

Unit Annual Report: Labor & Employment Relations (LER) Library

Note: *Since the LER Library is an embedded library managed on a half-time basis, the unit report will be substantially shorter than other departmental libraries. In addition, as a virtual library, the LER Library did not circulate any materials as a physical location, and thus there is no record showing circulation stats related to the LER Library.*

The LER Library provided its information services to the faculty and students at the School of Labor & Employment Relations in FY 2012. Yoo-Seong Song continued his role as a half-time LER Librarian, while serving another half-time at the Business & Economics Library (BEL). Notably, during FY 2012, planning and implementations teams were assembled to develop and submit recommendations for closing BEL. As a result, BEL ceased its operation as an independent entity and closed its physical space in May 2012. Despite the strong tie between BEL and the LER Library, however, the LER Library was able to offer its services without much disruption. Also, the LER Library's services were delivered to its constituents with consistency and stability, although Yoo-Seong Song took his sabbatical leave for nine months from December 16, 2011 to August 15, 2012.

Before he began his sabbatical, Song continued to offer his research consultation services to students. As a half-time librarian embedded at LER, Song spent half of his time (20 hours) at his office at LER. The LER Library typically does not receive directional or short reference questions; instead, students at LER tend to make appointments in advance and bring research questions that require in-depth consultation and extensive time, often exceeding one hour.

One of the major advantages of being an embedded librarian is the opportunity to build close relationship with faculty and students. Knowing the majority of students at the master's program by their first names actually brings valuable opportunities to make the library services more visible and relevant. Students feel comfortable contacting me either by e-mail or office visits, as most faculty do the same. Participating regularly at the leadership meetings at LER also bring great opportunity to update the school on recent developments at the University Library and also learn the latest developments at the school as well. By building this level of relationship, offering information services and collecting relevant materials becomes efficient and reasonable.

The *CareerCorner*, a libguide for career and employment management, has consistently been ranked one of the top five libguides created by librarians on campus during FY 2012. The libguide was a result of collaboration with the LER administration, and Song has received many inquiries and complements from other universities and academic institutions with regards to the use of the libguide.

Students who used the *CareerCorner* often requested personal consultation sessions. It demonstrated that virtual services could lead to in-depth research sessions in person, which was one of the major

goals for the LER Library as a virtual library entity. Most research sessions centered around the question “how do I *use* the information that I find on the library page?” rather than “how do I *find* information?”

As an embedded librarian, Song was easily accessible to students at LER, which could strengthen ties with them. The embedded librarianship model was successful at LER, and building strong relationship with faculty and students surely requires frequent interaction with them in person. Consultation sessions with Ph.D. students at LER also increased, as they could freely walk in and ask questions for their doctoral studies and research assignments from their advisors.

Song’s sabbatical for nine months during FY 2012 was a major concern, although Becky Smith agreed to cover services provided by the LER Library during Song’s sabbatical. However, Smith did an excellent job of covering Song’s duties, as commented by the former Dean of LER and several other LER administrators. One major event for Smith was for her participation in the Student Competition for Big 10 schools in labor and employment relations program. She used the LER Library’s web page to introduce relevant library resources for the student team at LER. The student team from LER earned the first place in the competition, and the former Dean of LER expressed great appreciation for the Library’s services that enhanced students’ ability to solve case questions.

As a result of the New Service Model initiatives at the University Library, Song is now sharing his time between the LER Library and the Social Sciences, Health, and Education Library (SSHEL), while also participating as a member of the Business Information Services (BIS). Managing time will be a big concern, as this new model becomes fully established. Continuing consultation among librarians in those units and administrators will be appreciated to assess the effectiveness of this model. Faculty and students at LER have been updated on this new development, and they are comfortable with the changes and progress made at the University Library thus far. Maintaining the same consistent level of services will be the key to the continuing success of the LER Library as an embedded library.

B. Reference & Instruction

Questions received by the LER librarian were mostly by e-mail, although the number of office visits increased significantly as a result of being embedded. Those questions usually required in-depth examination of our resources, and thus the librarian felt that they were rather consultations than quick reference questions. According to the FY11 Sweeps Week, the LER Library was projected to have a total of 160 reference questions while there would be 112 digital reference questions. These numbers look reasonable, since most students contact the librarian by e-mail first, and their initial inquiries typically led to in-depth consultation at the librarian’s office.

The LER Library also conducted a total of seven instruction sessions with a total of 192 students.

C. Personnel

The LER librarian sought to evenly divide his time between the Business & Economics Library (BEL) and the LER Library. However, as it usually happens to those who have multiple assignments, time management still remains a big issue. The total time spent to serve the users for BEL and LER easily exceeded 100% of his time.

The LER Library did not have a GA for the academic year, and thus the librarian did not have immediate assistance for some areas. Fortunately, some GAs at BEL willingly helped complete some projects, including the *CareerCorner*, and such joint efforts proved to be very helpful.

In addition, the LER Librarian took his 9-month sabbatical during FY12. Becky Smith covered his duty during his sabbatical.

D. Goals for FY13

- Continue to modify (and re-design if necessary) the LER Library's web page based on the feedback from the faculty and students
- Increase instruction programs and create resource guides for courses offered at LER
- Start programs to introduce library services to new LER students (especially to international students)

II Statistical Profile

A. Facilities

N/A

B. Personnel

Yoo-Seong Song (Faculty): 50% July 2011 – June 2012

Becky Smith (Faculty): Covered Song's duty during his sabbatical leave

C. User Services

a. Reference

i. Face-to-Face: 48 projected for the year

ii. Digital: 112 projected for the year

b. Number of students enrolled in independent studies by the unit faculty

N/A

c. Credit course

Yoo-Seong Song (LIS 590 – Applied Business Research; 14 students; Summer 2011)

d. Number of presentations to groups: 7

e. Number of participants in group presentations: 192