Nuacht litir na Leabharlainne

Student Survey – Have Your Say

AND WIN A CAMERA PHONE

Commencing 8 March, the Library will undertake a major survey of the University's students. The survey aims to help the Library find out how we can improve services and will cover undergraduates, access, diploma and higher diploma students. Topics will include opening hours, loans, the physical environment, the catalogue and the use of information.

The survey, which will run for two weeks, will be Web-based. It will take about ten minutes to complete. As an added inducement students will have the option of entering a prize draw and winning a camera phone, donated by the University Bookshop, or one of three vouchers worth €100 each from Campbell Catering, Bank of Ireland and the Library. During the first week, terminals will be made available in the Library's ground floor computer suite. Last year's survey of researchers was a major success and the Library is keen to repeat the same level of participation. A good response will ensure that we are better placed to improve Library services.

Laurie Greenfield
Assistant Librarian, Reader Services

FOCAL ÓN LEABHARLANNAÍ

Library budgets, and especially journals budgets, are under particular pressure this year. To date, the Library has fared well in its share of resources and better than many Irish university libraries, but with a journals budget in excess of €1.25 million and serials inflation running at 10-11%, standing still is not getting easier. Academics rightly want more full-text delivery to the desktop. The Library now spends more than 37% of its journals budget on electronic provision but, contrary to popular myth, electronic does not mean cheaper – although it should. This University through its research activity makes a major contribution to scholarly publishing, but sadly the present system of signing away copyright to publishers does not help libraries.

Collectively the CHIU Librarians Group is working at improving access on a national level. Meanwhile the OECD Declaration on Access to Research Data from Public Funding (http://digbig.com/3rbg), to which Ireland has signed up, is worth reading. It is not simply a question of "publish or perish" – but of where, and how. There are options and the Library will be happy to work with you in making the change.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Marie Reddan, Librarian

Most people will be aware that in January Ireland took over presidency of the European Union for a six-month term and as such will lead programme and policy development within the Union. Library users are in a prime position to keep abreast of such developments. Since 1973 the Library has been designated a European Documentation Centre (EDC) receiving selected material free of charge from the European Union. The aim of the EDCs, which exist in countries all over Europe, is to promote interest, debate and access to European topics amongst its citizens. The key information areas of the collection are:

- Legislation
- Policy and Developments
- Reports and Statistics

In the last year, for example, we have received excellent reports on the European environment, key data on the accession countries and of course information and proposed drafts of the troubled European Constitution. These days our print resources are supplemented by the recently revamped Europa Web site (www.europa.eu.int) which offers an excellent means of access to European resources.

The EDC is located on the ground floor of the Library. If you have any queries, please contact either Hugo Kelly or Margo Donohue on extension 3359.

Hugo Kelly
Law Librarian

EUROPEAN DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

www.eu2004.ie

http://digbig.com/3rbg
RECENT APPOINTMENTS

It is a pleasure to welcome three new members of Library staff. Rónán Kennedy, Sylvia Nutley and Nancy Smyth all joined us in January and we wish them well.

Rónán Kennedy has come from NUI, Maynooth to take on a new role in the Library as Assistant Librarian, Electronic Resources. His work will focus on enhancing access to an expanding range of online resources.

Sylvia Nutley has made the short move from Computer Services to become Library Systems Assistant. Her IT support experience is already proving valuable.

Nancy Smyth brings a range of experience, both in teaching and latterly as a student at NUIG, to the position of Library Steward.

Congratulations also to John Costello on his promotion to the new post of Library Systems Technologist and to Sonia Freaney who has become an Assistant Librarian in Cataloging on a contract basis while Ann Kelly shares the Nursing Librarian post with Máire Ó hAodha.

THE DIY LIBRARY

Self-service has become more common in all walks of life in recent years and the Library is no exception to this trend. A few examples are:

- Borrowing of books via the self-issue system
- Reserving a book that is currently on loan to another reader
- Renewing books you currently have on loan
- Submitting inter-library loan requests online
- Watching videos in the Library
- Using any of 60 public-access PCs
- 24 x 7 access to a range of electronic resources, including journals, databases and the Library catalogue

If you wish to know more about any of these facilities, please ask the staff at the Ground Floor Information Point (ext. 3005). Self-service can offer convenience, save time and meet the needs of a much-increased user population. Nevertheless, the Library remains committed to providing personal service so please make sure to ask staff for help whenever you need it.

