

A Successful Partnership Library

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Introduction

Library partnerships, over the years, have been put together in many forms and for many reasons. Probably the most common partnerships have been between K-12 schools and public libraries. The most common reason has been saving money.

The Academic Library is a joint-use library serving the partnership between Northern Arizona University in Yuma and Arizona Western College. The name was changed in 1997 from AWC Library to reflect this growing and prospering partnership between the university and community college.

Northern Arizona University in Yuma has grown from a distance learning site, started in 1988 to serve the needs of geographically distributed students, to what we have today. The shared campus of NAU in Yuma and AWC serves close to 7000 students. Many of these are non-degree seeking students or those pursuing a two-year associate's degree. Approximately ten per cent of Arizona Western College students wish to continue on for their baccalaureate degree while others in the community wish to continue their education beyond that level. However these students do not wish to leave Yuma to continue their education, because of family obligations, career goals, or many other reasons. Unfortunately, the nearest university campus in the state is 180 miles away in Phoenix, Arizona. For this reason, Northern

Arizona University, located in Flagstaff, Arizona, set up distance learning centers throughout the state and Yuma is the most developed. We offer more than 30 baccalaureate degrees and 9 graduate degrees including a doctorate in Educational Leadership.

To support these programs, Northern Arizona University provides a budget to purchase library materials to support their programs and one full time professional librarian and one full time paraprofessional librarian. This budget is under the direction of the NAU in Yuma librarian. The librarian works with the Arizona Western College Librarians to provide library services.

Literature Review

A review of the literature shows that there are many kinds of partnerships in many kinds of libraries. In "Shared Academic Library Facilities: The Unknown Form of Library Cooperation," Anthony J. Dedrick from Denver, Colorado's Auraria Library tells us that this is not a new phenomenon; he found several programs that have been in operation for over twenty years. He found that most were two-library partnerships between a community college and a university, with community college/public library partnerships also common. He found that management of these libraries varied a great deal. Many had one library director, but some had employees paid by both institutions. Some had separate

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directors for the separate institutions. Funding was also diverse. For some it was decided yearly. Others had a percentage from each institution's budget. About 50 per cent of the libraries studied said that their budget increased as a result of the joint program, others reported that their budgets stayed the same. Some had concerns that budgets would be decreased because the joint program was more efficient and as a consequence, their institutions would use this success as a pretext to reduce library funding. The majority did say, "some type of separate budget accounting is maintained for each school." (Dedrick, 441) In general Dedrick reported that there were many advantages of the partnerships including: a larger acquisitions budget, better utilization of staff, reduced physical plant costs, eliminated cost of a new facility, access to a larger collection, ability to purchase more reference materials and products, expanded hours of service. Of course Dedrick reported some negative comments, primarily administrative difficulties, such as tracking multiple budgets, developing programs and services to meet the needs of separate institutions with different missions and student populations, and separate payroll systems and personnel policies. He said that there were two clear patterns to emerge from his study: "(1) the typical shared academic library facility program does provide significant cost savings and service enhancements, and (2) there are inherently additional administrative burdens with these types of arrangements." (Dedrick, 441)

Geraldine Evans, in an ERIC document published in 1994, described the partnership between the Rochester Community College and Winona State University in Minnesota. She described a "2 plus 2" program similar to our partnership with Arizona Western College and Northern Arizona University in Yuma. Her article emphasized the history of the partnership and the financial benefit to the institutions. (Evans, 4)

In an article entitled, "Partnerships: Doors to the Future for Community Colleges," Norman R. Nielsen discussed multiple kinds of partnerships which could benefit community colleges. In a study by Kirkwood Community College (Iowa) they felt that "strong partnerships with both public and private agencies would meet the growing challenges for higher education in the nineties." (Nielsen, 3) Nielsen described several very successful partnerships between community colleges and private companies.

In "Joint-use libraries: more bang for your bucks,"

Sally Kinsey and Sharon Honig-Bear describe the partnership in Reno, Nevada between Washoe County Library and the Washoe County School District. They describe the benefits of their joint-use facilities and emphasize that "Agency boards and administrators look good when they cooperate and maximize resources. Students, teachers and the public gain enhanced services." (Kinsey, 37) Another point that they made was to be successful, "the top administrator and boards of these agencies must fully endorse the joint-use idea." They also point out that "smart government agencies understand that networking and resource sharing make them look good."

