Quick Search — New Library Search Engine

by Patricia S. Banach, Director of Library Services

During the spring semester, the Library introduced a new search engine, Quick Search, featured prominently on the Library webpage. Normally we do not introduce new software or new features in the middle of a semester, but this one seemed like such a useful tool for our students (and faculty) that we decided to make it available as soon as it was configured, right after Spring Break.

Quick Search does not replace the Library catalog, Consuls, nor does it replace the individual databases. These options continue to be available on the library homepage. The catalog is the easiest access to the library physical collections, such as books and media. Many of the individual databases are targeted to specific subjects and are a good choice for those who know they exist and wish to focus their search. However, the new Quick Search tool searches across the catalog and the databases and will quickly retrieve a variety of sources in various formats, including books, but also including full text online articles. The new search tool also allows the user to refine the search by selecting limiting features on the left margin of the page. The tool suggests specific databases for further search (at the top of the page) when the hits suggest an obvious source. It also allows the user to save selected retrievals in a folder for export.

Quick Search has advantages, especially for our students, who are often unfamiliar with the wide variety of resources the Library has to offer and only search the catalog, or the one general database Academic Search Premier. Students are also used to a single Google-like search box and do not understand that searching the catalog for journal articles will not help them find the resources they need. With Quick Search they will find a variety of formats and content and hopefully be led to explore more of the resources the University provides for them.

The Library wishes to thank and acknowledge the University of Texas at San Antonio for permission to use their phrase and design for “Quick Search” as an intuitive name for this ProQuest Summon software.
As part of the library strategic plan, that includes a marketing and outreach component, the staff at the J. Eugene Smith Library will highlight each operational area within the library. Our effort is to enlighten patrons of our mission that mentions the libraries collections, staff expertise and services offered. It is my pleasure to begin this process by writing about what many people acknowledge is one of the best kept secrets of the university, The Curriculum Center! Students and staff will sometimes stumble into the center by accident and sometimes on purpose. It has been my realization that unless you are in the field of teacher education or have been an advocate of literacy programs you might have a lack of familiarity and appreciation of the true purpose of Curriculum Materials Collections and Centers. Curriculum Centers serve as curriculum access and creation units and support pre K-12 teacher education curriculum and the needs of initiatives that support the greater university community. Staff working in these centers introduce and demonstrate to patrons how to incorporate material and technology found in the center into their course assignments and classrooms. Having worked with the Education Department faculty during the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accreditation last fall, I have come to fully recognize the significant connections that staff in the Curriculum Center/Library build with our students, faculty and community of educators.

Teacher accountability and the Connecticut Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for assessment as well as technological changes have had a tremendous impact on the challenges that pre-service teachers now have to contend with when deciding what materials are appropriate to bring into classroom learning environments. I often question how students in departments of education that do not have these centers are expected to complete coursework without encountering these materials through hands-on meaningful experiences before entering into teaching assignments. With the loss of media specialists and budget cuts to library resources, some would state that curriculum centers have a very important role to play particularly with the plethora of sources that are added to the Internet on a daily basis. Because we are aware of the difficulty that students encounter trying to find teaching materials in various formats and present them in a creative and instructional way, our center staff offer reference assistance and materials that are both physical and digital. We offer information literacy instruction sessions, “Reserve a Librarian” readers’ advisory services to all of Eastern students and faculty, as well as on-demand workshops that promote and teach our collections. We make the materials “come to life” by brainstorming with our patrons, thus, giving them interactive and creative ways to teach with the materials while offering a “safe space” for trial and error.

Some of our prized collections include: books that have been banned or challenged throughout the United States, print test guides (e.g. Praxis, etc.), Great Explorations in Math and Science guides and kits, children’s bilingual books in English and Spanish, Ellison dies for cutting letters and shapes, and Folkmanis puppets. Additionally we have an electronic Research Guide that gets updated monthly with student friendly information concerning subject assessments, literature resources, Smart Board tutorials to support the Smart Board technologies, literature and print test guides found in the center teaching lab. Because of our convenient location in the library we often work with faculty and students in all disciplines. In addition, we have partnered with the Center for Community Engagement on projects, the Child and Family Resource Center and our local group of educators in the Windham Schools, as well as parents of home-schooled children.

Staff in the center also maintain services at a small library at the Child and Family Development Resource Center, called “Ellia’s Library Nook-A Special Place for Family Reading Time.” This literacy project launched in 2006 received an award from the Connecticut Library Association (CLA), and will celebrate a ten year anniversary in 2016! In 2004, Eastern became a Great Explorations in Math and Science Site, the only one in Connecticut! Staff of the Curriculum Center are given upon request. For more information please contact Hope-Marie Cook, at cookh@easternct.edu. Also visit our LibGuide at http://easternct.libguides.com/education.