ONLINE LEARNING: MAKING THE LINK

Online learning is on the increase, as evidenced by the popularity of the Blackboard system adopted by the University last year. Electronic information resources such as e-journals and e-books dovetail perfectly with the online learning environment, putting convenient access to further reading within a click or two of course participants.

An interesting example is the Business Programming II course, currently accessible via Blackboard. Martin Hughes of the Department of Accountancy and Finance arranged with the Library to obtain access to electronic versions of two Java programming books which can now be viewed within Blackboard. Each title has proved highly popular with a total of over 400 uses within the first month. Martin comments: "The Safari electronic textbook resource provided by the Library is an excellent resource. It is fully compatible with the Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment and provides students with online access to supplementary texts directly from the course Web site. As lecturer, I can incorporate direct links, under each section of the course, to the content of these texts in addition to the core text and lectures. Furthermore the entire text is searchable. This gives the student an alternative learning resource that encourages independent learning, truly turning Blackboard into an environment for deep learning."

If you are providing online access to course materials, please contact your Information Librarian about linking to Library resources. Your students will appreciate it!
The Library’s collections grow at the rate of 20,000 volumes every year, providing essential support for teaching, learning and research. While access to online information continues to grow, the output of printed material from the world’s publishing houses is not slowing. Dealing with information overload is a problem for all of us; for the Library there is also a particular challenge in physically accommodating an annual collection expansion of over 400 shelves. Existing space is full and an appropriate balance must be maintained between shelving and reader spaces, the latter attracting intensive use for much of the year.

Last year Library Committee approved a collection management policy1 which seeks to guide future development in terms of selection criteria, choice of print or online formats and withdrawal of superseded materials. The last of these, also known as “collection weeding”, is a sensitive issue. In some subjects there may be a view that certain material is unused, well out of date and perhaps even dangerously misleading. In others the value of books or journals will not diminish over time and efforts to “weed” will be seen as heresy. Like its gardening equivalent, this practice is not especially attractive but, if approached correctly and with necessary safeguards, has benefits.

In Library terms safeguards include:
• consultation with academic staff
• exemption of collections or subjects
• variations in approach by subject
• focus on duplicate material, including books with multiple editions

Among the benefits are:
• review of collection strengths and weaknesses
• updating of Library catalogue
• better presentation of collections
• release of space for new publications

While it is good practice to reduce the number of copies held for publications where this is agreed, the impact on Library space is limited. Last Summer 2400 volumes were withdrawn but some additional shelving also needed to be added on Floor 1. There is a pressing need for more space to meet expansion and efforts are currently focused on increasing off-campus storage capacity. Your views are welcome on this vital issue and developments will be reported in this newsletter.

1 http://www.library.nuigalway.ie/resources/collectionmanagement/index.html

John Cox, Deputy Librarian
INTER-LIBRARY LOANS

The Inter-Library Loans (ILL) service provides you with access to the world of published knowledge, beyond the Library’s physical and online holdings. The service has undergone some recent changes as regular users will have noticed. A new ILL desk is now situated in the foyer of the Library bringing the service within easy reach. Staff at the desk will handle any queries on ILL, eg checking on the status of a request or helping you get started. Books are available for collection at the desk and should be returned here.

There has been a large increase in use of the online request form accessible at http://www.library.nuigalway.ie/services/ill/index.html. This greatly speeds up the process of requesting an ILL and allows users to copy references directly from database search results or e-journals into the request form.

The British Library has recently introduced a secure electronic document delivery service and this will be available shortly, enabling you to receive journal articles in .pdf format speedily. Please ask the ILL staff for more information (extension 2541; email ill@nuigalway.ie).

Monica Crump
Collection Management Librarian

DIGITAL ACCESS TO IRISH-LANGUAGE MANUSCRIPTS

The Library recently collaborated with the Irish Department and the Irish Script on Screen (ISOS) Project to give online access to 11 Irish-language manuscripts from our collections. These include a number of Irish manuscripts from the 18th and 19th centuries which were collected in the course of his work by Douglas Hyde and bequeathed to the Library on his death in 1949. In addition, a number of other Irish language manuscripts are held by the Library in the Lámhscribhinní Breise collection. These manuscripts are mainly collections of poetry and copies of Foras Feasa na hÉireann from the 18th and 19th century.

The Library is delighted to be part of this project and to contribute to the objectives of the ISOS project by providing an electronic resource of educational and cultural interest. To access the texts visit http://www.isos.dcu.ie/

Kieran Hoare, Archivist