the Director for Collections Management was able to cover that amount from another source. Funding for 2018 is set at $18,000.00 which reflects an across the board cut in collections funding. As discussed above, this is an example of collaboration and cooperation between four departments, and buy-in from subject selectors. Subject selectors have expressed their appreciation at receiving the quarterly reports and have said that they see nothing they would not have purchased themselves. Several mentioned that they were pleased to be alerted to collection gaps that they could then begin working to fill over time. The chart below shows the number of books, total cost, and average cost per book for the four most recent fiscal years.

### Patron Driven Acquisitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of Books</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total cost</td>
<td>9896.83</td>
<td>12218.70</td>
<td>16364.32</td>
<td>19760.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Cost</td>
<td>63.44</td>
<td>72.30</td>
<td>79.43</td>
<td>78.41</td>
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As illustrated by the chart below, the number of filled requests at the University of Arkansas has declined steadily from the 80,870 peak in fiscal 2013 to 58,667 in fiscal 2017:

### Filled Resource Sharing Transactions
(Does not represent total requests processed)

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<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing</td>
<td>34750</td>
<td>35077</td>
<td>35346</td>
<td>38267</td>
<td>35315</td>
<td>35781</td>
<td>28574</td>
<td>25572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lending</td>
<td>34887</td>
<td>35631</td>
<td>33288</td>
<td>32552</td>
<td>34981</td>
<td>35140</td>
<td>33096</td>
<td>28507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RazorRush</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>1410</td>
<td>6205</td>
<td>10051</td>
<td>9936</td>
<td>6854</td>
<td>5907</td>
<td>4588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>69637</td>
<td>72118</td>
<td>74839</td>
<td>80870</td>
<td>80232</td>
<td>77775</td>
<td>67577</td>
<td>58667</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The author believes that several factors led to the decline in requests. Some possibilities are: increasing engagement between instruction librarians and students; carefully targeted journal purchases; ensuring that electronic journal packages are being used and, if not, cancelled and
replaced with packages that better address the curriculum; the addition of backfiles to electronic collections; endowment funds recovering from the 2005 economic downturn thus allowing increased monograph purchasing (until fiscal 2018 when budgets across the board were cut); and selection librarians using purchase on demand reports and other tools to learn about gaps in collections that they can make efforts to fill over time. As described above, workflow alterations have recently been made that will better capture transactions that have, until now, not been counted.

The most interesting outcome of increase automation and development of new programs and services, was the ability restructure the department upon the retirement of the lending supervisor in 2015. The Interlibrary Loan Librarian had noticed that there appeared to be less of a need for two supervisors in the department. The department naturally evolved to a place where fewer people were needed to manage and perform processes. A new staffing model was proposed to and approved by upper management. As described above, the department’s daily operations are managed by an Interlibrary Loan Coordinator who supervises, lending, borrowing, and Razor Rush. The Coordinator is responsible for training and supervision of department staff and student workers. Because the Coordinator oversees the three units, the librarian has noticed improved communication among the entire group and each person is cross trained to process requests in each of the three domains. The Coordinator and Librarian work closely to solve problems, incorporate new methods and launch new services. Some readers may wonder about the wisdom of giving up a funded position assigned to the ILL department. It must be noted that the position was not lost to the Libraries. It remains as a line item in the personnel budget and is available to be used in another department that has a greater need for assistance.

The Future

Several factors influenced the decision to build a new storage facility. The current facility is at capacity, use of print materials continues to decline, and Mullins Library suffers from a lack of space for increasing numbers of students, to name a few. To that end, approximately three-quarters of the collections will be moved to the new facility when it opens in late 2018. Mullins Library consists of two sections, the “old” west side which is the original building, and the “new” east side, added in 1997. It is expected that shortly after the move is completed, renovation of the west side of Mullins Library will begin. Mechanical systems installed in 1968 are failing, but asbestos abatement must be performed prior to necessary upgrades. It is possible that the 500,000 items remaining in Mullins after the storage move will also need to be stored. The building may or may not be inaccessible for one to two years, detail is uncertain at this writing. The fact that the majority of the collections, if not all, will be moving to storage will alter the way interlibrary loan works. Stacks Management staff, working under the supervision of the User Services Librarian, will be responsible for storage retrieval. The number of daily retrievals will increase from two to four, with two retrievals on Sundays and none on Saturdays or holidays. Some future effects are clear. With all, or nearly all, scanning taking place from the new facility, ILL will clearly not need the number of students normally employed, which will result in savings to the library. Would it be useful to have lending staff working in the storage facility? How will these changes affect turnaround times? The author believes that with change,
brainpower is not diminished, it is placed in a philosophical mindset rather than a task oriented one. The tasks flow from the philosophy.
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