

# ◆ DLS Newsletter ◆

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## COMPETITORS OR MODELS? A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

Recently I opened an email message, which offered me a great opportunity. The sender was the representative of a proprietary company that markets fee-based access to databases, articles, and reference materials to members of the higher education community. As I read through the message, it occurred to me that the sender probably had gotten my email address from an academic list of some sort and assumed that I was a member of the teaching faculty, who might spread the word about this service to my students.

After deleting the message, I started to think about the amount of marketing of this type that is aimed at students and teachers in colleges and universities on a regular basis. It is not entirely effective as evidenced by prominent companies that are not flourishing as they might have hoped, but business does exist for these fee-based services.

When companies started to market fee-based access to library-type services, I took

part in many heated discussions with colleagues about the fact that these services did not need to exist, from our point of view, because they were not needed. "Why would students pay for the same services and materials we give them for free?" we wondered.



*Distance Learning Sec-*

Since my initial shock, I have begun to think about why anyone might pay for these services. First of all, students know about them because the companies advertise. Academic libraries have not traditionally had strong marketing programs, so that many students do not seem to know that we can offer all that the companies do, and more, for free. Additionally, the company Web sites have easy-to-use search engines that don't presume that everyone will know proper search strategy or what links to click to get to the actual materials they need. Many library Web sites expect a certain level of sophistication in their users that might not always be there.

Clichés abound in our

society today about the importance of information and the easy access to it through the World Wide Web. Traditionally aged college students grew up using computers from kindergarten and were doing research on the Web for high school papers. Nontraditional students, who are common in distance learning programs, are often busy with jobs and families in addition to school and want to find information quickly and easily. Many college students today can afford to pay for access to information and will when it is easier or more apparent than what we offer in libraries.

As leaders in the field of distance learning librarianship, we are in the forefront of providing library services and materials to our students virtually. Distance learning librarians also have had more experience in marketing services to remote users than their on-campus counterparts. It seems to me that we can benefit from examining our corporate competitors to see if there are ways we can improve our marketing and the ease of use of our virtual libraries so that we attract students to us as their first choice for

*(Continued on page 7)*

## DLS Discussion Group, New Orleans ALA Midwinter Meetings

A DLS survey from 2001 Annual Conference produced a list of topics important to distance learning librarians, and some of the topics were discussed at this session. The first topic concerned cost-and-funding issues related distance learning library services. Several librarians mentioned that their salaries are funded totally or in part by the continuing or extended study departments/colleges at their institutions. Next, the discussion turned to matters related to hybrid situations, such the "local remote user." The discussion also highlighted the importance of partnerships, especially between the librarians and faculty, with several individuals suggesting that librarians work with the faculty-development staff on campus in order to facilitate more partnerships.

The discussion next turned to good practices in providing service. Included in the good ideas were: providing instruction on the use of library resources through a variety of methods; providing electronic reserves; production of customized Web pages with links to resources; offering toll-free telephone numbers; using templates for class Web pages; saving long reference email messages for future use, and production of a Frequently-Asked-Questions Web page.

The discussion then moved to digital reference services, with the key issue being the number and variety of companies providing digital reference software. LSSI was mentioned as one of the best available choices, and it is the recent choice of Central Michigan University. Toll-free telephone calls were compared to digital reference, and the possible problem of students having only one telephone line was raised. Other issues related to digital reference were discussed, including student and librarian comfort with

"chat" environments and the schedule of hours when libraries provide digital reference service. Importantly, "chat" capability provides librarians with the opportunity to join online classes that are utilizing systems like Blackboard and WebCT. In many cases, the librarian is added to the class membership, and as a result, s/he is available during chats to answer questions from students regarding library resources and services. Digital reference consortiums, such as the one with OhioLink, were also mentioned as a promising development.

The Group also discussed the need for training distance learning librarians. Ideas included the creation of a mentoring program and the development of a several-day training seminar for new distance learning librarians. There is also the possibility that ACRL money can be used to fund such initiatives. The Group also discussed the fact that DLS needs to keep track of conference programs related to distance learning that are developed by other ALA sections and groups. Currently, DLS liaisons attend conference programs, discussion groups, roundtables, and other meetings related to distance learning, and they later write summaries of the meetings for the *DLS Newsletter*.

