

The Involvement of the Librarian in the Total Educational Process

BEVERLY P. LYNCH
KAREN S. SEIBERT

THE BASIC ASSUMPTION which governs the growth and the development of all academic libraries in the United States is that the library plays a role of central and critical importance in the instructional and scholarly life of the college or university. Academic libraries are integral parts of the institutions they serve. Collections are developed and services are designed in these libraries to meet the instructional programs of the particular institution. Programs of library instruction also reflect the development of the college or university of which they are a part. These programs will thus vary depending upon whether the institution is a doctorate-granting research institution, a college which offers a liberal arts program as well as professional programs such as engineering or business administration, a liberal arts college, a two-year college, or a specialized institute (such as a theological school, a medical school, law or other professional school). Programs of bibliographic instruction have been designed to make the library a more effective instrument in the learning process. How these programs emerge and become integrated into the educational process of the college or university is the subject of this paper.

Library instruction is not a new library concern. Several preeminent librarians of the nineteenth century addressed the issue. Melvil

Beverly P. Lynch is University Librarian and Karen S. Seibert is Reference Librarian, University of Illinois at Chicago Circle.

Dewey spoke of the role of the librarian as teacher.¹ William Frederick Poole called for a "professor of bibliography."² Justin Winsor described a plan for library instruction which forms the basis of many academic library programs still in existence: "It would be a good plan to take the students by sections, and make them acquainted with the bibliographical apparatus, those books that the librarian finds his necessary companions, telling the peculiar value of each, how this assists in such cases, that in others; how this may lead to that, until with practice the student finds that for his work he has almost a new sense."³

Beginning in the late 1800s, librarians sought ways to introduce library use techniques to students. Most of the early efforts were designed and carried out in the library; few programs were based in the classroom. For most of the period between 1876 and 1930, the curriculum was classical in nature. The accepted teaching method centered upon the authority of the professor, the lecture method and the textbook. The curriculum did not lead students into the library, nor did faculty members. Library use by students, for the most part, was recreational and not curriculum-based.

Although the curriculum rarely demonstrated to the professor or to the student a need for any instruction in the use of the library, librarians at Harvard, Cornell, University of Colorado, and University of Michigan were among those who introduced the library and library use to students.⁴ These librarians provided informal and formal library lectures, offered courses on library use, both credit and noncredit, and made available to the students and faculty library handbooks and leaflets describing library tools. These early programs of instruction were by and large designed by librarians and implemented in the library. Rarely were the faculty involved in such efforts.

In the 1930s the curriculum and changing methods of instruction began to exert a heavier influence on library use by students. Stephens College, a junior college for women in Columbia, Missouri, completed a review of its entire college curriculum in 1932. The new curriculum was designed to emphasize individualized courses of study fashioned around the needs of each student. Required courses were eliminated and traditional practices abandoned. With the full support of President James Madison Wood and the financial support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, a major component of the program was the placement of the college library into the center of the educational program. The objectives of the library's role in the curriculum were formulated: "First, to make the library contribute as effectively as possible to the instructional program of the college; second, to teach students how to

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use books effectively; and third, to lead students to love books and to read for pleasure."⁵ The librarian of the college, B. Lamar Johnson, served also as dean of instruction. In his role as librarian he was expected to know the library, its resources and its potential for curriculum support. As dean of instruction he was expected to know the instructional program. The dual thrust of the position was designed to integrate the library with the instructional program.

The program at Stephens College appears now to be rudimentary. Yet its contribution to development of professional thought is considerable. Through the instruction programs designed at Stephens College and at other academic libraries in the United States, several requirements now are identified as being essential to the success of programs of library instruction:

1. The faculty must consider instruction in library use to be necessary;
2. The library instruction program must be designed within the context of a particular course or academic program and be consistent with the overall educational program in which it occurs;
3. The instruction program must be presented at a time when the student needs it and is required to use it; and
4. The teaching of library skills must show a progression throughout a student's time in college and must not be repetitive.⁶

Each element has its basis for success in the complete integration of bibliographic instruction into the curriculum. In order for such integration to occur, librarians need to be involved in the decision-making process leading to curriculum design.

In addition to the program at Stephens College, those of Monteith College, Sangamon State University, Earlham College, and Swarthmore College serve as examples of library instruction experiments which have influenced other programs. Each of these programs provides an opportunity to review those processes of educational decision-making in which library instruction may be introduced into the curriculum.

Within the academic setting, who makes decisions? What is decided? How are these decisions made? It is in the context of such processes of decision-making that programs of library instruction are created, implemented and judged as successes or failures.

