

WLA ALD/ACRL-WA

NEWSLETTER



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Hello!

It's been six months since I joined the WLA ALD Steering Committee, and I'm pleased with what we've done so far, but I look forward to an even more active fall.

In this issue you will get to read summaries of the two drop-in conversations we have hosted so far this year: Managing Equipment and Showing Your Value. Both discussions engaged librarians from a variety of institutions and brought up fascinating differences and similarities in the work we do. As always, all members are welcome to attend these conversations, suggest topics, and even facilitate if so inspired!

This fall we look forward to hosting a few more drop-ins, but will also be excitedly promoting the joint ALD/ACRL-WA and ACRL-OR Joint Fall Conference to be held in person October 25, 2024, at Reed College in Portland, Oregon. The theme of this year's conference is "New Connections," and we are looking forward to learning about the innovative ways you are forming new connections in your communities, leveraging technologies to improve user experience, and showcasing all that libraries have to offer. ACRL-OR invites proposals that highlight diverse perspectives, share practical tips, and offer insight into the myriad new connections that make library work transformative. The submission deadline is June 30. Submitters will be notified by July 12. Conference registration will open in August, and scholarships will be made available at that time.

Shortly after the joint conference, Inland Infolit will be making its return to Spokane. The date is TBD, but coming soon!

Thank you for continuing to add your voice to our organization; it is so important for our collective professional growth to maintain our community. If you have ideas for future opportunities for academic library workers in the state to connect, please don't hesitate to reach out to the Steering Committee.

Carleigh Hill

Library Consortium Services Manager, WACTCLC
2024 ALD/ACRL-WA Division Chair

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A HOW-TO GUIDE FOR CREATING AN ENGLISH CONVERSATION GROUP AT YOUR ACADEMIC LIBRARY

Chelsea Nesvig

Global & Policy Studies/Research & Instruction Librarian

UW Bothell & Cascadia College Campus Library

The UW Bothell & Cascadia College Campus Library serves more than 8,000 students enrolled on our campus. Nearly 3,500 of those are Cascadia College students, 18% of whom are learning English as an additional language via the College & Career Foundations (CCF) department. This population includes both international and domestic students.

Step 1: After having a conversation with your new library director in early 2023, receive some encouragement from him that starting an English conversation group to support English language learner students would be a welcomed and supported idea. Know that you will be able to rely on some of your past experience volunteering for Talk Time at the Seattle Public Library.

Step 2: Reach out to a faculty member in the CCF department with whom you already have a good working relationship to see if they'd be interested in collaborating on organizing this. Also, reach out to staff in the Cascadia International Programs Office.

Step 3: In the meantime, start brainstorming a plan for your campus context. Use discussion materials and ideas offered by librarian colleague Sue Wozniak at the Lake Washington Institute of Technology. Attend a conversation group session at LW Tech to see an academic library conversation group like this in action.

Step 4: When both the CCF faculty and international programs staff members say they are interested in putting together a conversation group, have a meeting to start talking about the details and a way to pilot a first session. Secure space for the sessions in a library meeting room.

Step 5: Draft fliers and get the word out to both Cascadia and UW Bothell students about a first conversation group session in May of 2023. After seven students attend, realize there is likely enough interest for this to continue during the 2023-2024 academic year.

Step 6: Meet again during the summer to finalize plans and promotional fliers for the fall quarter conversation group sessions. Decide that meeting every other week (five sessions per quarter) is a manageable and sustainable schedule for the time being.

Step 7: During early fall quarter, publicize conversation group sessions via fliers and emails to other CCF faculty. Watch students attend, and then attend again! During winter and spring quarter sessions, see other faculty members show up out of curiosity and interest.

Step 8: Continue hosting sessions through spring quarter, even when "spring fever" hits and attendance dips a bit. Brainstorm ways to increase attendance again. Look forward to the next academic year while continuing and improving on the work done so far as you support Cascadia and UW Bothell students with their English conversation skills.

