

WLA ALD/ACRL-WA

NEWSLETTER



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

This year marked the return to an in-person conference, honoring the tradition of the joint conference between the Washington and Oregon chapters of ACRL. More than 90 librarians and library workers gathered at Lower Columbia College's beautiful campus and online to present, connect, listen, and learn from each other. With 25 in-person and virtual sessions, attendees and presenters engaged with the conference topic from a wide variety of important and creative approaches through lightning talks, presentations, and unconferences. I enjoyed getting a chance to learn about how my colleagues in the region approach library work, and I am glad that we were able to continue this space of connection.

I want to thank everyone involved with putting the conference together. Many thanks to our presenters and our keynote panelists for sharing their insights. Thank you to everyone on the Conference Planning Committee - Greg Bem, Ryer Banta, Annie Downey, Lindsay Keevy, and Caitlan Maxwell - for all their work from brainstorming a conference theme to building community in the pop up Discord and beyond! Finally, I want to thank everyone in the WLA Office, whose logistical work made the conference happen.

Outside of the conference, ALD/ACRL-WA continued to focus on building spaces for academic library workers to connect and learn from each other throughout the year. This year we continued our monthly(ish) "drop in" sessions on a variety of topics, and coordinated access to ACRL webinars. We are always interested in having members suggest topics for drop in conversations and volunteer to moderate! If you have a conversation you want to host, contact the steering committee and we can set it up for you.

As we come to the end of 2023, I want to thank the current members of the Steering Committee and welcome the new members! The Academic Library Division/ACRL-WA is member driven, and the work of the members on the Steering Committee are a vital part of the community building that is a part of the division. Many thanks to the Steering Committee members who are completing their terms, and congratulations to the new members!

Lydia Bello, Seattle University
2023 ALD/ACRL-WA Division Chair

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REAL LIT HITS A MILESTONE

Layne Gonzales, Cat Jensen, Alaina C. Bull, and Johanna Jacobsen Kiciman

In January of 2024, *Real Lit[erature] Book Club* at UW Tacoma is hitting a big milestone: our 20th title of social justice books read in community. We have been facilitating this book club in intentional collaboration with the Center for Equity and Inclusion, first in-person and then virtually, since the Fall of 2018. As part of this work, we have hosted twelve author talks open to the public, including folks like Angie Thomas, Tommy Orange, and Zeyn Joukhadar. Philosophically, the idea behind this work is grounded in anti-oppressive facilitation, and the idea that hard conversations within community lead to growth and the building of a community of care. A proof-of concept, the idea that a fiction book club reading primarily young adult texts would have a home in academic libraries as a tool for building community, we are now a firmly established group on campus that has won multiple campus awards. Questions about how to set up your own in an academic space? We're happy to talk with you, and do have a [toolkit](#) you can consult.

We are very intentional with the books we choose. We focus on books that feature authors and/or characters that are part of a marginalized identity, and make sure that we keep social justice issues at the center of our selections. This allows us the opportunity with each book to have meaningful conversations and bring in new voices. One example of this is when we read *Fat Chance*, Charlie Vega by Crystal Maldonado, which centers discussions around body image and fat activism. As part of this work, we hosted a specific meeting around community-accepted appropriate language to use when talking about fat characters, and brought in a specialist to facilitate the conversation.

Given that academic institutions by and large continue to perpetuate social structures rooted in systems of oppression, bringing conversations to our campus even when we discuss books about characters that have different identities than those of the facilitators or those of our attendees is of extra import. We still endeavor to have meaningful conversations and find ways to connect the book to our community and our own lives. With every book we read and every real conversation we have, work like ours can change not just our personal perspectives, but our collective reality. It's this kind of work—active and passionate, day in and day out, toward a more just future—that we believe in. It's this kind of work that Real Lit[erature] is all about.



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](#).

UW TACOMA LIBRARY LAB

Cat Jensen

I'll admit: I was simply having too much fun. What I initially envisioned being a small research project on roaming or roving reference during my first quarter as a University of Washington Tacoma (UWT) Reference Specialist in autumn 2022 soon ballooned into a 20-page program proposal. With the guidance of my supervisors Alaina Bull and Johanna Jacobsen Kiciman and the support of my co-workers, the UWT Library Lab officially launched in October 2023.

Once a week, for two hours, UWT Library Student Staff—namely me and my fellow Reference Specialist, Madison Phares—trek a few minutes uphill to the UWT YMCA, where we set up a table replete with signage, branded highlighters and sticky notes, small snacks and relevant flyers. During those two hours, we greet as many folks as we can, telling anyone who will listen about who we are and why we are there: As peers, we have acquired unique insight into navigating the library and information landscape and want to share our experience and knowledge. We offer to assist other students, members of the public and more with any research assignments or interests they may have. We also offer to try to answer all sorts of questions about the library, including how to check out books, the kinds of digital and physical resources that are available and how people can access them, along with the various types of services and programs that the library has to offer.

