Special Libraries: Medical & Law

URL for this class:  www1.law.umkc.edu/library/classes/iowa

Guest Lecturers:

Sue Sykes Berry  
University of Missouri-Kansas City  
Health Sciences Library  
www.umkc.edu/lib/hsl/

Lissa Lord  
University of Missouri-Kansas City  
Leon E. Bloch Law Library  
www.law.umkc.edu/library

Vision Statement, UMKC Libraries

To serve as a premier urban academic research library supporting excellence in learning, discovery and creativity by meeting the information resource needs of UMKC and the community.

Mission Statement

UMKC Libraries - Health Sciences Library

The University Libraries support the teaching, research, and clinical/community service of UMKC faculty and students using the University's resources and those of other libraries and databases through current information technologies. The Library also makes its resources available to other UM campuses, other scholarly communities and the general public.

The University Library currently operates at three locations: the Miller Nichols Library on the Volker Campus, and the Health Sciences Library and the Dental Library on the Hospital Hill campus. The UMKC Library is complemented by the library of the UMKC Law School.

Leon E. Bloch Law Library

We are Information Professionals facilitating the work of the legal scholar by providing access and
an educated use of all types of legal information resources.

Management

- Organizational Chart for the University
- Organizational Chart for the Health Sciences Libraries
- Organizational Chart for the Law Library

I think the organizational chart for the Law Library would look something like several overlapping circles. In fact, I'm going to try to design such a chart. The old chart is outdated and does not reflect the actual way things get done.

Of course designated positions are in charge of various functions of the library but all have input into every aspect of library activity.

During my job interview at the law library, I asked the selection committee what the management structure was and I was told: "management by discussion." And now, after working in this library for a year, I'd say that this description fits.

The Director often calls a meeting of staff members involved in the particular issue at hand. She lays out the details and ramifications of the situation and we discuss it. Together, the staff and Director, mold most of the decisions pertaining to the service role of the library. We "own" the way the library is run. We have an active interest and responsibility of action.

Staffing

- UMKC Health Sciences Library Staff
- UMKC Leon E. Bloch Law Library Staff

Budgeting

- UMKC Health Sciences Library

Personnel- $579,380
Total Collection Expenditures-$344,608
Serials- $278,365
Monographs-$176,247
Total Annual Expenditures- $1,028,516

- UMKC Leon E. Bloch Law Library
The Law School budget determines the library budget. The Director and acquisitions librarian manage the numbers. It is my experience that the library staff have fair input into the purchase of equipment and materials for their own department and projects as well as for the collection as a whole. I'd estimate that 98% of our suggestions/requests are honored with satisfaction in a timely and efficient manner. The Director relies upon the quality staff she has hired to recommend quality acquisitions for the enhancement of the library mission we hold in common. We are not a rich law library. However, academic law libraries are usually well supported by alumni of the Law School and our library benefits from that practice.

User Services (including end-user searching)

- **UMKC Health Sciences Library**
  (Note: homepage at [www.umkc.edu/lib/hsl](http://www.umkc.edu/lib/hsl))

The Health Sciences Library serves the students, faculty and staff of UMKC. It is also a resource for the employees of Truman Medical Center. We provide health information to Public Health Professionals in Northwest Missouri, and members of the community who may purchase a membership.

The library is a partial government depository and as such is open to the general public for use.

The library tries to offer classes to interested patrons on topics we think will be of use to them. The list of available classes is at [http://www.umkc.edu/lib/hsl/services.html](http://www.umkc.edu/lib/hsl/services.html).

- **UMKC Leon E. Bloch Law Library**

The library homepage ([www.law.umkc.edu/library](http://www.law.umkc.edu/library)) is a major component of our library's service to the user. These user services deal with access to sources of legal information. Our users are the students, faculty and staff of the Law School, the UMKC community, and members of the general public who come to the library to gain practical legal results (Note: See Self Help Law ([www1.law.umkc.edu/library/self-help.htm](http://www1.law.umkc.edu/library/self-help.htm)).

Legal validity is based on such factors as the date of publication, the jurisdiction of court opinions and the authority of legislated documents. In the law library, legal information is available for historical and current research. The library extends beyond its physical walls because current law is readily available on the Internet as is a growing underpinning of historical case and legislative history.

