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## Distance Library Education

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### ABSTRACT

THIS ARTICLE DEALS WITH an example of distance learning, in this case, a program in library education. After briefly discussing others' research on the topic, the author describes his own experiences in Rhode Island and California. The latter activity involves the development of a distance branch of an academic program on the campus of another university. The author describes the program in detail, citing opportunities, barriers, and achievements of the program.

### INTRODUCTION

The last fifteen years have witnessed, among other sociological phenomena, the loss of a number of accredited schools of library science. Beginning with the program at SUNY Geneseo, continuing on with Oregon, Minnesota, the University of Southern California, and most recently, the two most prestigious schools in our field, Chicago and Columbia (the direct descendant of Melvil Dewey's own school), more than a dozen programs have been lost. The list shows little regard for a program's size or academic reputation as a barrier to program discontinuance. Small or large, located on a modest campus or the campus of a very large school, with educational philosophies that stressed practical or research directions, private or public—none of the differences seem to matter. The schools continue

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LIBRARY TRENDS, Vol. 39, No. 4, Spring 1991, pp. 424-40

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to close. While of late there does seem to be growing evidence that the schools most at risk are private and research-oriented, one has the sense that no school is safe from threat.

Bleak though this picture is, there has been a growing trend to ameliorate at least some of the dislocation caused by the loss of programs. As the list of terminated schools continues to lengthen, there has been a concomitant effort by other schools to initiate a wide variety of educational programs that reach out to those who cannot come to a school's home campus. Whether those programs are categorized as "extension," "off-campus," or, in current usage, "distance education," the variety and number of such programs has grown almost yearly. Whatever the description, the delivery of educational opportunities to sites away from the home campus is hardly a new activity on the academic scene. That this issue of *Library Trends* is itself dedicated to the support of distance education is certainly indicative of the significance of such activities.

The author has worked, planned, and administered distance education programs ("extension" as it was called in the early 1970s) over a period of some years. In 1970, as a member of the faculty of the Graduate Library School at the University of Rhode Island, the author took part in the planning and initiation of an ambitious program in off-campus education. The Rhode Island program assigned members of its regular faculty to teach in the other five New England states, usually on the campus of the state university. The program was designed to teach courses that would enable students to begin the quest for their M.L.S. The objective was not to provide a full program at any of the institutions, but rather to teach a limited number of courses (generally "core" courses) that would significantly shorten the time students would be required to spend on the Kingston campus pursuing their M.L.S..

Later, as director of the School of Library Science at Norman, Oklahoma, the author was responsible for establishing the Oklahoma talk-back television program in library education, which beamed course offerings to students in Tulsa. Still later, as director of the Division of Library and Information Science at San Jose State University, the author has been responsible for the planning, initiation, and continuing administration of a program that is attempting to develop yet another type of off-site education—the institution of a branch campus.

The author will draw on that experience in his discussion of distance education and the problems inherent in all such distance education activities. That he has this experience is important, for

there is not much other material to draw on. The quotation below attests to the problems other researchers experienced when writing on the topic:

To date, there have been no library/information science dissertations and precious few journal articles that have specifically addressed the off-campus programs in terms of their ability to prepare people for successful careers. In Spring 1987 the JOURNAL OF EDUCATION FOR LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE published an entire issue devoted to the topic of distance education.... (Maggio & Blazek, 1990, p. 316)

Maggio and Blazek were writing on the paucity of information on the effectiveness of distance education as reflected in the quality of those graduating from such programs. But they could well have been writing about any aspect of the topic. There is very little that describes the current scene with any comprehensiveness, and even this article will not do that. There is a significant need for some ambitious individual to undertake a study of what is happening on a national scale.

### DISTANCE EDUCATION DELIVERY SYSTEMS

The literature speaks of two delivery systems, one using technology of some sort and the other of placing a faculty member in front of a group of students. The technology is, itself, divided as well. On one hand, there is the more advanced and expensive satellite transmission which, according to Barron (1987), is usually reserved for schools of business or engineering. On the other hand, there is television, which appears to be the technology of choice for library schools. The use of computer conferencing has yet to become a major focus in this effort.

In her 1987 article, Barron describes her efforts to develop a children's literature course for the University of South Carolina. That article describes the best and the worst of television production and delivery.