The Group next discussed the challenging issue of providing library services for distance learners who are located in other countries. Providing resources and services in languages other than English is especially difficult. Some schools are working with their bibliographers and other staff members who know foreign languages in order to better serve their non-English-speaking distance students.

The Discussion also focused on the issue of gaining support for distance library services. Support should be sought from a wide variety of sources, including library directors, other library staff, distance learning faculty, advisory committees, and other university/

college administrators. In addition, librarians should be actively involved in accreditation reviews, which can include mandates about effective library services and resources. Finally, the discussion concluded with an observation from several librarians—that the condition of student support services at your institution, especially the condition of library resources and services, can make the difference in whether or not a student selects your school for their study, and whether or not that student will succeed academically.

The Group was reminded about the Off Campus Library Services Conference to be held in April in Cincinnati. Approximately 50 people attended the DLS Discussion Group.

--Melinda Dermody (St. Cloud State University) and Stephen Dew (University of Iowa)



### RUSA/BRASS and the Guidelines

The Ad Hoc Committee on Distance Education within RUSA/BRASS have completed a study that includes the impact of the ACRL Guidelines on providing services to business education students. See: Bryna Coonin, Wendy Diamond, Catherine R. Friedman, Marilyn Hankel, Loretta Spurling, and Michael Oppenheim (BRASS Reference and Services Section). "Serving Business Distance Education Students." *Reference & User Services Quarterly* 41:2 (Winter 2001): 144-158.

--Loretta Spurling (University of Kansas)

## “Distance Education, Electronic Reference and Library Service”

Co-chairs of the ACRL Medium-Sized Libraries Discussion Group, Daniel Ortiz of the University of Massachusetts-Boston and Jo-Ann Michalak of Tufts University led the roundtable discussion that began with introductions. Everyone mentioned topics related to distance learning and/or electronic reference that most interested them. There was a wide variety of interests, including the areas of marketing services, virtual reference, statistics, and the Collaborative Digital Reference Service. Much of the ensuing discussion focused on electronic reference services, although there was a little discussion of distance learning services. Interestingly, the chairs of the session announced that they had thought to add distance education to the discussion as a direct result of being contacted by the DLS Liaison Committee. It was good to hear that the committee's contacts are raising awareness of distance learning issues among other ALA groups.

One attendee mentioned there are many models of library services to distance learners, and that the current discussion group seemed to include representatives using several different models.

A distance education student in a library science program spoke, and mentioned the helpfulness of electronic reserves, and also said that getting materials to distance ed. students is difficult. She said she is lucky enough to live in an urban area, so doesn't have as much problem.

There was a discussion on marketing distance education library services, and it was mentioned that it is important to work with the continuing education department or other group on campus that is in charge of coordinating these services.

The rest of the discussion focused on electronic reference services, both the more traditional e-mail and the newer virtual and chat reference services. One library has hired extra

people to provide v-ref services from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. The person presenting this information said that they received a lot of questions requiring referral to their local print holdings, even during late hours. It would be helpful to have late-night workers in the library rather than working from home or another remote location.

The next topic was staffing of virtual reference services. The hours of staffing varied from two to twenty-four hours a day. Some libraries staff the service with the librarians who are currently at the reference desk, and others have people cover the service from their offices when they are not assisting other patrons. Pros and cons of each were discussed. These services are new enough that there is no consensus on what works the best.

Voice over IP (VOIP) was mentioned as a possibility for use in virtual reference. VOIP is real-time voice communication between computers. Microsoft is now building this technology into their new operating system, and later it may be easier to incorporate into v-ref services.

Those who are currently using virtual reference software described the benefits and drawbacks of having transcriptions available. They allow the possibility of following up on transactions; keeping track of the quality of services provided with an eye toward training staff; and seeing what the frequently asked questions are. There are privacy issues related to keeping patron identifying information in the database. There have been recent instances of federal agents asking documents reference librarians for records of past transactions. It was recommended that the software purchased should have the capability of stripping identifying information from the

transcriptions. Some of them have this.

Other topics discussed during the session included: chat reference, Web call center software, and prioritizing virtual reference questions. I found the session very interesting. Although only peripherally related to distance learning, many of the issues that were discussed can be applied to the provision of services to distance learners.

