Library instruction comes in many flavors and the QCC librarians have worked with several variations this fall. In some sessions, like nursing and English, the librarian presenters have asked students to form groups, maximizing peer-to-peer interaction. Research on information literacy pedagogy tells us this approach enhances student engagement and expands interest in learning.

Changes in the English program sequence have prompted the librarians to develop a new guide series with selected readings. What began with a professor’s suggestion for a single course (the Market Basket strike) led to collaborations that include a suggested module for ENG 096 and faculty requests for readings (gun violence), and a library session, in ENG 091. We are pleased to extend resources to developmental level courses. Students who access these curated collections focus on the content rather than the search. For faculty who want their students to explore further, a click on a database link performs an embedded search.

The librarians have always designed sessions for orientation (ORT 110) to be interactive. The initial demonstration prompts students to click their responses to survey questions during a presentation. Then the hands-on activity gets students to move around the reference area of the library. Now an additional exercise—reviewing a syllabus—gives students practice finding the cues an instructor provides when assigning research.

In still another collaboration, librarians are being invited into online courses to provide direct library support. We look forward to working with you and your students to grow their skill at finding and using information.

—Dale LaBonte

Great Expectations of Discovery

QCC’s Technology in the Classroom Conference takes off again on January 5, 2016 with the theme “Using Technology to Launch Students to Another Level.” The concept plays well with the library’s newly-initiated discovery platform. Librarians Denise Cross and Dale LaBonte will lead a session where faculty can sample the output of the EBSCO Discovery Service (EDS), when the powerful algorithm crunches the data to find millions of articles from thousands of sources.

A chief benefit of this resource is for students to be able to start with a simple search term and quickly get relevant results. The process is outlined in Denise Cross’s online guide. A priority of the workshop is to spotlight the ways this tool promotes Information Literacy. Call it IL or infolit, this is a campus Learning Outcome and a 21st Century “must-have.”

Join us on January 5th for a lively session at the downtown campus.

Professional Development


Tweed-intensive humanists sniff at the whole web thing while downsing their sherry, don’t they? Not eminent scholar/publishers Gardiner and Musto: they offer a wide-ranging and practical guide to conducting humanities research, organizing materials, analyzing findings and disseminating results.

The authors summarize the pivot to digital that they see as recasting almost every aspect of the humanities among academics, libraries, publishers, administrators and the reading (and clicking) public.

The authors define terms and survey the scope of the humanities and then look at the day-to-day slog of humanities research and teaching. The Digital Humanities shows how the digital realm has impacted humanists and their research and how they, in turn, shape a portion of the digital universe.

Access to and use of text, graphics, 3D artifacts, sound and (potentially) gargantuan data sets are covered, along with the inevitable need for scholars’ grasp of copyright, permissions and dissemination platforms.

To be informed when the book is available for checkout, contact Michael Stevenson. If you just can’t wait to start reading, Cambridge University Press offers the first two chapters here.

—Michael Stevenson
Library Guide on “One Book” Author Richard Blanco

The Library featured an interactive backgrounder on November’s visiting author Richard Blanco and his memoir, The Prince of Los Cocuyos.

Mr. Blanco was selected as the Inaugural Poet for President Obama’s second inauguration ceremony in January, 2013. The guide includes a video with Mr. Blanco reading his poem “One Today” on the steps of the United States Capitol.

The Guide offers background on the Cuban-American community of which Mr. Blanco paints vivid memories in The Prince. Readers of our guide also find out how our guest reaches out to mentor budding poets through his workshops at Gould Academy in Maine, the state where he resides.

In a timely development, the guide documents a major thawing of relations between Cuba and the U.S. after over 50 years of a tense standoff. Readers may select major media coverage of the rapprochement, including Mr. Blanco’s poetry reading at the reestablishment of a U.S. embassy in Havana this year.

Besides acquiring Mr. Blanco’s works, the Library has expanded its book selection on Cuba and Cuban Americans. Highlighted in the guide are books on Cuba’s capitalist sex trade, U.S. Senator Marco Rubio’s blueprint for a more mainstream type of prosperity in our country, and Little Havana’s brew of hustling and skulduggery in 1980s Miami.

Back Story


Call number: E 382 .I57 2015, and also held as an e-book.

NPR reporter Steve Inskeep tries his hand at history with this compelling story behind the Cherokee Trail of Tears. It is the boisterous tale of a faceoff between two determined men: Andrew Jackson before and during his presidency, and Chief John Ross of the Cherokee people.

Who knew that Old Hickory engaged in insider trading?

The General scored a bargain on former Native American lands in what is now the Southeastern U.S. shortly before becoming Chief Magistrate of our young republic.

As president, during years of legal and military action to clear out Cherokees and other tribes from the entire Southeast, Jackson faced a near-immovable object in John Ross, a mixed-race Cherokee politician and diplomat. Ross used all the tools offered in the young nation’s constitutional toolkit to stave off eviction of his people from their ancestral lands. He took his case through the courts all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, and built a coalition of supporters that included Senator Henry Clay, Chief Justice John Marshall and that King of the Wild Frontier, Davy Crockett.

Under Ross, the Cherokees tapped the burgeoning press and postal system to gain popular support, and the tribe won allies in activism in the fervent women’s movement in the North. Many of the organizing techniques of the tribe and its allies were adopted by the abolitionists as the nation hotly disputed the fate of another people of the Southland, the slaves.

There was no Hollywood ending to the Cherokee saga. President Jackson seized tens of millions of acres of Native Americans’ lands, an expropriation of southern territory that Inskeep dubs “Jacksonland.”

New Staff in the Alden — and Downtown — Library

Whitney Pape anchors Alden Library services on Saturdays and can also be found at the downtown library on Thursday evenings.

A Connecticut native, she graduated from the University of Connecticut with a Bachelor of Arts degree in French. Her Master of Library and Information Science degree is from the University of Texas at Austin, and included a specialization in rare books and preservation. She has worked in this concentration at Oberlin College in Ohio and at Brown University and the Redwood Library and Athenæum in Rhode Island. She is currently Vice President of the John Russell Bartlett Society, a group of Rhode Island book lovers and collectors who meet for the purpose of engaging in dialogue about books as art and cultural objects.

In April, Denise LaRoche joined the Alden Library crew at the Circulation and Information Desks. She was previously employed at the Boylston Public Library. She staffs the Downtown Library at mid-day, dispensing barcodes, laptops and group study rooms, and can be found in the evenings at Alden Library.

Denise graduated from Worcester State University with a BA in Visual and Performing Arts, with a concentration in Theatre. Her favorite roles have been the Maniac in Accidental Death of an Anarchist by Dario Fo and Maria in Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night.

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