Where Classic Meets Modern: Trends from Academic Business Library Directors' Year in Review Reports, 2019-2020

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Abstract A summary of Year in Review reports of members of the Academic Business Library Directors (ABLD) is presented. Themes include new and ongoing initiatives in libraries, library collections, organizational change in libraries and member business schools and changes in library spaces.

Keywords *academic business libraries, library trends, organizational changes, new initiatives, business schools, Academic Business Library Directors (ABLD)*

The Academic Business Library Directors (ABLD) group meets annually in the spring. The 2020 meeting was scheduled to be a joint meeting in Vienna, Austria with the Asia Pacific Business School Librarians' Group (APBSLG), the European Business School Librarians' Group (EBSLG) and delegates from The Latin American Council of Management Schools (CLADEA). The meeting was to have been hosted in May by the Vienna University of Economics and Business, with the theme "Where Classic meets Modern." The joint conference was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Online meetings replaced the physical conference for ABLD and were held in May and June.

ABLD members submitted their annual year in review reports prior to the online meetings. These reports summarize the year in members' libraries and business schools, including issues and initiatives in the members' libraries and business schools. Reports covered the time period spanning April 2019 through March 2020.

Notable Trends Overall

Familiar themes of shrinking budgets and demands on spaces emerged, but the COVID-19 pandemic was a recurring theme in members' reports. Services and collections were especially affected by the shift to remote teaching by many members' institutions in March of 2020, and there was a great deal of uncertainty about the coming year.

New and Ongoing Initiatives

Collaborations with partners across campus drove several new initiatives. Campus partners varied, but libraries and their collaborators worked together to provide services to the communities they serve.

Scope and type of collaborations also varied greatly, from Ford Library at Duke partnering with a student club to add board games to their collection (ABLD, 2020, p. 32) to the Management Library at Cornell partnering with the Career Management Center to develop career support workshops (ABLD, 2020, p. 27).

Two libraries highlighted the work that they are doing with open access. Carnegie Mellon University Libraries has worked to negotiate deals with Elsevier and ACM to provide open access options to publishing authors at the institution (ABLD, 2020, p. 19). At the University of Chicago, they are working hard to raise awareness of open access across campus, hosting several events (ABLD, 2020, p. 22).

Several libraries reported that they are now using additional Springshare products to support library services. Alabama and Chicago are now using their chat service to support their patrons, which has been especially helpful with the COVID-19 closures (ABLD, 2020, pp. 4, 21). Carnegie Mellon reports that reference statistics are now being tracked with LibAnswers (ABLD, 2020, p. 19), and Babson built their new website in LibGuides CMS (ABLD, 2020, p. 8).

Chat services were emphasized by many libraries as services moved online. Southern Methodist implemented proactive chat, so patrons were presented with a pop-up chat box after landing on their home page. Chat usage tripled from the previous year after this was implemented (ABLD, 2020, p. 90).

At least six libraries reported on changes to their integrated library systems. Illinois and Texas are switching to Alma and Primo (ABLD, 2020, pp. 47, 92), and Alabama is switching to FOLIO (ABLD, 2020, p. 4). McGill is joining a unified catalog with seventeen Quebec libraries hosted on Worldshare Management Services (ABLD, 2020, p. 58). The entire University of California system is engaged in a system-wide ILS project (ABLD, 2020, p. 100).

Instruction played a big role in initiatives at many institutions. Libraries are offering a wide variety of workshops and sessions, like Big Questions for Startups at Columbia (ABLD, 2020, p. 24), Access to Financial Data at HEC Montreal (ABLD, 2020, p. 43), a panel discussion on current consumer trends at the University of Washington (ABLD, 2020, p. 113), and an Interdisciplinary Dialogue program series at the University of Maryland (ABLD, 2020, p. 56).

Librarians are in the classroom, too. Emory offers a 1-credit BBA Business Essentials Junior Seminar and also piloted in-class sessions for their experiential learning at the graduate level (ABLD, 2020, p. 35). Library workshops are now a part of BUS 101 at the University of Illinois (ABLD, 2020, p. 45).

Several libraries reported collection changes. Both McGill and Arizona State have moved portions of their collections into storage (ABLD, 2020, pp. 7, 58). Indiana University has added a new collection of popular business books (ABLD, 2020, p. 49). On the electronic front, Northwestern broke up their Sage Big Deal package to save over \$100,000 (ABLD, 2020, p. 78), and MIT reaffirmed their commitment to being a digital-first library (ABLD, 2020, p. 61).