In "Joint-Use Library Services at Distant Campuses: Building Cooperation Between a Community College and a University," Yvonne L. Ralston and Adele Oldenburg discuss many aspects of these partnerships. They discuss how Florida was a pioneer in this area in 1972 with their *The Master Plan for Florida Post-Secondary Education* which created branch campuses and pioneered the development of 2 + 2 programs. They stress that the needs of community college and university students are different and that Interlibrary Loan between the smaller campuses and the universities would be very important. Universities would be primarily the loaners and the community colleges would be primary borrowers; but universities should accept this sacrifice as necessary. (Ralston, 144) They recommend that the sites build their collection to support their curriculum, and the university would supply access to other materials at other sites. This very thorough article also gave a checklist of what the primary issues would be and that they should be in writing. This list included mission and goals, lending policies, resolutions of conflict, advisory committee, acquisitions, etc.

Another article that looked at shared libraries in Florida was Susan Anderson's "Shared Libraries: Focus on Florida." She looked at the various kinds of partnerships that are possible and gave recommendations based on the varied experiences in Florida. In the case of Edison Community College and the University of South Florida, both institutions purchase materials, but they are intershelved with each institution identifying its own materials. Fiscal responsibility is based on the head counts for the two institutions. They also use a courier service between sites.

In looking at the literature on partnerships, I would say that in our partnership here at Northern Arizona

University in Yuma and Arizona Western College's Academic Library, we implement the best of their recommendations, in a combination that has been very successful for us.

What is working for us now

The Librarian-Generalist for Northern Arizona University in Yuma is considered to be part of staff of Northern Arizona University's Cline Library staff. She works with this staff to provide library services to NAU's students in Yuma. This librarian also reports to the Associate Director, Dr. Thomas Tacke and the Executive Director, Dr. Nick Lund of Northern Arizona University in Yuma. Dr. Lund reports directly to the President of Northern Arizona University, Dr. Clara Lovett. In some respects, the administration, faculty and staff of NAU in Yuma are considered another college of Northern Arizona University, in the same way that the College of Business is a college of Northern Arizona University. The partnership between Northern Arizona University in Yuma and Arizona Western College is very important to these individuals and all involved feel that this partnership is tied very much into the continuing success of these institutions and the success of our mutual students.

The Arizona Western College Library staff reports to the Associate Dean of Instructional Technology. This individual is responsible for Arizona Western College's library services, interactive television services, computer services and their learning assistance center. Because the Associate Dean of Learning Resources has other responsibilities in addition to the library, the actual running of the library is in the charge of the three AWC librarians and the NAU librarian. The Arizona Western College staff consists of three professional librarians, two full-time paraprofessionals, and six to eight half-time paraprofessional employees.

We have evolved a team or consensus approach to running the library. We have informally divided up the primary responsibilities according to our strengths and interests. For example, this author supervises bibliographic/technical services. One AWC librarian is in charge of computer support, the second is in charge of circulation services and the third supervises reference. However, the librarians do all of these jobs, in addition to planning, bibliographic instruction, book selection, serials, etc. It is just good to have one single, final authority for cataloging or reference policy or other ques-

tions that can come up regularly in any busy library. Generally, we discuss the gray areas when a clarification is necessary, and then make sure, if there is a change in policy or procedure, that all affected are made aware of the change. The library also employs student workers from both NAU and AWC.

Book selection is also done by all of our librarians and we have divided up the subject areas again based on our strengths and interests. We ask for input from the faculty of both institutions. When recommendations are made, we will specify if the item is more appropriate for the NAU in Yuma curriculum or AWC, and then it will be ordered out of the appropriate budget. While the library keeps track of which institution pays for which books, they are all stamped Academic Library, not NAU-Yuma or AWC. Often we will consult with each other on these choices, especially if we see a review for an item that is from another's subject area. If an Arizona Western Librarian sees something, which they feel is more appropriate for supporting the Northern Arizona University in Yuma classes, they usually want my input in the decision. Our open communication and dialog helps to make this process go smoothly.

One of the key factors in our success is that all of our acquisitions, budgets, ordering, and bookkeeping for the library is handled by one person. This person is our Northern Arizona University paraprofessional. All our materials orders go through her. This eliminates the possibility of duplicate orders and facilitates working together with two separate budgets. She works very closely with all the librarians and the AWC Associate Dean of Instructional Technology.

Another key factor in our success can simply be stated as attitude. When a patron comes into the library, we serve them. The library cards are issued by the library, which means that they do not say on them if them if the student is an NAU or an AWC student (the computer knows, of course). Although NAU students make up only about ten per cent of the population on campus, they are much more likely to use the library than their AWC counterparts. This is primarily due to their differing education goals. The NAU students are upperclassmen or graduate students and therefore have more compelling reasons for using the library. NAU students make the majority of our interlibrary loan requests, but our ILL librarian is an employee of Arizona Western College. To better serve all university students in Arizona, there is a courier service between the three

universities. Northern Arizona University in Yuma was included in this courier service, which gives overnight delivery of books and materials from one campus to another. We use document delivery software to transmit periodical articles between the universities also. These services greatly increase the resources available to students and supplement our 50,000-volume library!

