

Public Health Library & Informatics (PHLI)

www.sph.umich.edu/phli

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Public Health Library & Informatics
is part of the
University of Michigan University
Library, Health Sciences Libraries
and the School of
Public Health

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A New Face at PHLI

We'd like to welcome a new staff member in the Public Health Library & Informatics: Rafael Becerra. He is the new Circulation Supervisor joining us with 19 years of experience in the University Libraries and expecting to add many more! We are sure his knowledge and experience will be a true asset to the Library and the School of Public Health in advancing our services and relationships.



While Rafael is not busy serving in the Library, you can find him working out, watching movies, reading, and traveling. Please stop by next time you are in the Library to introduce yourself and say hello to Rafael!

Paul Courant: New University Librarian

The University of Michigan Library System is proud to welcome Paul Courant as the new University Librarian and Dean of University Libraries.



Courant was University Provost from 2002-2005 and currently holds professorship appointments in public policy, economics, and information science.

Courant brings distinguished experience and an exciting new vision for the future of UM's libraries, with dedication to the students, faculty, staff, the physical collections, and the potential of the digital realm.

Library Hours

Spring/Summer 2007

Monday – Friday; 8am - 5pm

Closed Saturday & Sunday

See the website for exceptions

PHLI and Web 2.0

by Patrick Fuller

Web 2.0 technologies foster collaboration. There are many examples of Web 2.0 technologies out there but the most well known are wikis, blogs, podcasts and RSS feeds.

In March, two PHLI Librarians and a School of Information student traveled to Lansing for the Michigan Public Health Technology Conference to instruct public health workers from around the state of Michigan on the various ways they can use these new technologies in their careers.

Many of these emerging technologies have very practical applications such as collaborative documentation, keeping up with current research, or providing information to the public. And best of all, most of these technologies are freely available and relatively simple to use.

For additional information, contact a PHLI Librarian to schedule a consultation or training session.

PHLI Blog

by Jon Ponder

Since January 2006 Public Health Library and Informatics (PHLI) has run a weblog through the mblog system.

The blog is available at <http://mblog.lib.umich.edu/PHLI/> and can also be accessed by clicking on any of the headlines listed under "PHLI News" on the PHLI homepage.

Blog posts, written by PHLI Librarians and Reference Assistants, provide summary information and links to additional information on topics of interest to public health students, researchers, and professionals. Some posts are news-oriented while others are resource related and direct readers to helpful public health information resources. In this way, the blog seeks to extend the services of the library by connecting the public health community to relevant and helpful resources.

Recent posts have related to online access to public health related images, evidence-based practice resources for the public health community, and articles authored by SPH events speakers to be featured in future events.

The library welcomes comments on specific entries or more general comments about what types of information and discussion would be useful in this forum. The more tailored the blog is to the specific communities it seeks to serve, the more helpful it will be. Comments may be posted directly to the Blog.



Public Health Library & Informatics and SPH Computing Services Annual Survey – 2007

As we draw the academic year to a close, PHLI and SPH Computing Services once again launched a user survey to obtain feedback on our services. Though our services are no longer combined, we both still want to know how we are doing. Though it is a short survey, the feedback received is invaluable to use as we plan for the next academic year and try to focus our efforts, improve our services, and possibly expand some services. Some of the things we ask about include E-Reserves, Reference Services, Library hours, and the computing environment in the Library.

Unfortunately it is both too late to participate and too early to share some of the results of the survey. However, be assured we are paying careful attention to the feedback we are receiving so we may improve our services and resources. Thank you to all who have participated!

PhD Thesis Defense via Web Conferencing

by Vic Divecha

A doctoral candidate in Epidemiology successfully defended his thesis from Saudi Arabia using web conferencing¹ to present to his committee and other attendees in Ann Arbor. This was an inspiring example of how technology can provide solutions to otherwise challenging situations. Defending the dissertation in person was not an option due to indefinite delays in securing a re-entry visa to the United States. A nearby – though not so convenient – video conferencing facility was briefly considered but abandoned due to the difficulty of scheduling a trip for the entire committee. The SPH video conferencing facility, which would have provided a sound solution, is unfortunately still in development. This situation left us with web conferencing technology as the path to completing his PhD.

We tried a variety of systems expecting the usual obstacles such as firewall policies and such which prohibit a smooth exchange of audio and video. Working through the glitches and ironing them out in time is a critical part of facilitating solutions through technology. We have learned that though technologies emerge, develop and stabilize they are still dependent on human expertise to understand them and create solutions. IT administrators in Ann Arbor and Saudi Arabia worked diligently to ensure the technology would work, easily fueled by the excitement of the end result.