"Time and time again students report to me that they have found the Curriculum Center staff to be incredibly helpful to them as they search for children’s books and other materials that support their lessons. Because there are so many materials beyond books, I always make sure my students get a guided tour of the CC. They find it both informative and fun, and get excited about spending more time there to study, get books for course assignments, or just hang out." THERESA BOULEY

“The CC staff are a perfect complement to my early childhood courses and students. I usually make a last minute call/email desperately seeking resources for a class the week after and they find me not only exactly what I need but many more that I did not know I needed. I come in looking for one particular book but their aesthetic yet organized display allures me to browse and I end up walking out with way more than one book. My students find their resourcefulness and service very helpful too and many have commented on how much more they were able to do, with the guidance of the CC staff." SUDHA SWAMINATHAN
This year is the fifth anniversary of our Undergraduate Student Library Research Award. We were pleased to receive 16 submissions with 13 of these for the junior/senior award and three for the freshman/sophomore award. The winners in each of the two categories received $350 prizes. Although there is no monetary prize for honorable mention, this is the second time the committee felt one applicant’s research essay, paper, and supporting documentation were strong enough to merit this distinction.

- Bryan Lehner is the winner in the Junior/Senior category for his research essay and paper: “Catalytic Efficiencies of Enolase from Fast- and Slow-Killing Genotypes of Paenibacillus Larvae.” His faculty sponsor was Dr. Ross Koning.
- Nicole Green is the Freshman/Sophomore category winner for her research essay and paper: “The Cat in the Hat v. Piggybook: Where Do Women Belong?” Her faculty sponsor was Dr. Lisa Fraustino.
- Acknowledgement of Junior/Senior Honorable Mention is given to Laura Perez-Handler for her research essay and paper: “Intergenerational Transmission of Monotheistic Religions: a Proposal for a Comparative Study.” Faculty sponsor was Dr. Kim Dugan.

All Eastern students are winners, however, special congratulations are extended to our Library Research Award stars and to all who applied as well as to faculty for their student support and guidance! Our 2016 awards will include research essays/papers from Summer 2015, Fall 2015, Wintersession, and Spring 2016 so continue to encourage students to apply. The award site link is: http://easternct.libguides.com/content.php?pid=62741.

VAESEAN DANIELS joined the library staff in March due to a retirement in the Access Services Dept. Vasean will be a familiar face at the main Circulation Desk where he will be available to help with all aspects of service. Vasean comes to us from the New Haven Free Public Library where he worked in the Circulation Dept. and also assisted library patrons with their technology needs. He has a BA in Information and Library Science from Southern Connecticut State University.

KATHY FREIDENFELDS retired from the library on May 1, 2015. Kathy worked in various areas of the library including Cataloging, the Curriculum Center, and the main Circulation Desk. Kathy began her career in the Library in January 2005 and had just completed 10 years of service. She was known for her pleasant demeanor, helpful attitude, and versatile cataloging skills.

RACHEL GAVIN retired from the library on January 1, 2015. Rachel began her career here in February 1999 and worked most of her time at the main Circulation Desk, with another assignment in the Serials Dept. Rachel was known for her great rapport with the students she supervised, and for her conscientious work ethic.

MARY SCHWEITZER is retiring from the library on June 1, 2015. Mary worked most of her time in the Acquisitions Dept. doing the book ordering and related tasks. She also worked in the Curriculum Center and at the main Circulation desk earlier in her career here and was a very helpful substitute at the service desks when staffing needs required her help. Mary began working here in 2003. She is looking forward to spending time with her new grandchild.
PLEASE CONSIDER BEING A FRIEND OF THE LIBRARY

By designating your tax deductible contribution in one of the categories below, you will be supporting the collections and services of the J. Eugene Smith Library at Eastern Connecticut State University.

_____ Friends of Eastern $50-99  _____ F. R. Nobel Associates $1,000-4,999
_____ The Century Club $100-299  _____ Tower Society $5,000 and above
_____ The President’s Circle $300-499  _____ Other contribution amount
_____ The 1889 Society $500-999

Total amount enclosed: ___________________________________________  Today’s date: _____________________________________________

I would like to make this donation in honor of: ________________________________________________________________

I would like to make this donation in memory of: ______________________________________________________________

The library will gift plate a book in your name, or in honor or memory of someone you designate, for a donation of $50 or more.

Name: _______________________________________________________________________________________________

Phone: (optional): _____________________________________________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________________________________________

E-mail (optional): ______________________________________________________________________________________

City: __________________________________________________________  State: __________  Zip: _______________

Please make checks payable to the: ECSU Foundation, Inc.

and send your donation with this form to: ECSU Foundation, Inc.,
Eastern Connecticut State University, 83 Windham St., Willimantic, CT 06226.