Relatively few studies exist on decision-making in the academic setting or on the governance structures in academic environments. For the most part the studies of universities and colleges have attempted to describe the organization in the context of Weber's bureaucratic model,⁷

or in the context of the collegial model.⁸ More recently, political models have emerged.⁹

Many bureaucratic elements described by Weber can be found in an academic setting: hierarchy of office, careful specification of office functions, recruitment on the basis of merit, promotion according to merit and performance, and a coherent system of discipline and control. The Weberian model emphasizes authority and legitimate formal power. It describes accurately much of the structure in the university. A major weakness in applying the bureaucratic model to college and university governance is that the model tells little about the processes of university governance or decision-making. It is unable to explain the decision process which leads to policy formulation and change.

Observers interested in this process have rejected the Weberian model and sought to apply to the academic setting the collegial model, or the concept of full participation in decision-making. In this model, decision-making is seen as being achieved through a dynamic of consensus, with governance based on the full participation of all members. Much emphasis is placed on the instructor's professional freedom and the needs for consensus and democratic consultation.

The political model recognizes that decisions are made neither by bureaucratic fiat nor by simple consensus. Instead, it brings into the process power plays and conflict.

Many different groups of decision-makers exist within the academic setting. Most members of a college or university community are able to participate in the decision-making process, although the degree of participation varies, as does the openness of the decision system. In reality, even though most members of the academic community are able to participate in decision-making, only a few do.

B. Lamar Johnson, in describing the library program at Stephens College, identified the process whereby the decision was made to place the library in the center of the instructional program. First, a careful and critical evaluation of the college curriculum took place, presumably with much participation on the part of the faculty. Having received the report which formed the basis of the new curriculum, the entire college staff sought methods of implementing the new curriculum. At about this time President Wood, participating in a conference in California, attended a session on the place of the library in the college. There he was influenced by his conversation with a librarian who chastised all college administrators for not making possible a full and complete college library program. The librarian criticized administrators for hiring clerical workers as librarians or placing "super-annuated" teachers in

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charge, failing to provide funds, and offering few, if any, responsibilities to the librarian.¹⁰ Pondering methods whereby individualized instruction could be implemented at Stephens College, Wood decided: "We shall employ a librarian and place upon him such responsibilities that it will be impossible for him to be a mere clerical worker. We shall tell him that we want to place our library at the very center of our educational program, that we want no institutionalized library plan but that we want our library administered in terms of meeting the needs of individual students."¹¹

The major decisions at Stephens were influenced by the faculty, who decided upon the change in curriculum. The decisions were influenced also by the president, who was generally supportive of the entire program, who was first to consider placing the library in the forefront of the new curriculum, and who agreed to seek the necessary funds to mount the program. It may be presumed that the college trustees influenced the critical decisions, too. Librarians at Stephens did not participate in the decisions which initiated the program. They participated later in the operating decisions and in the day-to-day decisions of implementation. The role of the president in this case was critical, for without his enthusiasm, support and ability to generate funds, the program would have faltered at the outset.

The Stephens program attempted to bridge the gap between the faculty member responsible for curriculum design and course content and the librarian who supports that effort. The model of a single appointment with dual responsibilities was not emulated in other libraries, nor was it continued at Stephens. After President Wood retired and Dean Johnson left the college, the roles again were separated.

During the 1940s and 1950s librarians continued to talk about the gap between faculty and librarians while they developed new techniques, library courses and programs of instruction. Most of these offerings were outside or adjunct to the regular curriculum, the common exception being library instruction as a component of freshman English. The content of these programs continued to reflect Justin Winsor's outline of 1880.

During the 1960s and 1970s a number of academic programs were designed to integrate library instruction more formally into the curriculum. These programs owe much of their impetus to the influence of the college or university president. At Sangamon State University in Springfield, Illinois, the first president, Robert C. Spencer, played a major role in the decisions which led to an expanding program of library instruction.¹² President Spencer identified teaching as a central

