

4-1-2006

Relationships Between Teaching Librarians and Teaching Faculty AND Libraries within Their Institutions: Creative Collaborations [Review]

Dane Ward

Illinois State University, dmward@ilstu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/fpml>

 Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Ward, Dane, "Relationships Between Teaching Librarians and Teaching Faculty AND Libraries within Their Institutions: Creative Collaborations [Review]" (2006). *Faculty and Staff Publications – Milner Library*. Paper 34.
<http://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/fpml/34>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Milner Library at ISU ReD: Research and eData. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty and Staff Publications – Milner Library by an authorized administrator of ISU ReD: Research and eData. For more information, please contact ISURed@ilstu.edu.

confidentiality policies. Rounding it all out is a helpful glossary for when you need to know the difference between *COPA* (*Child Online Protection Act*) and *COPPA*. This book is clearly written, well organized, and an outstanding contribution to the literature on privacy.

Marc Meola

The College of New Jersey
meolam@tcnj.edu

Relationships Between Teaching Librarians and Teaching Faculty, ed. Susan B. Kraat. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Information Press, 2005. 182p. \$24.95 softcover (ISBN-13: 978-0-7890-2573-9), \$39.95 hardcover (ISBN-13: 978-0-7890-2572-2)

Libraries within Their Institutions: Creative Collaborations, ed. William Miller and Rita M. Pellen. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Information Press, 2005. 230p. \$39.95 softcover (ISBN-13: 978-0-7890-2720-7), \$59.95 hardcover (ISBN-13: 978-0-7890-2719-1)

Collaboration is like motherhood and apple pie. Librarians, administrators, and colleagues all across higher education aspire to work together for the greater good. Through collaboration, we hope to pool financial and human resources to accomplish what cannot be achieved on our own. However, collaboration is more than a good idea; it is a practice that requires us to fundamentally rethink who we are, how we work, and where we allocate resources. As the articles in these two books suggest, collaboration can be a challenging process, but the benefits are well worth the effort.

Within the literature of librarianship and higher education, collaboration frequently means working together across departmental boundaries to achieve

common goals. Typical articles describe projects involving individuals from several departments working to accomplish those goals. They do not usually describe the often messy interpersonal processes that are foundational to any collaborative enterprise.

The articles in these two books say much about the nature of our thinking and writing on collaboration. There are fine examples of projects here and some that do touch upon what occurs between partners. In reality, however, neither work focuses primarily on those relationships. Instead, they emphasize the diversity of interdepartmental projects involving libraries and their on- or off-campus partners. Taken together, these works provide a good roadmap of collaborative partners and projects.

Relationships Between Teaching Librarians and Teaching Faculty, consisting of 10 articles, was edited by Susan B. Kraat, reference librarian and coordinator of library instruction at the State University of New York at New Paltz. The projects presented in these articles are generally closer to the experiences and initiatives of individual librarians than those found in the other work. Topics include integrating information literacy into specific disciplines, developing and/or grading research assignments, and establishing new forms of communication between departments. There are also two interesting studies, one concerning librarian attitudes toward faculty (Lisa M. Given and Heidi Julien) and the other about faculty attitudes toward library instruction (Kate Manuel, Susan E. Beck, and Molly Malloy).

Throughout this work, one senses the difficulty of collaborative activity. We read of the separation experienced by librarians and faculty, their mutual misunderstanding, and, at its worst, mutual



demonization. At the same time, many of the authors identify practices and strategies that overcome perceived or actual barriers. We read, for instance, about the importance of openness and dialogue (Navaz P. Bhavnagri and Veronica Bielat), defining mutually valued goals (Michelle Toth), and maintaining flexibility while ensuring equal participation of library and discipline faculty (Lynn Lampert).

It is worth noting, though not surprising, that effective collaboration requires a conscious effort to enhance the quality and quantity of conversation between librarians and faculty. Real success results from personal commitment and a willingness to take risks in reaching out. Nothing undermines collaboration more than assuming that those with whom we work have bad intentions.

Libraries within Their Institutions: Creative Collaborations was edited by William Miller and Rita M. Pellen, the director and associate director, respectively, of the libraries at Florida Atlantic University. Containing 15 articles, this work generally emphasizes the broader context of collaboration between libraries and other departments, centers, and organizations both on and off campus. Included here are studies of working with teaching centers, library science programs, and city governments. Additionally, the book includes several provocative articles, including one about the formal and informal structures that facilitate collaboration (Jordana M. Y. Shane) and another about “embedding” the library into significant aspects of campus (Barbara I. Dewey). In this broader framework, collaboration is facilitated, according to many of the authors, by systematic planning and development. Still, the personal component remains significant, though increasingly complicated by the size of the project. Many observations found in the

other volume are reinforced here.

In addition, *Libraries within their Institutions* includes unique insights concerning collaboration at the institutional level. For instance, the broader, more encompassing outcomes require a larger circle of collaborators (Christie Flynn, Debra Gilchrist, Lynn Olson); how we talk about working with others shapes how we actually work with them (Joan K. Lippincott); and collaborative success has much to do with the proactive or passive stance of the library in relation to campus (Dewey).

Both works represent useful contributions to the literature of collaboration within academia. Librarians, administrators, and faculty will find valuable discussions of a wide spectrum of actual projects. At the same time, there seems a tendency to tread somewhat lightly on the subject of what actually happens between people who are working together. The authors are most successful when they do provide insights about the interpersonal aspects of collaboration and are able to identify those factors that contribute to success in a real world of difficult, often fragile, human relationships.

Dane Ward

Illinois State University
dmward@ilstu.edu

The Successful Academic Librarian: Winning Strategies from Library Leaders, ed. Gwen Meyer Gregory. Medford, NJ: Information Today, Inc., 2005. 256p. \$39.50 (ISBN 1-57387-232-6)

While perfectly relevant for those considering a career in academic librarianship, this work is primarily designed as a guide to individuals just embarking on such a position. Readers will find virtually ev-