She enumerates the efforts of course experts, television production crews, and script writers to assemble a fifteen-unit program on children's picture books. As she lays out the activity and results, what emerges is a picture of a substantial level of support that is most likely well beyond the reach of most library schools. From student responses, it is clear her efforts paid off in encouraging learning and use of the materials she was teaching. At the same time, she tends to gloss over the harder issues—i.e., limited student counseling and advisement, the brevity of student/faculty interaction, and, most important, the enormous cost of production. Barron states that: "Actual production of the videos (15) took about a year and a half, and required a full team of professionals" (p. 253). It is precisely

because of the cost factor that most televised delivery systems stay with the more traditional and less dramatic "talk-back" system. The instructor teaches in a studio, usually in front of a regular class. The instructor's desk is equipped with a telephone. The program is usually broadcast to one location, and in that classroom the students also have access to the telephone, which they use to raise questions and contribute to the discussion.

The author's experience with both talk-back and commercial television has proved how much less engaging and exciting the talk-back system is. It is not what McLuhan had in mind when he spoke of the Global Village. Adding color cameras (very costly) and color monitors (more expense) can only add an element of "bells and whistles." Too frequently, the crew (often a single individual) televising the class is not properly prepared, and without proper preparation the almost inevitable result is terribly dull video. The telephone is even more limiting. It may be the author's bias, but the excitement and intellectual stimulation of classroom discussions are, for him, a major means of facilitating learning in the classroom. One student on a telephone at one time destroys that possibility. Even talk-back requires much preparation. Television is a visual medium, and the usual lecture style of most library science faculty is not. Most library school faculty have had very little preparation in terms of teaching techniques and style and thus lack even a rudimentary preparation for the visual medium.

Let us consider some of the other factors affecting distance education with particular attention to examples drawn from library science programs. Any course taught off-site still requires a certain level of interaction with people on the main campus for purposes of advisement and the like. The larger the distances to be covered, the greater the burden on the program. Requiring students to come to the main campus for student advisement is one thing in a state the size of, say, South Carolina. Requiring the same in one of the larger western states is quite another matter.

The diversity of available library collections is another vexing problem. Most states have more than one large city or large academic library at which students can and do find materials for basic reference and management courses, as well as various literature courses. But even the large academic libraries do not collect the full range of materials required for a library science program, either in monographic or serial formats. Barron's assurance that many libraries in South Carolina purchased copies of the thirty titles recommended on her program does not entirely alleviate one's concern regarding the availability of library resources (though we may not be dealing

with the best example here, for Barron's [1987] course does not seem to have been concerned with a library school course framework) (p. 255).

With regard to the personal mode of course delivery, one must acknowledge that the use of human instructors at off-campus sites has its own difficulties. Those difficulties are frequently caused by the unwillingness of the home campus faculty to be involved in such programs. The author remembers, as a junior professor with a family to support, having the "opportunity" to drive 175 miles one way to teach two sections of his management course and then drive 175 miles home. He quickly availed himself of this opportunity so as to provide an important addition to the family budget. Later, as director of an off-campus program, he found regular faculty unwilling to travel to distant locations on the grounds that the trip to Southern California from San Jose required a full day, or worse, an overnight stay. Given the demands of the university in teaching and research, such travel can indeed be an onerous burden. Often adjunct (temporary) faculty must be recruited and trained. Some library programs require that regular faculty be prepared to teach one course off-campus or face the risk that tenure will not be granted. Although this author strongly desires to see off-campus programs succeed, such measures seem quite Draconian.

If one cannot rely on the regular faculty, then one must search for adjunct instructors and that is difficult indeed. In a professional community such as San Jose's, where many adjuncts are employed, it is a relatively easy matter to find out who the "good people" in the vicinity are and encourage them to apply. It is another thing when the teaching site is hundreds of miles away.

Instructing temporary faculty about the way courses are taught, what must be covered, problems with grading, and student advisement, all present serious problems that must be addressed if a modicum of academic success is the objective. Even with an on-site coordinator providing direct management, recruitment and support of qualified instructors is difficult and uncertain at best, and carries the potential for academic disaster at worst.

Physical resources are another matter. Location of teaching sites, whether for televised or personal instruction, is a problem. If the site chosen belongs to another institution, faculty of the host institution wonder why members of other universities are using their campus when "there is already too little space for our own programs." Moreover, teaching tools such as microcomputers must be available, but frequently they are not. When one engages in off-campus adventures, one quickly finds that teaching library and information science in a contemporary fashion is not so easily transferable from

place to place as one had imagined. The availability or rather unavailability of library resources presents problems. Altogether, the difficulties to be faced are similar to those experienced when teaching televised courses.