--Jerilyn Marshall (University of Northern Iowa)

### DLS Speaker Needed

ACRL's FISCAL "Fee-Based Information Services in Academic Libraries" is holding a discussion group on Sunday, June 16 on "Bridging the Gap for Distance Learners: a Look at the Role of Traditional Document Delivery Services vs. Fee-Based." FISCAL has enlisted Gail Etschmaier (George Washington U) to address the fee-based portion. We need to supply a speaker to address the traditional service perspective. Please spread the word and forward to me the name(s) of anyone who is interested in participating in this discussion. Anne Marie has suggested we consider a program proposal for next year's ACRL conference. Ideas? Thanks. Rob Morrison: TEL: (435) 797-1477; FAX: (435) 797-7475; E-MAIL: [robmor@cc.usu.edu](mailto:robmor@cc.usu.edu).

--Rob Morrison (Utah State University)

## Web Notes

### SEARCH ENGINES

iLOR [<http://www.ilor.com/>]

Using Google's database, iLOR allows you to search the web and then gives you options. "When you pause your cursor arrow over a search result using iLOR, an option menu appear that gives you exciting, useful and easier ways to explore the results that are relevant to your search and ignore the ones that are not" [from the iLOR site]. Basically, iLOR lets you create a custom list from the results of your search. iLOR also let's you easily open a link in a new window or as a new window on your taskbar.

ConnectNet [<http://www.connectnet.org/>]

Not a search engine in the traditional sense, but a great resource nonetheless. ConnectNet is intended to connect youth to places where they can use and learn about computers. Most of these computer centers provide free access and/or training. The database is searchable by zip code and provides you with a map showing the locations of the resources nearby. The database is also accessible via an 800 number. The goal is to bridge the digital divide by offering all kids the opportunity to learn more about technology and to connect with local organizations that can help.

Researchville [<http://www.researchville.com/>]

Also not a traditional search engine, Researchville is part meta-search engine, part reference source. You can search multiple sources with the same query, with each source's result opened in a new window or you can search one resource at a time. One of the great things about Researchville is that it links to lots of local newspapers that you might not otherwise think of searching.

### RESOURCES

LexiCool [<http://www.lexicool.com/>]

LexiCool is a directory to over 500 online translation dictionaries and glossaries. You can select two languages (from a list of almost 60) to find resources to translate to and from those languages or you can search by subject or keyword. LexiCool doesn't actually perform your search in the selected resource, it just points you to the right place. Still, it's a great way to translate a word or two quickly or to find an online dictionary.

The End of Free [<http://www.theendoffree.com/>]

In this age of dot coms gone bust, more and more services are taking the plunge and charging their customers. Keep track of the trend with The End of Free, which chronicles sites, tools, and resources that have switched to a fee-based approach.

Newspaper Direct [<http://www.newspaperdirect.com/>]

Speaking of things that aren't free, here's one that's interesting. Newspaper Direct is a service that tries to make your favorite newspaper available to you anywhere and seems to be targeted primarily at travelers. It's sort of print-on-demand for newspapers. It doesn't look like they've thought about the library market. Maybe they should.

Where to do Research [<http://www.wheretodoresearch.com/>]

Where to do Research is a subject directory that links primarily to reference sources. With nearly 100 subject areas and over 6,000 external links, it covers everything from popular subjects to academic interests. It's great because it brings things together in an easy-to-use format and because it includes links to resources that might be overlooked by more traditional reference sites. It would be even better if it was searchable and annotated.

### TOOLS

CreatePDF [<http://createpdf.adobe.com/>]

Adobe has created a subscription-based

service that allows you to create PDF documents from anywhere without having the Adobe Acrobat suite installed on your computer. You simply upload the document (it supports a wide variety of common file types) and the service can either create the PDF file on the fly or e-mail it to you. You can also submit a URL and have CreatePDF convert the site into PDF. A free trial is available.

OurFax [<http://www.ourfax.com/>]

Let it be said at the outset that, while this tool is free, it is supported by advertising. What it does, though, is allow "any email user in the world, to send faxes directly from their email address, to almost any fax machine in the world" (from the OurFax web site). The services include: e-mail to fax; web to fax; fax to e-mail; voice mail to e-mail. An interesting development.