Centra is a web conferencing system licensed by the University for web collaboration and is already used extensively at SPH for collaborative meetings and conducting virtual classes across geographies. In the past Centra had successfully accommodated connections from European countries, Canada and South Africa. Connections with Saudi Arabia turned out to be somewhat challenging which led us to test two free consumer grade messaging clients with video capability: Skype and Yahoo! Messenger. With most bugs worked out and ensuring acceptable quality audio and video we were hoping that the defense would go smoothly. We were wrong.

As the student presented to the audience via Skype, bandwidth troubles showed up but which were resolved with little effort but required turning off the video feed. The presentation continued with audio only while PowerPoint slides were advanced manually at this end. When it came time for questions and answers, we re-started the video and were able to complete the discussion successfully.

Another discovery along the way was the unexpected power of an inexpensive yet well designed prosumer product: The Polycom Communicator Speakerphone. This is a simple device that sits on your desk and acts as a microphone and speaker. The surprise was the range of pickup. The committee members in Ann Arbor were fairly spread out through the room but were each picked up clearly by the Speakerphone. We have deployed these in the SPH E-Learning Studio's conferencing room for desktop collaboration as well as capturing screen video with audio.

The entire experience consisted of bringing together pieces of technology to create a reliable and acceptable solution for the challenge. The patience, trust and open mindedness of the end users and administrators is commendable in suggesting the possibility and approving the solution². They are the true facilitators of this innovation.

¹ Web conferencing is the use of computer based applications for collaboration as opposed to IP-based video conferencing which requires special equipment for collaboration.

² Prof. Brian Burt was the chair of the Epidemiology doctoral student, Khalifa Al-Khalifa's committee. Associate Dean Edith Parker approved the use of this long-distance technology for the thesis defense.

Findings Magazine Online Archive

by Mary Beth Lewis, SPH Content Specialist

If you've been appreciating recent issues of UM SPH's award-winning Findings magazine online in HTML, now you'll appreciate them even more with a new searchable archive.

A four-month-long collaboration between UM SPH's Office of Communications and the Web Services division of Public Health Library and Informatics has produced a searchable database of four years' worth of Findings issues, representing hundreds of pages of information and photos about the work of school faculty and alumni. Web administrator Patty Bradley-Diehl built the archive's Cold Fusion database, which was planned in conjunction with Office of Communications web content specialist Mary Beth Lewis. Bethany Osborne assisted in data entry, and Findings editor Leslie Stainton consulted on the project (both from the Office of Communications).

Launched in beta testing mode in mid-April, the new searchable archive allows users to quickly find articles on important health research and policy, from aging to depression, influenza to zoonotics. Queries access fields of keywords and personal names. In addition, all text in the Findings web server folder is also searched for the HTML issues of the magazine. Cover images accompany search results, helping jog users' memory of particular theme issues.

New issues of the magazine will be added into the database as they go online in spring and fall of each year. Eventually the search will be expanded back in time to include pre-2003 issues (currently in composite PDF format).

An extra benefit of the project is that SPH web administrator Patty Bradley-Diehl integrated the Findings archive with the SPH Experts searchable database, which she also built. So news reporters searching sources will access both contact information for SPH experts and pertinent Findings articles.

Find the Experts List at <http://www.sph.umich.edu/iscr/experts/> Find the searchable Findings archive at: <http://www.sph.umich.edu/alumni/findings/index.html>

Online Reference

Ask questions about locating library materials, using library resources, and conducting research project as well as any other questions relating to the library or its resources. All inquiries can be directed to Reference Services by calling (734) 763-5109, or by emailing sph.reference@umich.edu. You may also Submit a Question using a web form on our website, linked from the image you see above.

Reference services are available 10:00am - 4:00pm , Monday - Friday.

SPH Web Site Facts

Did you know that...

- That the SPH web site had over 76,000 unique visitors in March, 2007?
- That the top 3 web pages visited in the SPH website (after the SPH homepage) were the faculty profiles, the Public Health Library & Informatics home page, and the online course listings?
- That the top three countries web site visitors surf from (after the United States) were the Czech Republic, Canada, and the United Kingdom?
- That the top three web sites that referred visitors to the SPH web site were the UM Google search page (<http://www.googlesyndicatedsearch.com/u/umich>), the UM Graduate Studies page (<http://www.umich.edu/grad.html>), and the UM Academic Units page (<http://www.umich.edu/units.html>)?
- That 88% of the visitors to our web site that used a search engine to find our site used Google, while 6% used Yahoo!?
- That 67% of our web site visitors used Internet Explorer, 24% used Firefox and .4% used Netscape?