Notes and acknowledgments

I'd like to acknowledge all of the resources shared and questions answered by librarian Sue Wozniak at the Lake Washington Institute of Technology. Thank you, Sue! I would also like to acknowledge and thank both Dave Dorratcague, Cascadia CCF faculty member, and Kareen Kanjo, international student advisor, for their dedication to the English conversation group and their continued work with me on planning, promotion, and execution.

UW TACOMA SENSORY FRIENDLY ROOM

Martha Rabura

Reference Specialist and MLIS student at University of Washington

One of my favorite parts of a project is taking a moment to pause, look back, and reflect on the beginning. It is pure joy to see the progress and growth that has been accomplished over the past few months. Last fall, with the guidance of my supervisors Alaina Bull and Johanna Jacobsen Kiciman, I started drafting a proposal to transform an underused library classroom at the University of Washington Tacoma Library into a sensory-friendly study space. My hope was to create a space that would address the barriers faced by our neurodivergent students and promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in our library spaces. At the time, the proposal felt like a pipe dream. Now five months later, a pilot for the room has been approved –and funded– and I have a pile of packages surrounding my desk, ready to be unboxed and make the dream a reality.

The pilot program for the room will soft launch this summer or early fall. Initial items purchased for the room seek to address the different facets of overstimulation and create a genuine space of joy, respite, and belonging. The room will include fluorescent light covers of the night sky to make the room lighting sensory-friendly and create a calming atmosphere. There will also be dimmable desk lamps so students can adjust the light to their specific needs. There will be a white noise machine and noise-canceling headphones to reduce outside noise disturbance and overstimulation. Multiple different seating options will be available including a beanbag, wobble chair, and floor cushions. The room will also have an adjustable desk to allow students flexibility when studying. Lastly, there will be fidget gadgets and a weighted blanket to help ease anxiety and stress. As the sensory-friendly study space progresses and we gain feedback through assessment from users of the space, we hope to continue building upon the resources the room has available.

Since the space is also occasionally used for instruction and other purposes, the plan is to make it easily transitional from a sensory-friendly study room into a classroom with minimal setup and take down. Some aspects of the space will be more permanent to make the room sensory-friendly and accessible regardless of use. This design was inspired, in part, by a [similar plan at West Chester University](#) to turn a classroom into a transitional and part-time study space for neurodivergent students (Walton & McMullin, 2021). The accessibility-centered work of other university libraries has been a source of tremendous inspiration and informative knowledge throughout the entirety of this project. However, this is still relatively new work for university libraries and there is much to learn and progress to be made.

The sensory-friendly study room aims to be in line with the mission of UW Tacoma Library “to help our students, faculty, and staff achieve their goals.” Due to systematic barriers and additional challenges created by historically ableist structures and spaces, these goals may be harder to achieve for individuals who identify as neurodivergent. As an institution, we have the opportunity to combat systemic discrimination by providing intentional resources, like sensory-friendly rooms, that reflect the needs of our diverse campus community. The sensory-friendly study room builds upon already existing inclusive spaces and programming, such as our caregiver-child study carrels and Real Lit Book Club, and UW Tacoma Library aspires to continue investing in our diverse communities and inspiring other institutions to do the same.