Make a Shorter Link [<http://www.makeashorterlink.com/>]

Ever had a problem with a URL so long that it breaks in e-mails and causes you and the recipients problems? Make a Shorter Links is the answer! You just copy your long URL, paste it into Make a Shorter Link's text entry box and it generates a shorter URL for free. Make a Shorter Link will maintain the link for "as long as we're in charge of the database" (from the Make a Shorter Link web site).

### PLAGIARISM DETECTION TOOLS

Eve2 [<http://www.canexus.com/eve/index.shtml>]

Eve2 is software the allows teachers and professors to detect plagiarism from World Wide Web sites. You insert the text of the essay or paper in question, and Eve2 provides you with a report with links to sites which may be the source of plagiarism. A 15 day free version is available.

Turnitin [<http://www.turnitin.com/>]

Turnitin is much like Eve2 in that it detects plagiarism from web sites, but

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## ACRL Electronic Reserves D.G.

Jill McKinstry and Katie Whitson, of the University of Washington Libraries, opened the session with a description of their locally developed system and their use of Blackboard, under the theme, "Customization, Personalization, or Not." UW has a wonderfully well-developed web site, and about 200 of their 400 courses per quarter use electronic reserves. Students log on with their own network password, which stays with them even after they become alumni, and access specific course information including e-reserves through a line number from their current schedule, which is available to them online. The links are durable, and the system is dependable. Local courseware modules are also being developed for customized support of online teaching, with 7 academic units, including the library, meeting monthly as a group called *Uwired*. Blackboard has come into use more recently. One of its desirable features is that publishers seem to think it is more secure, so are more likely to grant permission for copyrighted materials to be posted there than on the other system. The libraries are talking with faculty about linking BB postings to their E-res lists, for the convenience of their students and of the library staff who field the questions. Their PowerPoint presentations are posted at Jill's web page: <http://faculty.washington.edu/jillmck>. (Your computer must have PowerPoint installed in order for you to be able to view them.) The University site, <http://www.washington.edu>, shows current weather conditions on campus, as well as its many other features.

Charlotte Cabbage, of Northwestern University, also works with a separate E-reserve system and Blackboard, and her comparison was similar: the E-Reserve system (WebVoyage) is more dependable and faster to access, yet Blackboard's

password protection finds more favor with publishers granting copyright permissions. Music is an area with special copyright concerns, so streamed music reserves are put in Blackboard. NW is moving toward more use of Blackboard for its instant access to course information, even though it doesn't provide the kind of cataloging or tracking that the library and its E-reserve system do. Staffing levels for scanning materials and for dealing with copyright permissions is also a significant consideration here, as is the conflicted situation concerning one-semester permissions and the initial cost of putting the material online in the first place. Their library web site is <http://www.library.northwestern.edu>.

Jackie Hanson, of UC San Diego Libraries, focused her comments on the necessary interconnectedness of e-reserve materials: they have done 3 pilot programs with regular text reserves, music, and image reserves (wondering if video reserves will soon be possible as well). UCSD distinguishes "Course Reserves" (articles, etc.) from "Soft Reserves" (lecture notes, syllabi, posted free for faculty but copies provided to students at a cost). Course Web Pages, Textbook Services, and Printing & Duplicating, try to coordinate services with a common web page <http://coursematerials.ucsd.edu>, (which of course includes a link to the UCSD Libraries) and a joint flyer.

Mary Jackson of the Association of Research Libraries concluded with a question-and-answer session, and affirmed us in our thinking about the rate of change and the variety of response to current issues involving e-reserves.

--Laura Bottoms (Rogers State University)



## D. G. on Fee-Based Service Centers

Genie Grimm from Atlas Systems spoke about the OCLC ILLIAD software. ILLIAD is an ILL management software system with a web interface for patrons. Its three main components are borrowing, lending, and document delivery. Grimm touched on many of the highlights of ILLIAD and concentrated on the billing properties of the system, which would be particularly useful to fee-based services using the software. After her presentation and a question period, the Discussion Group briefly addressed doing a joint program with DLS at the Annual Conference in Atlanta. DLS will be suggesting a speaker for the program.

