

Conclusion

I hope that this excursion into some of my thoughts and experiences has been helpful to any libraries thinking of, or being drawn into the provision of Distance Education services. It's a big undertaking, but a real need, and a very worthwhile area.

Meredith Williams

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Site insight : Canberra College of Theology

Having only been a librarian for six months, the experience of attending my first ANZTLA conference was daunting to say the least. I felt more at home upstairs in the Moore College Library with the students, whose air of slight tension as they researched books for essays slightly overdue was very familiar to me. I completed my degree in Theology last year, at the Canberra College of Theology, a process which took a long time as I struggled to look after family, part time job, and study. This year I have become a graduate student at the University of Canberra, doing a Graduate Diploma in Library & Information Management. I have discovered the mystifying new world of acronyms such as ABN, OCLC, and now, AULOTS (could it be some prehistoric mammal discovered by ANZTLA), also the ARI (is this the secret password for IRA, I pondered as I watched secret lunchtime meetings with suspicious characters whispering together).

The Canberra College of Theology is a small college affiliated to the Christian & Missionary Alliance denomination. This is a small and not well known church in Australia despite its long and distinguished history of missions. Because of its emphasis on missions, particularly in China and South East Asia, there are more ethnic congregations than western, especially Chinese and Vietnamese. This poses a problem for the college to meet their special needs. Also most of these churches are situated in the coastal capital cities, so the College has had to develop a strong Distance Education program.

The College has 10,100 monographs, and a modest collection of tapes (1000) and videos. We subscribe to 39 journals, a huge expense for such a small library. We are constantly reassessing these to ensure they are the most relevant for our needs, and to provide a balanced collection. Our strongest collection area is in Biblical Studies and Missions. Canberra is amply provided with excellent libraries. St Marks and the A.C.U library are frequently used by our students, also the A.N.U. library.

So, what does a student in a theological library most appreciate? Naturally, a helpful and patient librarian, who can direct them speedily to the right section of books for that impossible essay. Recent publications are a must, likewise a clearly displayed 'new books' area for easy quick perusal. Journals and indexes, accessible and well lit. A simple and easy to operate OPAC that doesn't require a computing degree to use. Lastly, an open borrowing system, as many, for as long as you like!!!

The last six months transition from student to Librarian has been, and continues to be a vertical learning curve. My sympathies are slowly but surely realigning towards the long suffering kind, self-controlled wonderful librarian.

Susan Phillips



Fences and gates

Industrial issues and workplace safety

Phil Teece

Phil Teece, Industrial Services Manager in ALLA's National Office presented details of the changing nature of Australia's labour market in general and in the library sector particularly. In doing so, he referred closely to ALLA's recent national survey of employment conditions for library workers, the most comprehensive research project of its kind ever carried out. Among the many facts presented the following stood out:

The age profile of library workers is remarkable, by comparison with the general workforce: 72% of workers are aged 40 or older, compared to 40% of all Australian workers.

In the past year, 66% of library workers received a pay increase. After analysis, the intuitively-felt pay disadvantage of library workers relative to the total workforce is confirmed. Library workers whose pay increased, other than via promotion or change of job, received an average wage increase of 3.4% - significantly lower than increases in Australian average weekly ordinary time earnings of 4.5% and increases from enterprise agreements (4.4%). This is notwithstanding the finding that library workers are better educated, more experienced and more stable in their employment patterns, relative to the total workforce. Given that a very high proportion of library workers is found in the public sector, real wage differentials for library workers can be seen as even greater when comparisons are made with average wage increases for public sector workers as a whole (6.1%). The relatively small proportion of private sector library workers fared much better than their public sector counterparts with average increases of 4.9%. Some gender differences were evident: for example, among full-time librarians 50.4% of men earn more