POSTCARD POP-UP AT SEATTLE UNIVERSITY LEMIEUX LIBRARY AND MCGOLDRICK LEARNING COMMONS

Lydia Bello

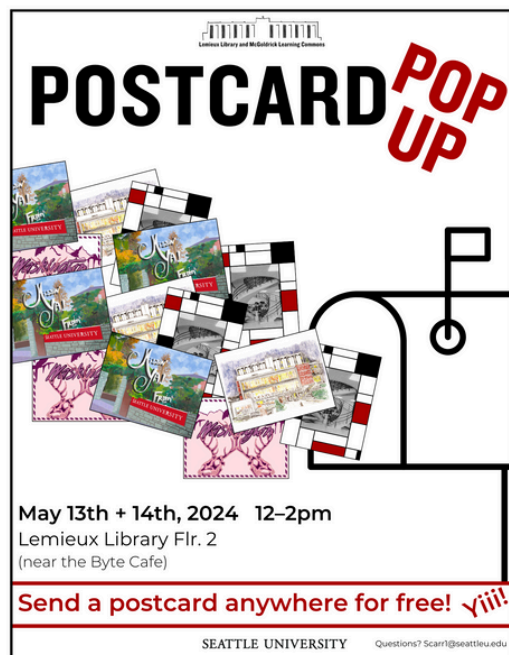
Director, Research Services and Science and Engineering Librarian, Seattle University

During 2023-2024 academic year the Lemieux Library and McGoldrick Learning Commons hosted a series of casual events designed to connect students to the library in a welcoming and inclusive way. One such program was our “Post Card Pop Up,” a quarterly tabling event where we offer free postcards and stamps for students to send postcards to anyone they like.

Twice a quarter the Library staffed a table for a two-hour shift in a high-traffic area near one of our iDesks. We offered free postcards and stamps (international and domestic), as well as pens, a list of campus addresses for easy reference, and candy. Students were welcome to sit and write a postcard or take a postcard with them. We collected and stamped the postcards we collected before putting them in the mail.

Over the course of the year the Library expanded our selection of postcards. Our first postcard was a reproduction of an image from Special Collections, our second was art designed by a staff member, and after running a design contest in Winter Quarter 2024, we were able to offer two postcards that had student art! Postcards were printed through our campus printing services.

The Postcard Pop Ups are a low cost and low effort way to build a welcoming presence in the library. Offering free postcards is a great way to connect with students, and many students sent postcards to parents, family, and friends. Over the course of six pop-ups the library mailed approximately 226 postcards on behalf of the Seattle University community. Anecdotally, students complemented the postcard art, appreciated seeing art created by their peers, and enjoyed learning about the history of the Library building. The Library looks forward to hosting more pop-ups and adding more postcards to our collection!



Left: Image used to promote Postcard Pop Up for Spring Quarter 2024

Right: Science and Engineering Librarian Lydia Bello and Student Engagement Librarian Shelley Carr staff the Postcard Pop Up for Winter Quarter 2024

AI UNCONFERENCE AT SEATTLE UNIVERSITY

Ekaterini Papadopoulou

Health Science Librarian, Seattle University

On March 8th Seattle University Lemieux Library hosted an AI Unconference for Seattle-area institutions. Attendees included library leadership from UW, Seattle University and SPU, as well as librarians with both reference and instruction, and technology job focuses from libraries across Seattle area institutions.

As a reference and instruction librarian, I have now attended several events and trainings to learn more about AI and I found the unconference to be a particularly engaging and empowering approach to the topic. Unlike other presentations with an “expert-to-audience” information transfer, there was room for a much more organic discussion in the unconference model. Expertise and experience were shared to help dig into what AI tools do, and how they are actually being used and in real library settings. With such a rapidly changing technology, the immediacy of the information-sharing in an unconference ensured the content didn’t suffer from the time-lag that is a necessity of more formal presentations and conferences. The unconference model also opened the floor to the curious but modest practitioners who may not have stepped up and framed themselves as an “expert presenter” but, in the course of the unconference were shown to be informed and valuable thought partners. The information shared at the unconference was directly applicable to library work. The experiences and examples that participants brought to the discussions helped build an understanding of how AI can help meet student needs, and also provided multiple examples of the contextual framing that is needed to ensure we continue to work with AI through an information literacy lens.

I came away from the conference feeling more confident and comfortable that my understanding of the technology was current and appropriate for my role. I have observed excitement, fear, and perhaps hyperbole in many AI-centered by comparison the tone of the unconference was reassuringly practical, nuanced, and anchored in the library experience.