--Anne Marie Casey (Central Michigan University)

## How to Join DLS

To join the Distance Learning Section, contact:  
Membership Services  
ACRL  
50 Huron Street,  
Chicago, Illinois 60611  
1-800-545-2433 ext. 2521  
email: [acrl@ala.org](mailto:acrl@ala.org)  
<http://www.ala.org/acrl.html>

## Editor's Note

This *Newsletter* is available on the DLS Web site. Minutes of committee meetings as well as Strategic Planning documents also appear there.

Please submit any corrections to this *Newsletter* to the editor at [nburich@ku.edu](mailto:nburich@ku.edu).

—Nancy J. Burich (University of Kansas)

## Distance Learning Up Close

At the 2002 ALA midwinter conference in New Orleans, the OCLC Institute sponsored a program called "Distance Learning Up Close: Considerations for Decision Makers." The OCLC Institute is the arm of OCLC that conducts educational and consulting programs. The focus of the program was designing instructional materials for distance learners.

The first speaker, Linda Evers, associate director of the Institute, gave an in-depth presentation entitled "Designing Distance Learning: Instructional Systems Designs for the *Proactive Librarian*." Her talk focused on an instructional systems design (ISD) model that she defined and built upon as she proceeded with her talk. The final model consisted of these steps: determine purpose, analyze, design, develop, implement, evaluate, and maintain. She also encouraged the audience to analyze work roles (makers, buyers, keepers) as part of thinking through each step of the ISD model. For those librarians who don't have the time to follow all of the planning steps, she recommended three essentials: 1) someone must declare the project is correct, 2) it must be accessible from technology, language, training, content, and readability standpoints, and 3) it must be sequenced properly with the right resources and the right depth.

The second presenter was Steve Miller, Head, Monographs Department, Golda Meir Library, who also teaches a web-based course on metadata for the MLIS program at his institution, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. His talk explained how he converted his course from an in-person classroom course to a web-based DL course using Web CT. Steve walked us through his web course, discussing and giving examples of what instructional and technical issues needed to be considered when designing the web course and the communication issues

that needed to be dealt with when teaching the course.

After these two presentations, Erik Jul, executive director of the OCLC Institute, led an audience discussion on what librarians can do better for distance learning. Describing and storing knowledge resources and fostering cooperation among libraries have been the original and ongoing roles of OCLC and Erik talked about how this could be applied to web resources and distance learning. Cooperative efforts could be utilized to help librarians with instruction design, content delivery, knowledge capturing, and reducing redundancy. Ideas from the audience were to create a best practices clearinghouse, to provide a common electronic location with templates where developers could go so they don't have to continually relearn new course software, and to use the DLS web page as a depository for cooperative efforts.

--Susan Davis (Gallaudet University)

## ACRL's First E-Pub: In Print: Publishing Opportunities for College Librarians

If you're looking for relevant information about what journals might be interested in an idea you have or you want to encourage your staff to publish more, the Research for College Librarianship Committee (RCLC) of the College Libraries Section of ACRL has just what you need: *InPrint: Publishing Opportunities for College Librarians*.

The benefit of *InPrint* is that it allows great flexibility in reviewing and selecting journals in which to publish. Not only do the descriptions of titles include e-mail links to editors, but a searcher can specify that s/he

wants only titles that are refereed, that have an acceptance rate of better than 50 percent, that require fewer than 20 pages, and that have editors who will respond to writers in less than two months.

Launched in early January 2001, *InPrint* is available at <http://acrl.telusys.net/epubs/> for \$35 (\$25 for ACRL members). The cost includes access to data for two years and RCLC members will be reviewing and updating entries every six months. Titles included will interest all academic librarians and cover the fields of library and information science, higher education, computer technology, and college teaching in specific disciplines.

By publicizing editors who are willing to discuss ideas and in some cases to mentor writers and researchers and by targeting useful publications, RCLC members hope to make it easier for academic librarians to contribute to the literature.

## Web Notes

(Continued from page 4)

also has additional features that they claim help prevent plagiarism through deterrence. The main product is much like *Eve 2* in that it generates a report that links the teacher or professor to material that may be plagiarized. In addition, there is a peer review function coming soon that allows students to view and comment on others' work anonymously. A 30 day free trial is available.