All of the librarians give library tours and bibliographic instruction. Which librarian gives the session is determined by their schedules more than by the employer or whether the session is for an AWC class or an NAU class. The librarians often work together in creating bibliographies and other handouts to give to the students. In the case of very large classes, two librarians may work together or split the group into two for their instruction.

Northern Arizona University is committed to providing a university education to Arizona residents wherever they reside in the state. To this end they have well-developed statewide Services. This is particularly true of their Library State Wide Services. The well-developed statewide sites have Internet access to the databases to which NAU subscribes to in much the same way as the on-campus students do. All Northern Arizona University students can access these databases through their home computers, also, using their e-mail account information. Because three of the computers in our library, with Internet access, belong to NAU and are considered part of the Cline Library on the Northern Arizona University campus in Flagstaff, they have direct access to these databases without the need to log in. This access is analogous to a community college student, high school student, or any other local patron going into the Cline Library in Flagstaff and using their reference computers.

The majority of the Arizona Western College students who use the library are in pursuit of their bachelor's degree and most will matriculate to Northern Arizona University, either in Yuma or Flagstaff upon completion of their lower division classes. In that sense, they are our freshmen and sophomores. Many students are co-enrolled in both institutions. Also, some of the Arizona Western College faculty will teach NAU classes as adjunct faculty and therefore have loyalty to both institutions. The Arizona Western College and Northern Arizona University in Yuma advisors and financial aid people work together to make the transition from one institution to the other as seamless and painless as possible.

Northern Arizona University in Yuma has distance sites within the region that they work very closely with. Because Arizona Western College offers classes in San Luis, Somerton, and Parker, Arizona, as well as a couple of other sites, Northern Arizona University in Yuma also teaches classes at those sites, some in person, some through interactive television, and others through the Internet. These students can receive library services directly from the Cline Library in Flagstaff or from the Academic Library in Yuma. Arizona Western College is working very hard to improve services to their distance students and our librarians have visited the sites and are working with the faculty and staff at the sites to improve their library services. The NAU librarian is on this committee and is working to improve library services for all of our students, AWC and NAU. One avenue we are pursuing is creating partnerships for these remote sites with their local public libraries.

The Academic Library has other partners in addition to the partnership between Northern Arizona University in Yuma and Arizona Western College. This library has shared its library catalog with the Yuma County Library District for many years. This was motivated mainly for the cost savings of a shared system. These two partners are now on their second system, the original was a "home grown" system, which had outlived its usefulness and was replaced in 1998 by a SIRSI Unicorn System. Sharing the systems has been very cost-effective for both parties involved. We also work together when we have problems to solve them. It is convenient for both our students and their patrons to be able to easily check each other's holdings when we don't own the book or item which the student or patron may need. At times, we may choose not to order a particular book because the County Library owns it and we don't anticipate that the demand would justify that more than one copy is needed for the area.

The Future

Northern Arizona University in Yuma has seen that this partnership with Arizona Western College has been a good one for all involved. The main campus of Northern Arizona University has looked to Yuma as the model, when they design and improve their other distance sites. NAU in Yuma is always looking for other ways to partner that will also be of mutual beneficial to the college, university, and the community. One proposal put forth would be to create a community joint use library. There

is already a K–20+ consortium in place between the University, Community College, and the Yuma Public Schools. This consortium is already taking care of bus-ing and vehicle maintenance for the institutions. The campus which NAU in Yuma and AWC occupy would have room for a large joint use library to be used by the public schools as well as the university and college. Northern Arizona University in Yuma and Arizona Western College currently share their campus with two elementary schools and a middle school. Two of these schools were just completed in the last year and this reflects the rapid growth in this part of Yuma County.

Last year Northern Arizona University in Yuma, Arizona Western College and the Public Schools received a grant from U.S. West to provide Internet instruction and access for K–12 students, teachers, businesses, and the community, which was held in Northern Arizona University in Yuma and Arizona Western College’s Aca-demic Complex Building, with state-of-the-art computer labs and classrooms. Faculty and staff members from both the university and community college volunteered to assist with this training. The partnership would like to offer more of this type of training to the community in the future, with or without a grant.

Conclusions

The Academic Library serving Northern Arizona Uni-versity in Yuma and Arizona Western College is a suc-cessful partnership library. This success is due to a com-mitment by the administration, faculty, and staff of Northern Arizona University, Northern Arizona Uni-versity in Yuma, and Arizona Western College. In the library, the librarians and staff feel that we have no choice, we must serve all of our patrons fairly, whether they are students, faculty, staff or community members. This is an attitude that says that there is always room for improvement, and we work everyday to improve our services to all of our patrons.

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