component of the master plan for Sangamon, a new campus established in 1970. Teaching was to be emphasized over research. The educational philosophy of the university included the premise "that library competence is a valid objective of liberal education and, as such, the library has a responsibility to teach this competence."¹³ To support this premise Spencer put the library at the center of the instructional enterprise. Librarians were given a great deal of administrative support and the faculty were encouraged to form the teaching program around the library. Spencer outlined a number of strategies that were used at Sangamon to develop the teaching library and to enhance the influence of the librarians and the library.¹⁴ The librarians' technical skills were deemphasized and a major emphasis was placed upon their teaching responsibilities. The university librarian was designated a dean and the librarians were appointed to the faculty. As dean, the university librarian was expected to participate as a full member of the university's Academic Cabinet, which is charged with the development of academic policy. As faculty members, the librarians were expected to participate as full voting members in academic degree program committees. Librarians assisted with curriculum design and bibliographic development, and were eligible for membership in the Faculty Senate, for service on senate standing committees, and for election to university-wide committees dealing with appointment, promotion and tenure. Financial support for the library was provided by the president. The proportion of the institution's annual educational and general budget allocated to the library averaged about 10 percent during President Spencer's term, considerably above the figure of 6 percent suggested by the ACRL "Standards for College Libraries."¹⁵ Sangamon's program of integration of the library into instruction demanded that librarians be faculty members and that the library's budget be high. Both of these decisions were made by the university's first president as part of the university's first plan.

Alan Guskin, Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Parkside since 1975, described the role he played in introducing the library instruction program formally into the curriculum of that university and in expanding the concept of the teaching library there.¹⁶ The campus, established in 1965, undertook a review of its entire curriculum upon Guskin's arrival. One outcome of this review was the introduction of a campus-wide collegiate skills requirement. Students now are required to pass college-level competency exams in reading, writing, mathematics, and library research skills by the time they complete sixty credits, or they are dropped from the university. Guskin attributes the successful adoption of the library skills requirement to the support he gave the

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program, which was critical. He attributes the decision also to the formal participation of library staff members in the campus-wide planning effort, to the effective work of a senior library administrator on a major university-wide committee, and to the involvement of opinion leaders among the faculty in the initial design of the library's bibliographic instruction program, already underway when Guskin arrived. The financial support available to the library for the instruction program came primarily from reallocations within the library. Few, if any, new dollars were made available to the library from the administration.

The formation of Monteith College also was based upon an educational philosophy which emphasized teaching over research. The ambitious and influential library project designed and executed at Monteith by Patricia Knapp was funded by outside grant money. The project reflected the philosophy that the library must be an integral part of the instructional program. The college, established in 1959 as a subcollege of Wayne State University to improve the quality of undergraduate education, closed in 1975. Although many factors led to its closing (none of which reflected upon the contributions or lack of contributions of the library), the decline in support by the central administration at Wayne State was determined to be a crucial factor.¹⁷

In 1966 the president of Swarthmore College appointed a special committee to consider the function and operation of the library in the liberal arts college.¹⁸ The study was one of three commissioned that year by the president, the others being concerned with educational policy and student life. After a year's work, the library committee presented twenty-five recommendations designed to support the goal of expanding the role of the library in the intellectual life of the college.

One recommendation was that three divisional librarians be appointed, one each for the humanities, the social sciences and the sciences. These people were to hold a Ph.D. degree in an appropriate subject field and the MLS degree, and were to have experience in classroom teaching as well as library work. The assumption was the same as that held at Stephens College several decades earlier: the divisional librarian was expected in the role of librarian to know the library, its resources and its potential for curriculum support; and the divisional librarian was expected in the role of instructor in a particular discipline to know the requirements of the the curriculum. The duality of function was to enable the library to be integrated more fully into the educational program.

Another recommendation was that those librarians who participated directly in the program of instruction be accorded faculty status.

Although professorial titles were not recommended, the librarian, associate librarian, divisional librarians, and reference librarians were recommended for membership in the faculty; and with this came the right to vote, serve on faculty committees, and be eligible for travel and research grants and for sabbatical leaves.¹⁹

The Swarthmore Library study conceded to the faculty its traditional function of instruction. It accepted the library's obligations of helping faculty fulfill these functions. Many of the library committee's recommendations reflected an interest in sound collection development programs, extended library hours, and adequate budgets, in addition to supporting a more active role for the library in the educational process.

The impact of the committee's recommendations was not as pervasive as many had hoped. Only some of the recommendations were adopted.²⁰ Difficulties emerged in developing assignments which would serve the ends of a course of study while fostering library skills, and in convincing faculty members to include library skills in the instructional program. The appointment of divisional librarians also was delayed. That delay was determined to be a critical factor in the implementation of the library's program.²¹

The program of course-related instruction at Earlham College grew out of a library assignment an English professor handed to his class in 1965.²² The assignment was a difficult one, so librarians called the professor and arranged to meet with his class to talk about the assignment and the various reference sources which might be useful to its successful completion. From that modest beginning a program emerged of great importance to librarianship as practiced in the small liberal arts college. It had no impetus from the campus administration. It was not designed around a curriculum review. It was designed by librarians as a logical extension of the library's role of support to the educational program of the college.