Enriching Scholarship 2007

Public Health Library & Informatics's Patty Bradley-Diehl and Vic Divecha will be presenting special workshops during Enriching Scholarship 2007 [<http://www.umich.edu/~teachtec/ES2007>], a week of free seminars, workshops, demonstrations and other events drawing upon the expertise of faculty and instructional technology specialists from across campus.

Accessibility: Building Accessible Websites

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

10:00 AM-12:00 PM - Science Learning Center (SLC)

Patty Bradley-Diehl, Presenter

There are over 400,000 college students with disabilities in the U.S., several hundred of whom attend the University of Michigan. Is your website helping or hindering their education? This presentation demonstrates how to design accessible websites by introducing you to the issues faced by persons with disabilities and the concepts and techniques necessary to make sites accessible to them. This presentation will be especially helpful to faculty and staff who design websites. Attendees should have a good working knowledge of HTML and/or using a website editor like Dreamweaver.

Continues on the next page

Enriching Scholarship 2007, cont'd

Screen Capture and Lecture Recording

Wednesday, May 9, 2007

10:00 AM-12:00 PM - CRLT Seminar Room

Crisca Bierwert and Vic Divecha, Co-Presenters

A variety of lecture-recording systems now allow instructors to archive lectures. Several systems are now being used and studied at UM. Research shows positive uses by students with little impact on attendance. This session will demonstrate MScribe, Camtasia, and other systems. Participants will explore archived lectures and share in creating their own. Research findings will be reviewed briefly. Faculty use of web-based lectures will be discussed including: giving students assignments to analyze a lecture segment in more depth, replaying segments of lectures in discussion section, and "quoting" previous lectures at later dates. (continued on page 10)

Introduction to Hypertext Markup

Thursday, May 10, 2007

10:00 AM-12:00 PM - Science Learning Center (SLC)

Patty Bradley-Diehl, Presenter

While it may be easy to create attractive-looking web pages without any knowledge of Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) using programs like Macromedia Dreamweaver, using markup to correctly structure your web pages makes them render more consistently across various web browsers and operating systems, more usable, more visible to search engines, and more accessible to the disabled. In this hands-on workshop, you will learn methods for structuring your web pages with X/HTML elements to comply with current web standards. You will learn about the different versions of X/HTML, the different sections of HTML documents, block vs. inline elements, inheritance, validating documents, and much more. This is a web coding class, not a web design class. Even those with some knowledge of HTML may benefit.

Introduction to Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)

Thursday, May 10, 2007

1:00 PM-3:00 PM - Science Learning Center (SLC)

Patty Bradley-Diehl, Presenter

Cascading Style Sheets (CSS), a web formatting language developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), is used extensively by web developers and web editing programs, such as Macromedia Dreamweaver, to format pages for the World Wide Web. Understanding CSS gives developers precise control over how their web pages are rendered. In this hands-on workshop, you will learn how Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) work, how to use CSS properties to format web pages, how to apply CSS styles to an entire website, how to validate your CSS, and much more. You will learn how to write good CSS code and to create web pages that comply with current standards. This is a web coding class, not a web design class or a Dreamweaver class. Some knowledge of Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) is required.

Many other exciting workshops will be held during Enriching Scholarship 2007. See for yourself at <http://www.umich.edu/~teachtec/ES2007>



Staff Accolades

Vic Divecha, eLearning Specialist attended a workshop on the design on learning spaces in higher education at the Educause Midwest Regional Conference in Chicago in March 2007. This workshop focused on developing for working with architects and information technologist to design modern learning spaces. Scenarios covered during the workshop included design for flexible places for lecture and group work.

At the Michigan Public Health Technology Conference, sponsored by the Michigan Association for Local Public Health (MALPH), PHLI Librarians taught two courses: Using New Web Technologies in Public Health Practice (**Gillian Mayman, Jason Nargis, and Patrick Fuller**) and Creating Large Scale Scientific Posters Using PowerPoint (**Gillian Mayman and Alison Grodzinski**).

Helen Look has been appointed to the MLA Professional Recruitment and Retention Task Force.

Helen Look also received professional accreditation from the Academy of Health Information Professionals.

New to the PHLI Family

We are very happy to welcome PHLI baby #2! Nicholas Song arrived April 15th, 8:30pm, weighing 6 lbs, 14oz. Nicholas is the son of Ben and **Jean Song**.