Librarians in the academic law library focus on user education. Legal information is available in various formats. The tools of information access include micro film and fiche, print documents and treatises, online legal databases (Lexis and Westlaw), and the Internet (Note: See Bookmarked Law ([www1.law.umkc.edu/library/bookmarks.htm](http://www1.law.umkc.edu/library/bookmarks.htm)). The library's educational momentum is toward programs that focus on gaining skillful use of the tools of legal information access as a primary research goal.
Library user education classes taught in the last year include:

- Legal Research and the Internet
- Law and Computers: Search Engines
- Learning HTML & FrontPage Web Editing

Technical Services

- **UMKC Health Sciences Library**

  The Miller Nichols Library handles the purchasing and cataloging for the Health Sciences Library. We work closely with them to insure that our purchase requests are received in a timely manner. The list of new books is available at: [http://www.umkc.edu/lib/gen-info/newtitles-med.htm](http://www.umkc.edu/lib/gen-info/newtitles-med.htm)

- **UMKC Leon E. Bloch Law Library**

  - Cataloging - *Director of Bibliographic Management*
  - Acquisitions - *Director of Collection Resources*
  - Looseleafs, Serials, Updates - *Special Handling Assistant*
  - New Books List [www1.law.umkc.edu/library/circpage.htm](http://www1.law.umkc.edu/library/circpage.htm)

Marketing

- **UMKC Health Sciences Library**

  Marketing is a business term that is rarely used in conjunction with an academic library. Yet what we do in trying to promote the services of the library can be called that.

  The Health Sciences Library has several different methods of publicizing the services we offer. We include library information in the newsletters published by the School of Nursing and the School of Medicine. We hand out bookmarks with information on the library to patrons who come into the library.

  We attempt to reach faculty by attending the faculty orientations that are held each year in the fall. The library is part of the orientation for new Internal Medicine Residents each year. We attend the new student orientations offered each fall for the students at the Schools of Medicine, Pharmacy and Nursing. In all of these sessions we emphasize the web site and the remote access to the library.

- **UMKC Leon E. Bloch Law Library**

  Our most visible presence to the legal researcher is our library homepage ([www.law.umkc.edu/library](http://www.law.umkc.edu/library)). The concept of marketing is more like "how do we let folks know we have this?" We do a
brisk business. Students, professors, staff, university researchers and the general public seem to find our little place in the world with little marketing. Our good service coupled with the clients' need for the specialized information provide a more subtle marketing engagement.

The staff concentrate on maintaining a high level of academic and public service. The users of law libraries need the library and have a fairly clear idea of what they want. We facilitate the "how" of getting that information.

(Note: See From the Reference Desk www1.law.umkc.edu/library/classes/reference.htm).

Members of the general public are our most frequent customers at the reference desk. They want to find their own law ... a piece of the law that pertains to a legal situation in their life. These issues include questions on child support, divorce, taxes, landlord/tenant issues, employment, discrimination, etc.

Collection Development

- **UMKC Health Sciences Library**

The responsibilities for Collection Development in the Health Sciences Library are divided up by specialty.

The Assistant Director for the Health Sciences Library selects all the materials for Medicine, Pharmacy, and Biological Sciences. The Instruction and Reference Librarian selects materials for Nursing and Reference.

A useful resource for collection development in the Health Sciences is the Brandon-Hill List. In addition, we have a collection development plan with Blackwell and have spent the last year working on refining the profile so that it best suits our purchase interests.

Faculty can request titles at any time and the requests will be honored as long as there are funds. Usually, once a year the faculty of each school gives us a list of the titles they would like us to purchase. Students may also request books.

Our journal purchases do not change much each year. Since the journals are so expensive and the prices continue to go up, it is rarely the case that we add a journal; most of the journal decisions involve what titles to cut.

- **UMKC Leon E. Bloch Law Library**

My role in collection development is to evaluate and suggest new titles for our growing database collection and book and journal titles for our print collection.