#### DISTANCE EDUCATION AND THE ISSUE OF ACCREDITATION

It was previously established that there is little in print describing off-campus education for library science. There is even less which investigates the impact off-campus programs have on the professional accreditation of schools. As most of us know, the ALA Committee on Accreditation (COA) is the agency which grants official professional accreditation to library schools. Its power is, in the contemporary idiom, awesome. Those developing off-campus programs, regardless of the medium of delivery, must consider every step of the way how the proposed program will be viewed by the committee. That may sound extreme, but anyone who has experienced the COA's concern about off-campus activities knows it is a reality.

The committee has consistently taken the stand that is not opposed to off-campus library education. Yet, little on the subject has emanated from the committee save one brief set of guidelines for those seeking accreditation. Those of us in library education are left with no other evidence of the committee's attitude toward off-campus education beyond hearsay, rumor, and the few pronouncements by those members of the committee who have addressed the matter in their writings. An example of this occurs in Maggio and Blazek (1990). They make the following statement about Kenneth Beasley (a former lay member of the COA, on whose 1984 article they draw). "[He felt it to be] exceedingly difficult for the Committee to judge the quality of off-campus programs, particularly due to the lack of resources." Maggio and Blazek then continue: "In effect, he subscribes to the 'inferior education' theory in his reflection that off-campus instruction is primarily a tool used by library school administrators to shore up their enrollments for the home campus" (p. 316).

Quite recently, there was a welcome change, coming in the form of a document published by the COA in July 1990. The two-page statement of clear and specific guidelines about how off-campus programs should be conducted makes clear the criteria by which a particular off-campus program will be evaluated. For the professional librarian used to dealing with quantitative standards such as books per capita, reserve book room transactions, and the like, the two pages might appear less than sufficient. But the clarity of these statements makes it far easier for library schools to judge their effectiveness in the maintenance of their programs. Most important

of all, in the author's opinion, is the very fact that such a statement has been made. It is positive evidence that the COA has, indeed, recognized the importance of off-campus library education and has taken positive steps to demonstrate that awareness.

### DISTANCE EDUCATION AND THE STUDENT

The author is indebted to the work of Curran in 1985 and Blazek in 1990 for much of what follows. They provide cogent and thoughtful insights into the issue of how students (part-time and distant) respond to off-site education. The work of Maggio and Blazek also provide the first documentation about what many of us have "felt" about part-time and distant students. Each of these authors rejects the elitism expressed by Beasley and those who view the academic world as he does:

for there is a potent mythology that attends the subject of the part-time student. It is a mythology that is part fact and part fiction—a belief system influenced by contradictory legends. In fact, one of those questionable beliefs may be embodied in the very title of this article. Why presume that part-time learners, distant or close, are any different from their full-time brothers and sisters, and why suggest that they should be regarded differently by planners and deliverers of distant education programs? (Curran, 1987, p. 241)

Curran's article is a thought piece meant to raise serious issues. He suggests that more investigation is necessary to gain an accurate picture of part-time and distant learners. His final question is well worth considering here. After describing the sort of aggressive behavior required of those who attend part-time or at a distance from the main campus, since they must struggle with all sorts of difficulties the full-time student rarely encounters, Curran asks: "If library schools continue to offer opportunities to part-time students who are aggressive, career-oriented extroverts, what will happen to that column on image in AMERICAN LIBRARIES" (p. 246)?

Three years later, Maggio and Blazek (1990) published the results of a study which examined whether there were significant differences between graduates of programs on campus and off campus. Considering a variety of factors, they found little measurable difference.

both on-campus and off-campus graduates are similar in their undergraduate educational background, membership in state professional associations, and participation in continuing education. Neither group does much speech-making, or writing of books or articles. Each is equally satisfied with the job; aspirations for positions in the future are similar. Most important, both groups have a similar view of the adequacy of their preservice education. (p. 326)

And later:

Even if we concede the fact that resources for instruction are superior on campus, this feature does not necessarily translate into more successful (better-prepared) graduates, at least inasmuch as this can be measured in terms of career growth and progress of those graduates. Quality of the product in many cases is in the mind of the consumer; the student is at first a consumer of the education and second a product of the program. There is no evidence that points to any real differences in either respect when compared to his/her campus counterpart. (pp. 326-27)

And, in two comments that clearly echo Curran:

They (schools providing off-campus education) have succeeded in producing a substantial group of individuals who appear to be the equal of their campus counterparts in every way, when judged by professional accomplishment....