What we don't mention (unless asked) is why we chose the YMCA or why we're even outside the library at all. But we know why. Visibility and accessibility to information is critical, and meeting students where they're at can have far-reaching effects. Peer-to-peer mentorship models work. Already, we've had a meaningful increase in the total number of interactions with folks, and—perhaps more importantly—we've developed relationships with people who may not otherwise have stopped by the library, people who've chosen to return to speak to us about any number of topics.

2024 will be here before we know it. I can't say I'm looking forward to the ice or possible snow or biting winds that accompany winter. But what I can say is this: even if my fingers or my nose or my ears grow numb as I make my way to the Y, I'll feel a bit warmer knowing the UWT Library Lab is real, it's happening and it's having an impact on our community.

LIBRARY SPACES SHOWCASE

Lower Columbia College graciously hosted the ACRL Joint WA/OR Fall Academic Conference in Longview, WA. During the conference, Lower Columbia library staff offered a tour of their spaces. Enjoy this virtual tour!

Photos by Greg Bem, Spokane Community College

Descriptions by Lindsay Keevy, Lower Columbia College



Welcome to the LCC Learning Commons! We opened the doors to our newly remodeled space in spring 2022. We now have all of our services (library, eLearning, and tutoring) co-located behind one desk, where students can come to get help with just about anything they may need.



We are an active learning space and our first floor can get very busy (and noisy!) with tutoring appointments, reference desk interactions, circulation activities, and students using the copiers. Instructors will often hold their office hours at our first-floor tables as well. Our International Programs office is also located in our building and provided us with flags to hang which represent the various countries our international students hail from.

LIBRARY SPACES SHOWCASE (continued)



Our remodel included a replacement of all of our bookcases, which are now at a more accessible height and are on wheels, allowing our space to be reconfigurable over time.



Students love our new study pods – they are always the first seats to fill up on our second floor.

LIBRARY SPACES SHOWCASE (continued)



We now have two dedicated classroom spaces in our library – hooray!

We use these for library instruction and allow instructors from other disciplines to reserve them too. When classes are not in session, they are open for student use. Everyone loves the whiteboard tables and whiteboard walls!



COMMUNITY UPDATES

Central Washington University

Fall 2023 has been an exciting time at CWU Libraries. We welcomed a new faculty member and selected a Dean of Libraries.



Chelsea Riddle joined the team as the Research Engagement Librarian in mid-August. Chelsea is working with our peer research consultant program and leading efforts to provide high-quality research services to our patrons.



Sydney Thompson has been selected as Dean of CWU Libraries. Having served as Interim Dean the previous year, she is excited to continue her work with the team and help move the libraries' vision forward.

DEIA Community of Practice

CWU Libraries welcomed the creation of a staff-initiated Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Community of Practice. The past months have provided time for the group to meet and begin discussing focus areas and goals surrounding relationship building, professional development, and topics of diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism in libraries spaces. The community has worked collaboratively to bring upcoming training to the CWU Libraries team and will continue to dive into the vision and direction for the group as it moves through its first year.



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 Spring 2024.

ALD-ACRL-WA Steering Committee Updates

Welcome to the new and returning members of the Academic Steering Committee!

Carleigh Hill (she/her), Chair

I am currently the Library Consortium Services Manager for Washington Community and Technical Colleges. I assist with systems work (Alma/Primo), provide training and collaboration opportunities, work with vendors to support current products and negotiate new service contracts, and generally keep my eye on academic library trends. Previously I was a librarian at Whitworth University where I did instruction, reference, social science and English collection management, e-resources management, OER coordination, web services, and some social programming. While working on my MLIS, I taught full-time at EWU in the Journalism program, did a project at WSU Spokane Academic Library, and completed my practicum at Foley Library at Gonzaga. I have also worked and volunteered in public library systems since 2004. I want to build on the wonderful work of the previous steering committees to strengthen the academic libraries of Washington.

Daniel Pringle (he/him/his), Secretary/Communications

I am serving in the position of Secretary/Communications on the division's steering committee this year. I am the Business and Leadership Studies Liaison Librarian at Gonzaga University in Spokane, where I teach information literacy and provide research support to students and staff. I've also held positions at Eastern Washington University, Western Washington University, The Evergreen State College, and Spokane Public Library. I'm looking forward to bringing that experience to the committee to make the division a valuable resource to academic library workers in the state and I hope to see you at the WLA Conference in Spokane in March!

Genoveva Vergara, Member-at-Large

I currently work as an archives and reference librarian at Northwest University in Kirkland, Washington, where I live with my husband, daughter, and son. Originally from Mexico, I spent over two decades at the Universidad Iberoamericana library in Mexico City, primarily focusing on services coordination. In my academic pursuits, I seamlessly integrated education and library science, I studied a Pedagogy Bachelor. Recognizing the extensive potential libraries have in the educational process, I pursued and earned a Ph.D. in Information Science at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain.

Leah Cover, Communications Manager

I joined the ALD/ACRL-WA Steering Committee in January 2023, and I'm returning for a second year as the Communications Manager. I started my position as the Information Literacy & Assessment Librarian at The Evergreen State College in July 2022, and before that I worked as an instruction librarian in Louisville, KY.