For those who didn’t attend the event in March, a second AI Unconference is scheduled on October 24, 2024 for Orbis Cascade Alliance libraries at the University of Oregon NE Portland campus. The upcoming unconference is a result of receiving the John F. Helmer Professional Development Award. More details to come - questions can be directed to the co-leads Yen Tran (Seattle University) and Carrie Fry (Seattle Pacific University).



Did you know that you can access certain ACRL webcasts through the division?

ALD/ACRL-WA receives access to two webinars per year from ACRL. You can find past recordings by logging into the WLA website and checking out the [ACRL Webcasts page](#).

SPRING DROP-IN DISCUSSIONS

For several years now, the steering committee of WLA's Academic Library Division (ALD) / ACRL-WA has been hosting online drop-in discussions to bring together academic library voices from across the state. They are designed to cover a wide range of topics in an open, informal setting. Discussions are unrecorded, but we take notes to capture the general topics of conversation for those who are interested but unable to attend. See below for short summaries of the drop-in discussions from Spring 2024.

Do you have a topic that you'd like to discuss with other academic librarians in WA? We're always eager to receive topic suggestions for future drop-in discussions. The invitation is open and ongoing, and WLA members who would like to propose a future session topic can send an email to the ALD listserv at academiclibraries@wla.org or to current Steering Committee members: <https://www.wla.org/academic-contact-us>

April 11, 2024: Managing equipment in academic libraries

- The following equipment circulates at attendees' libraries:
 - Laptops, chargers, whiteboards, board games, puzzles, osteopathic treatment tables, headphones, ENET kits, calculators, computer mice, hotspots, iPad drawing kits, webcams, photography equipment, bone models, daylighters, noise-canceling headphones, external DVD players, dry erase markers, portable Blu-ray player, digital cameras.
- Attendees discussed a range of topics related to equipment in libraries: impact on staff time, impact on registration for lost and damaged items, funding sources for maintenance and replacement, how to promote and measure the use of items, and licenses attached to laptops and other technology.
- The group's wishlist for equipment includes anything virtual reality (VR), event passes, national test prep materials, computer science and gaming laptops, hotspots, and an MDM solution for managing everything remotely.

May 20, 2024: How did you show your value this year?

- Attendees shared various success stories, most of which involved partnering with students, student groups, campus, and community partners. One library hosted student art on an "Art Wall" in the library, and several others connected with students and campus partners to develop book displays on topics relevant to those groups. Others mentioned adding "sense of belonging" to their strategic plan, hosting English Conversation Corners for ELL users, and hosting storytelling events for students to read their written work. One library with low circulation numbers is pivoting to electronic-only collections.
- Attendees expressed interest in opportunities to strengthen connections to external partners and initiatives, such as connections with tribal nations, native language learning resources, incarcerated populations, and providing academic collections for licensed medical practitioners in the state.
- Finally, the group touched on the messages that libraries can share with administration, faculty, students, and other stakeholders. Some libraries use annual reports as storytelling tools; some are closing the assessment loop by communicating to survey participants how they integrate their feedback; others are proactively collecting stories from participants who are impacted by services to include in reports.

CAMPUS & WLA UPDATES

WSU Press and Whitworth University team up for new publishing deal

[Check out the full story.](#)

WLA Social Media Library Takeover

The [WLA Marketing and Communications](#) committee is excited to announce a new series on our social media pages for all librarians and library workers. We are inspired by @LifeOfLibrarians and have chosen to spotlight and celebrate different librarians throughout our state. As we know, librarians are much more than the stereotypes of horn-rimmed glasses wearers, book collectors, and cat lovers.

We don't read all day, and no, we haven't been replaced by Google. Join us as we amplify and honor librarians among us.

Apply at: <https://forms.office.com/r/ftbcUFy7AS>



Do you have campus updates, news, or emerging projects to share with the ALD/ACRL-WA community?

Send them our way! The next newsletter will go out in Fall 2024.