Some influential programs of library instruction received their impetus initially from college presidents who were determined to review and change the curriculum. In other instances senior faculty members have participated in the central activity of program design through their work in the curriculum review. In a few cases librarians have participated actively in the committees which recommended that library programs be integrated more fully into the curriculum. In colleges such as Earlham, the informal interaction librarians have had with faculty members has led to a *de facto* program of bibliographic instruction, a program integrated informally rather than formally into the educational process.

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J. Victor Baldridge, a proponent of the political model of decision-making in universities, has constructed a four-step scale of participation in academic decision-making. In this model, participation varies from a small number of participants who are continually active to a large number of inactive or apathetic participants:

1. **The officials:** those committed to running the university. This group is the most politically active and has the most influence on decisions.
2. **Activists:** a small body of faculty members, intensely interested in university politics, serving in the campus committee system and in its advisory councils. Sometimes these people become partisans working outside the formal system in order to plan strategies to influence the formal system.
3. **Attentive public:** faculty members who watch the formal system from the sidelines. Basically, this is a group of onlookers unless an issue of importance to them is being considered. This group potentially is very powerful and thus exerts a great deal of indirect control over official decision-making.
4. **Apathetic:** those faculty members who never serve on committees and rarely show up for faculty meetings. Others, such as part-time faculty, lecturers, and teaching assistants, are also part of this very large group.²³

Librarians from time to time have sought membership in the more active groups of participants, but they are found only rarely among the officials or the activists.

A few descriptions exist of the librarian's role in the decision-making process of the college or university. Most of these prescribe a larger role and emphasize the privileges and responsibilities of librarians as faculty members. Patricia Knapp's work stands in stark contrast to most of this literature. She characterizes in a vivid way the role of the librarian in the political life of Monteith College. In a careful and objective account of the social structure of the college, she notes that while being a part of the course-planning group in the Science of Society Division of the college, the librarian never was truly a part of the "cohesive interacting group which [the faculty] quickly became....She was not accepted into full membership."²⁴ As the library project group continued to design and implement the famous Monteith program, librarians found they had never been fully accepted as members of the social science faculty. Once the librarians realized this, they turned to each other for support and developed into a solid and cohesive group themselves. Then the project began to take its ultimate shape. The final

decision on roles was made when the librarians abandoned their own attempts to become part of the faculty group and invited faculty members to join with the library project group. Faculty members had no difficulty gaining acceptance from the librarians, while librarians had grave difficulties in being accepted as members of the faculty.

Baldrige's study of decision-making shows that many people are active in the decisions made at the departmental levels, and that a high degree of participation is evident among the full-time faculty.²⁵ As one moves to the college and then to the campus levels, the numbers of participants become very much smaller. At the departmental level basic decisions are made regarding the curriculum and degree requirements. Although these decisions are ratified at the college and university levels, and the faculty through its senate generally retains control of curriculum design, the initial design and the critical decisions are made in the academic departments. The departmental faculty members have a broad influence on the curriculum and on the appointments and promotions within the department.

Deans of colleges have broad powers and influence in all areas, including budgeting, planning and overall curriculum development. The general administration, including the president or the chancellor, is strongest in the area of long-range planning and budgetary control.

The library traditionally has been accepted as existing to house and make available to students materials assigned to them by teachers. The library's role to teach useful research skills and to facilitate the habit of independent study has been less widely accepted. It is unlikely that a campus-wide program of bibliographic instruction will be adopted formally into the curriculum unless librarians engage on a regular basis in the decision-making which affects curriculum design. Even in those institutions where librarians participate regularly in faculty decisions, the formalization of bibliographic instruction programs is difficult, for these decisions are made at the departmental levels where librarians rarely participate. Dual appointments such as that at Stephens College or those recommended at Swarthmore College are efforts to influence decision-making at the departmental level. For a variety of reasons, such appointments are rarely made; even when implemented, they are rarely continued.

The role of the librarian as faculty member has been determined by some to be critical to the implementation of a formal program of integrating the library into the educational process. Librarians, however, are faculty members in relatively few institutions. It is thus necessary for librarians to find other ways to become active participants in the

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politics of academic decision-making if instructional programs are to be formally integrated.

Informal programs such as those as Earlham College are easier for librarians to achieve. The initiation and implementation of these programs depend almost entirely on the relationships between individual faculty members and individual librarians. Such informal programs rarely will have the continuity or the longevity librarians seek, for they will remain adjuncts to the regular curriculum. These programs will seldom be integrated freely into the educational process, for they will be designed most often within the context of a particular course offered by a particular instructor. By and large, the specific content of the course and the specific methods used in the course will be determined by the instructor.

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