In summation, it would appear that the future of the library and information science field is enhanced with the entry of career-oriented, mature individuals who are appreciative of their educational opportunity. (p. 328)

### THE CALIFORNIA AND RHODE ISLAND EXPERIENCES

The distance education delivery strategy used by the University of Rhode Island in the early 1970s was mentioned in the first part of this discussion. Teaching faculty were recruited from the full-time faculty of the library school, and to that number several part-time, on-site adjunct instructors were added. Students were provided a good deal of contact with the home campus through the presence of regular faculty. That presence meant a closer approximation of home campus atmosphere. The program was operated by the university's continuing education program.

The concept had much to commend it besides the use of regular faculty. The program was supported by the university, because Rhode Island's library school had been declared the "official" library school by the New England Board of Higher Education, a regional academic planning and coordinating body. There were surprisingly few "turf" difficulties with the library program at Simmons, which even then claimed the nation's largest library science student body, and saw in the Rhode Island program no competition for prospective students.

There were problems, of course. The faculty were split over the idea. Some were very much opposed to it because the time and energy required to drive distances of 175 miles or more on one day meant that much less time and energy available for research and publishing. Library resources were never adequate, and no effort was made to adequately develop these. Not all of the campuses served found the program attractive. One of the states had considered opening its own library school, and when it was prevented from doing so, blamed the Rhode Island program for intervening, a claim with little substance. Members of the Rhode Island alumni were opposed because they, too, were fearful that the resource drain was taking time away

from the development of the program on the home campus. That the Rhode Island program had its ALA accreditation removed a few years later may attest to the accuracy of that criticism.

While faculty were logging thousands of miles each semester to improve their salaries, things were not getting done in Kingston. Program planning and curriculum development were neglected. The pace and direction of the program suffered because faculty were split too many ways.

When the author was given the opportunity to develop and initiate a major off-campus effort in California a dozen years later, the issue of human resource use was a critical one. Without doubt, the regular faculty of any program will provide more effective education than nonacademic colleagues. If students at distance sites do so well with mostly adjunct and media-delivered faculty, how much better might they do if the faculty in the front of their classes had the same academic credentials as those on the home campus, were promoted and tenured using the same criteria as those on the home campus, and performed the same duties as the home campus faculty? Yet the use of regular faculty produced more difficulties than could be overcome.

The impetus for the California program, now being operated by the Division of Library and Information Science of San Jose State University, came from the library community in Southern California. Events in the region, which encompasses a population of 18 million people in Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, and San Bernardino counties, had left but one accredited library school in the area, UCLA, a two-year program, which tended to discourage students from attending on a part-time basis. Those who needed to work and lived thirty or forty miles from the UCLA campus might spend two hours commuting each way, which, when added to a six-hour academic day, left little time for working.

The library school at the University of Southern California had been closed in 1987. The library school at California State University, Fullerton, was unable to secure accreditation from the American Library Association and was closed in the late 1970s. Thus, in an area with a population perhaps twice that of the greater New York City area, which then boasted seven library schools with educational opportunities for between 1,500 and 2,000 students, only one school existed, providing educational opportunities for perhaps 250 to 300 persons.

The most difficult issue for the Southern California counties was (and remains) how best to respond to the desire for educational opportunities that would provide the best parts of the on-campus experience long distance. One answer that quickly suggested itself

was, "Build a 'clone' of the campus program on another campus." In other words, the effort would be made to build a branch program on the campus of one of the other California State University campuses. (It should be noted that others were at work in similar vineyards. Rosemary Ruhig DuMont, dean of the Library School at Kent State University, and Robert Swisher, director of the program at the University of Oklahoma, were also working to build similar types of programs.)

Determining the area's demographic needs was the easiest part of the problem. The question was how to respond to that need with effective programming. The program was deliberately designed to duplicate the program on the home campus as closely as possible. Students would be admitted to the San Jose program using the same admission process and standards as are used on the San Jose campus. Retention would be governed by similar standards. So, too, would faculty recruitment and retention.

The proposal was taken to the division's faculty. Some faculty were opposed, citing the "obvious" drawbacks in any kind of off-campus education. Others were fearful the off-campus program would fragment faculty resources. Fortunately, there were enough in favor of the idea. After several months, it was voted to go forward with the program.