This process "happens" during my workday as part of what I do and not as a separate activity. During my time on the reference desk I may come across an interesting resource that would improve our service in the law library. Or, I may be researching for a class or lecture and trip upon valuable titles we don't own. I may be perusing a professional journal and read a review for a product worth recommending for our collection. And, I attend conferences and workshops where I
am introduced to myriad tools for information access and electronic research. My role in the library's collection development process is satisfying and fun.

Professional Activities/Training

- **UMKC Health Sciences Library**

  As members of the faculty at the university we are expected to teach, conduct and publish research, and provide service. These goals are met in a variety of ways depending on the nature of your job. In my position I do a great deal of teaching, but other positions may focus more on service.

  Conferences are a great way to keep current and active. I am a member of the American Library Association and attend the two conferences they sponsor each year.

  As part of this membership, I serve on the steering committee for Reference and User Services, and on the instruction committee for the distance learning section of the Association of College and Research Libraries.

  This year in March I will be making a presentation at the Association of College and Research Libraries 10th National Conference. In addition, I am a member of the Midcontinent Chapter of the Medical Library Association. The Medical Library Association offers its members a certification program as part of its professional activities [http://www.mlanet.org/academy/index.html](http://www.mlanet.org/academy/index.html)

- **UMKC Leon E. Bloch Law Library**

  Librarians are encouraged to pursue continuing education because of the level of expertise required by the subject of law coupled with the changing technology of accessing legal information.

  Our professional organizations offer great educational and networking opportunities. These are the conferences I attended this year:

  
  - AALL / American Association of Law Libraries [www.aallnet.org/events/](http://www.aallnet.org/events/)
  
  - Internet Librarian [www.infotoday.com/il2001/default.htm](http://www.infotoday.com/il2001/default.htm)

  We have a promotion process at UMKC that motivates us to be serious about professional membership, participation on committees, writing for professional publication, and our own higher education. This can truly be an enjoyable process.

  Professional reading is another way I keep informed. The **Internet Lawyer** and **Computers in Libraries** are two of my favorites. Also, I keep my eyes peeled for on campus training sessions offered in the area of technology and research.
There is much value in keeping the borders of "special library" wide and permeable. My experience is that I have gained in knowledge, professional expertise and confidence by maintaining close professional relationships with librarians from all types of libraries and by being active in an array of professional activities.

How We Keep Current

› UMKC Health Sciences Library

I have found that one of the ways to keep up is to monitor the listservs. I monitor the listservs for reference and instruction. In order to keep current in nursing I have active nursing licenses in two states, Florida and Iowa, and I meet the continuing education requirements for both of them. I am also a PhD candidate in the School of Information Science and Learning Technology at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

› UMKC Leon E. Bloch Law Library

I subscribe to listservs that send news updates to my email as the news happens. The Law is everywhere and therefore news from the NYT and ABC works great for me. Also, I subscribe to legal information lists such as Findlaw and Cornell Supreme Court filings.

Here is an example of a Supreme Court Opinion announcement sent to an email listserv: click HERE ... note the subscription information at the end of the message.

Example of NYT Headlines email listserv message: click HERE

Example of Findlaw Legal Headlines email listserv message:

Example of LLRX Update (Law Library Resource Xchange): click HERE

Example of RefDesk.com daily link: click HERE

I highly recommend that all reference librarians and those involved with the library's web resources keep a close ear to daily news casts via email or other technology.

Articles We Found

Not an endangered career
Looking it up
November 28, 2000
Web posted at: 6:08 p.m. EST

Librarians: Information Experts for an Information Age
Winter 2001 issue of Occupational Outlook Quarterly (U.S. Department of Labor)
www.bls.gov/opub/ooq/ooqhome.htm

UMKC Librarian's Council
Handbook
http://www.umkc.edu/lib-council/

UMKC Health Sciences Library
2411 Holmes
Kansas City, Missouri 64108-2792
Ph: (816) 235-1880
Fx: (816) 235-6570
UMKC-HSLREF@umkc.edu

Phone: 816/235-1650
Comments to: Lissa Lord
http://www1.law.umkc.edu/library
Updated on undefined NaNth undefined, NaN. Updated on Wednesday 28th February, 2001.

University of Missouri - KC
Leon E. Bloch Law Library
5100 Rockhill Road
Kansas City, MO 64110-2499