--Brian Mikesell (St. John's University)



## ACRL Media Resources D.G.

The ACRL Discussion Group on Media Resources met for the first time during the ALA Midwinter Meeting in New Orleans. The group was formerly an ACRL committee. The Chair for 2001-2002 is Jill Ortner of the State University of New York at Buffalo. During the meeting Diane Kachmar of Florida Atlantic University volunteered to be Vice Chair/Chair-Elect. She will begin serving as Chair after the ALA Annual Conference in Atlanta. The attendees are involved with a variety of media, including sound, video, and microforms, and come from both public and technical services.

Much of the meeting was administrative and included choosing the type of organizational structure the group should have, as well as meeting times and formats. The group determined that they will continue to meet on Sunday mornings from 9:30 to 11, because this does not conflict with other media interest groups' regular meetings. The format of the group's meetings will remain fluid and discussion-oriented, and may include very short presentations to launch discussion. The group will plan on having up to two discussion topics per meeting, one planned and one open for discussion of new formats or developments, as well as a backup topic.

For the ALA Annual Conference in Atlanta the discussion topics will be a "New Formats Discussion Slam" (a forum for people to share information about new media formats), "Metadata for Media", and a backup topic to be determined. The Chair and Chair-Elect of the discussion group expressed interest in having guest speakers from the Distance Learning Section at a future discussion, "once they are on their feet" as a group.

--April P. Levy (Lesley University)

## RUSA/MARS D.G.

RUSA/MARS Education, Training and Support and Managers of Electronic Reference Services Committees held a discussion forum at Midwinter in New Orleans entitled, "Care and Feeding of the Virtual Librarian: Discussion Forum on Training and Support of Chat Reference Staff".

The purpose of this meeting was to help plan the program at the Annual Conference in Atlanta in June. It was emphasized that this group concerns itself with training and support of staff, not with issues of the technology or software involved in delivery of virtual reference services.

Discussion raised questions that might be addressed at the program in Atlanta. For example, are libraries hiring people specifically for the virtual reference positions, and what skills are needed to do virtual reference? How many libraries are outsourcing digital reference, and is there a correlation to size of library? Are library schools teaching about virtual reference? What are some effective training techniques for virtual reference? Do we need standards for virtual reference, and if so, how do we go about developing them? How can different types of libraries work together in consortia? How do we develop policies? What are the various staffing models? How about assessment and evaluation of the virtual reference staff and their answers?

Issues to include in training staff are: troubleshooting the most basic technical problems that can occur, discussion of licensing agreements (are virtual visitors the equivalent of walk-ins?), selecting which sources can/should be used for answering questions, and being sure to include sources in answers.

People were able to share some information about programs

in practice and contributed many ideas and questions for the program in Atlanta.

--Margaret Casado (University of Tennessee, Knoxville)

## Subscribing to OFFCAMP Listserv

The OFFCAMP Listserv has been established for "discussion about all aspects of service to remote users, including but not limited to branch campus service, state regional, national, and international academic programs and their associated constituents."

To subscribe to OFFCAMP, send an e-mail message to:

listserv@lists.wayne.edu

In the body of your message type:

SUB OFFCAMP YOUR NAME

Example: SUB OFFCAMP JANE JONES

## Competitors or Models?

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information.

At the ALA Annual Conference in Atlanta this summer, the DLS program will focus on issues such as these. The program, entitled, *E-Research Businesses: Value Added or Virtually Redundant?* is scheduled for Saturday, June 15 from 1:30-3:30. I encourage members of the section to attend this program and perhaps bring back to our own libraries some ideas for reaching the students who are willing to pay for what we want to give them.

--Ann Marie Casey, Chair (Central Michigan University)

## E-Research Businesses: Value Added... or Virtually Redundant?

Saturday, June 15, 2002, 1:30 – 3:30 pm  
Room to be announced

A discussion for professionals concerned about plagiarism, duplication of resources, marketing of library services, and information competency.

**A panel of knowledge experts and information executives**

Moderated by:

**Michael Patrick McManus**, Co-Anchor, CNN Student News

Keynote Speaker:

**James Neal**, Vice President for Information Services and University Librarian, Columbia University

Featuring:

**Troy Williams**, Founder and CEO, Questia Media

**Susan Swords Steffen**, Director, A.C. Buehler Library, Elmhurst College

Sponsored by the Distance Learning Section and  
Community and Junior College Library Section of ACRL

Reports from Midwinter Meetings

In This Issue...

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