The next step was to gain the university's approval. Responses there mirrored those within the division. Fortunately, the university's chief decision-maker, the president, was in favor of the idea and urged others in the administration to support it as well. That took additional time and was followed by the task of gaining approval of the university's accrediting body, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). WASC required a full description of the program and its proposed implementation.

After more than eighteen months, the program was ready to be implemented. The faculty, realizing they could not predict whether the program would develop poorly or well, requested a trial period to test program feasibility. The distance between San Jose and what eventually became its temporary branch home, CSU Fullerton, is more than 400 miles. All connected with the program wondered whether it would be possible to make such a program happen while maintaining quality education. Would it be possible to find quality faculty? Would it be possible to maintain student quality given the lack of direct control? These were some of the questions raised. Because of the questions, it was decided to make the program experimental for two years. The chief problem was that, during those years, students would be required to pay the entire cost of the program, a significant sum, particularly in light of what California normally charges its

students for higher education. Six (6) semester units of work at San Jose will cost a student \$375 in 1991-92. The division's branch program costs a student \$500 per three-unit course.

The next matter to be solved was the location of the program. Over a period of a year, the author traveled throughout Southern California seeking a home for the program. Finally, the administration of CSU Fullerton offered the program a two-year "home." Fullerton believed the program would enable it to provide a special service to its area. San Jose would exercise academic control, and Fullerton would provide quarters and support.

The problems of establishing a program on another campus arose at once. All California State University programs are cramped for space. The introduction of a program from another campus is not a way of easing those problems. Many Fullerton faculty wondered why, if a library science program was wanted, Fullerton didn't start one. And there were many who wondered why a library education program was being considered at all. Fortunately, the staff of the university library, under the direction of Richard Pollard, provided the program with a place to teach courses, but the turf problem continues.

Once a place was established where classes could be held, it became possible to begin faculty and student recruitment. Advertisements for faculty and students were published in a variety of sources and positive results were quick in coming. In the first year, the program boasted a faculty whose qualifications were the equal of the faculty of any library school in the nation; it boasted alumni of the University of Southern California, UCLA, Illinois, and Chicago. Over 200 student applications were received by the time the first class began.

Enrollment in the first semester was 171 class registrations (34.2 full-time equivalent students [FTE/S]). That has grown to more than 322 (64.2 FTE/S) in less than two years. With the increases in the student body came the need to recruit and appoint regular faculty, two of whom have been appointed for Fall 1991.

The author taught a class in Fullerton since he was responsible for on-site management of the program. The travel became the onerous burden it was expected to be. More recently, an on-site coordinator has been appointed, and her presence has made an immediate difference. Gay T. Kinman is the acting associate director. Without her on-site direction and the on-campus support of the division's associate director, William Fisher, the program could not have succeeded.

The program received no funding from San Jose State University nor from the California State University system. Because the program

was experimental, it would have to demonstrate there was a need for the classes, and that those who wanted the classes would pay the high cost. Only after marketability had been proved was there hope of receiving university funding. The faculty agreed to a two-year trial, with the provision that the program would be continued only if it were to receive state support at the end of the trial period. There being no funding for start-up costs, the program was only able to open thanks to the enlightened generosity of Edward M. Syznaka, director of the Pasadena Public Library, who was responsible for a gift of \$21,000 from the Pasadena Library Foundation.

While the Fullerton library had retained most of the collection that had supported the former library school, the collection was old with enormous gaps. The division used some of the Pasadena gift to begin augmenting the Fullerton collection, while Fullerton also began making contributions to enhance the collection.

Later, a strategy to use resources at San Jose's University Library was devised. Using telefacsimile, students in Fullerton request materials from San Jose. Transmissions are sent to the division's office. A graduate student is assigned to take the requests to the university library, find the materials, and copy them. In turn, the materials are faxed to the division's office in Fullerton and the copies in San Jose destroyed. This solution seemed an elegant one by making use of existing resources (limiting duplication) and using the best of contemporary technology, thus modeling for its students.

The microcomputer is completely integrated into the division's academic program. Fully three-quarters of the courses in the curriculum make some or much use of the micro, and no student leaves the San Jose program without a significant level of competency with the technology. San Jose is, after all, the library school for Silicon Valley. But technology was in short supply that first year. To ease the problem, no courses using the microcomputer were offered in the first semester. But that would only be one semester, and a search was undertaken to find locations where technology might be available. The reader may wonder why such questions were not answered at the outset. We thought we had answered these questions, but when the program opened, one reason or another was offered as to why no technology would be available. In the second semester, we tried using a micro lab operated by the State University system, but this proved unworkable. The lab agency's mission did not make room for a busy schedule of classes and students using labs at all hours. In the summer, a nearby junior college rented teaching and lab space to the division, but that also proved unsuccessful. Thanks

to the dedication of the faculty—all of whom were part-time persons with no real ties to San Jose—the students received a very creditable education in technology.

More recently, the acting associate director made contact with the Department of Computer Science on the Fullerton campus. The faculty there extended a formal invitation to sponsor the division's programs on the Fullerton campus and provide classroom and microcomputer laboratory space for the program. The division pays a rental for each semester, but has access to more microcomputers in Fullerton than it has on its own campus. Because of the interest of the two departments in handling information, we are exploring the possibility of joint programs, perhaps even dual degree programs.

Gradually, the program is coming together. The usual number of first-year and second-year mistakes were made. Anticipated problems about turf arose and continue to cloud the program's future destination. Problems of resource availability were at least as difficult as they were expected to be. To provide even greater access for students as well as fewer difficulties for the host campus, the division has scheduled its program to function almost entirely as a "Weekend College." That approach should make for fewer difficulties in finding available rooms. Fullerton, like many of its sister campuses, is mainly a commuter college with a much smaller list of offerings on the weekend. Beginning in Fall 1991, two of the core courses will be offered at the Pasadena Public Library. The main reason for this extension is the problem presented by commuting in Southern California.

As noted earlier, the San Jose faculty had voted to operate the program for a two year period, at the end of which it would either be discontinued or, as was expected to occur, the Fullerton branch would have been incorporated into the division's regular program by the California State University system with the necessary financial support forthcoming as well. And, in fact, a proposal for just such a plan had been sent forward to the Office of the Chancellor with high hopes for its success.

But at that very moment, the financial picture in California higher education was turning from difficult to bleak to crisis. With what would become a \$14.8 billion shortfall in the state's budget, it was clear that cuts, not additions, would be the order of the day. The university was forced to cancel hundreds of classes, an act repeated on all campuses. The faculty found itself in a serious dilemma. While sentiment for continuation of the program in a self-support mode was nonexistent, the faculty recognized that the outpouring of interest on the part of students and prospective students in Southern California clearly articulated the need for precisely what was being

carried out. The decision was made to continue the program until funds were provided by the system to regularize arrangements, or until one of the university's sister campuses in Southern California was prepared to accept administrative responsibility for what would be a new library school. The last arrangement had been made feasible because two of those sister campuses had shown definite interest in taking the program over. Members of several Fullerton departments have asked their AVP to establish a faculty committee to study the matter while another institution awaits the outcome of that effort to begin its own exploration of the matter.

When the program was originally planned, contact was made with the Committee on Accreditation to explore whether San Jose might inaugurate the program, then relinquish it to another institution. The key to any such devolution was that it would have to be accredited by ALA without the usual lengthy period before a team from the committee was sent to evaluate the new program. At that time, however, the position of the committee was that making an accreditation visit immediately after such a shift was not possible. But a change has apparently taken place.

The author recently developed a position paper on the possible future for library education in California. That effort was submitted to the library directors of the CSU campuses and attempted to outline possible options. One option was to establish San Jose as the "Library School for California" (or at least for the twenty-campus State University System). A second option was to seek ways to encourage ALA to develop a procedure whereby one school could start a program, later turning it over to another. A copy of the document was provided to the Committee on Accreditation. (The committee's accreditation officer, June Lester, responded and the quotation following is from that response. It should be noted that the quotation addresses not only the possible transfer of programs, but other issues raised in the document as well. This distinction is important in order that Lester's words be read in the proper context.)

My reading of the various proposals is that they relate not to basic issues that should be treated in the STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION, but rather to the procedures by which those Standards are implemented. The constraints that currently exist in regard to initial accreditation of programs, transfer of programs and the like, are promulgated in the MANUAL OF PROCEDURES FOR EVALUATION VISITS, not in the Standards. Hence, I would suggest that the appropriate area for discussion is not within the context of Standards revision, but rather through approaching COA with suggestions for procedural change. Such change could occur either in the current MANUAL or in the new revised MANUAL that will be promulgated to implement the revised standards. Another approach would be to devise creative solutions that are permissible within the context of current procedures. I can assure you that COA is receptive to innovation and creativity in the design and delivery of graduate library education programs....My comments are

offered with the caveat that these are my interpretations of the current COA understanding of the Standards. (June Lester to the author, personal communication, July 20, 1990)

Since that time, an illustrative "schedule" has been developed by the committee demonstrating how one school might step away from its responsibility for the program while a second school stepped into its place. As Lester suggested, the issue was not with the standards, but rather the way the standards are implemented. It is clear the committee is aware of the need to treat these new and innovative programs in new and innovative ways.

What is gradually being forged is a new educational policy for the State of California. While this is not the first attempt at institutional cooperation, it is the first of this type. Decision-makers in the office of the chancellor of the California State University have indicated a serious interest in the concept. The cost of establishing new professional programs anywhere, and certainly in California, has kept most institutions from mounting them. But if it were possible for two or more institutions to work together to extend educational opportunities where none had heretofore existed, the benefits would accrue to all involved—institutions, faculty, and students. Providing citizens with greater access to their educational institutions has great appeal. Thus the San Jose concept is being looked at as a model for other programs in California. When those programs look at the San Jose model, they will see one that has been able to deliver on its major objective, graduates with education the equal of those on the home campus. The San Jose experience confirms the findings of Maggio and Blazek (1990), that students in distance-learning situations show little difference from their counterparts on the home campus. Of the thirty students in the program who have taken the division's comprehensive examination, three failed, a 10 percent failure rate compared to the 12 percent failure rate on campus.

From the enrollment numbers noted earlier in this article, it is clear that the division's program has enabled a number of persons to take advantage of the opportunities created. In the course of my teaching and counseling activities within the program, I have been privileged to hear many stories of what the San Jose program meant to those participating in it. The numbers of women, many of them single parents, finally able to empower themselves for challenging and rewarding careers, the numbers of those who would no longer be stuck in low-paying, dead-end jobs—such stories were told again and again. For many, the classes meant harrowing times on California's decaying freeways, and some students drove 200 miles each way for class. For many others, the expense of the courses caused financial strains. Yet they persisted. These realities of many for whom

the new program means new lives, mean that all the effort and stress have not been expended in vain. The psychic reward from such an experience is substantial.

What lessons can be learned from the San Jose experience? The first is perhaps the most surprising. While there are turf issues when moving onto a new campus, it is just as likely one will find many potential friends. Now that the program has found strong support from the Computer Science Department, a member of the history faculty at Fullerton has come forward to offer suggestions for joint programs with his department. It was surprising to find, in the midst of so many schools slipping away, the interdisciplinary interest in library and information science education.

Another equally interesting phenomenon has been the infusion of new ideas for curriculum development from the Southern California program. Several new courses have already emerged including courses dealing with services to multicultural groups, multicultural collections, women in librarianship, archival administration, and the evaluation of library programs. Moreover, the move to Southern California has enabled the division to more easily find multicultural faculty to teach its courses.

Still a third development is emerging from the library directors of the California State University libraries. Faced with growing, sometimes insurmountable difficulties recruiting beginning professionals to replace the growing numbers of retiring staff, a figure that will number one-half by the millennium, the directors are currently working on a White Paper which recommends new and far-ranging strategies for the development of a multi-faceted approach to library education in California, using San Jose as the centerpiece of that effort.

Because the program is designed to go where students are, rather than bring them someplace else, the multicultural student body has grown appreciably. Prior to the opening of the program, the division's multicultural students had numbered between 12 and 14 percent. With the opening of the new program, that total jumped to 25 percent. It is clear that innovation in the academic world is far more difficult than imagined. Those who provide distance educational opportunities must do so with the realization that their lot will not be an easy one. Yet, just as certainly, those willing to risk the difficulties find that new levels of professional achievements open as they open new opportunities for others. For those interested in being at the cutting edge, distance library education is one place to be.

But perhaps the most interesting lesson is that new growth, as in nature, emerges from the old. The distance education programs are a new growth, offering new educational opportunities in our

field as we lose programs with long and honored traditions. It is truly in keeping with the words of Ecclesiastes: "To every thing there is a time, and a season to every purpose...." And as we move to renew and recreate, we make our education more responsive to human need. There is no more honorable objective.

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