All libraries have been impacted by COVID-19 and have responded in various ways. At Vanderbilt, the library was involved with campus-wide COVID-19 taskforces, in particular those dedicated to remote teaching and transitioning the class of 2020 to alumni (ABLD, 2020, p. 106). At MIT, they created response teams to handle COVID-19 issues related to reference, teaching and learning, and collections (ABLD, 2020, p. 61). HEC Montreal created an emergency fund for students affected by COVID-19, in

recognition of the help students had provided when the library experienced a major flood in Spring 2019 (ABLD, 2020, p. 43).

Library Collections

Familiar themes were seen in reports on collections. Prices increase while budgets stay flat or decrease. Some vendors are hard to work with, and more members are dropping Thomson ONE. The exchange rate continues to be an issue for members in Canada.

The sudden switch to remote work left many members scrambling to provide access to desktop software. Bloomberg was the most frequently cited, but Datastream, Eikon and SDC Platinum were also problematic. Duke and Illinois instituted mediated searching and delivered data to patrons, rather than setting up patron access (ABLD, 2020, pp. 32, 46). Dartmouth, UCLA, and William and Mary activated Bloomberg's Disaster Recovery Service for remote access, but the process was difficult (ABLD, 2020, pp. 30, 102, 117). Columbia was trying to set up remote access to Bloomberg, but had not been successful at the time of their report (ABLD, 2020, p. 25). Platform migrations were also a source of pain, particularly the move of BMI to Fitch Connect for Babson and Duke (ABLD, 2020, pp. 9, 33).

Some business vendors still struggle to understand the academic market and the unique challenges members face supporting varied user groups. Many still require individual accounts, which causes problems with maintenance and new user registration. CBInsights and CapitalIQ were singled out by Carnegie Mellon and Duke (ABLD, 2020, pp. 20, 33), while Harvard mentioned a vendor that requires IP and user credentials for authentication (ABLD, 2020, p. 40). However, proxy servers have their own issues, as reported by Babson, Illinois, and Texas (ABLD, 2020, pp. 9, 48, 92).

Washington and Ohio State reported licensing problems brought by broader mandates by their institutions. Washington had new privacy rules issued by the University Counsel (ABLD, 2020, p. 113). Ohio State now requires all new databases to meet accessibility guidelines before they can be made available to campus, leaving them with a database they have purchased that remains unavailable for use (ABLD, 2020, p. 82).

There seemed to be less churn in databases this year. One hundred thirty-three new titles were reported with thirty-five cancellations. These numbers have been about even the past two years.

Organizational Changes

Library leadership was another area of less change than in the past few years. A new university librarian was appointed at Yale, with a start date of July 1, 2020 (ABLD, 2020, p. 122). Alabama, Carnegie Mellon, Chicago, Penn State and Washington saw new associate deans or associate university librarians begin work (ABLD, 2020, pp. 4, 19, 22, 87, 113).

Indiana did some restructuring after staff departures and arrivals. Many departments that had been reporting to the prior head of the Business Commons were moved to other divisions (ABLD, 2020, p. 50).

Hiring freezes were in place at Babson, Carnegie Mellon, Cornell, Duke, MIT, UCLA, Vanderbilt and Yale at the time of the members' reports (ABLD, 2020, pp. 10, 20, 28, 33, 62, 102, 106, 123). Other members speculated that hiring would slow or be frozen as the response to COVID-19 grew at their institutions.

Two universities noted that public service positions that were formerly filled by students from their Information Schools are struggling. At the University of Michigan, the weekend and evening reference position will be eliminated due to budget concerns and a difficulty in finding interested candidates from the School of Information. At the University of Texas at Austin, the graduate research assistant position is now being filled by a graduate-level business student due to lack of interest from students at the UT School of Information.

Business School Changes

New deans were named or began working at Columbia, Penn, Northwestern and UCLA (ABLD, 2020, pp. 25, 85, 78, 103). Babson installed a new president (ABLD, 2020, p. 9). Deans left Carnegie Mellon, Emory (for Penn) and Toronto (ABLD, 2020, pp. 21, 37, 94). Harvard's dean was supposed to step down, but delayed this due to the COVID-19 pandemic (ABLD, 2020, p. 41).

Administrative changes, including new administrators, were reported by several members. Duke is reporting to new Senior Associate Dean for faculty research (ABLD, 2020, p. 33). Harvard has a new CIO, which is helping renew partnerships (ABLD, 2020, p. 41). Penn has a vice-dean of analytics (ABLD, 2020, p. 85), while Babson has a VP of Innovation who will help implement a new strategic plan (ABLD, 2020, p. 9).

Science, technology, engineering, and medicine (STEM) are growing areas of emphasis for business education. Arizona State, Carnegie Mellon, and NYU designated their MBA degrees as STEM focused (ABLD, 2020, pp. 7, 21, 77). ASU is also losing grant funding of its MBA programs. Students had been fully funded by the Carey Foundation; now support will be more need-based (ABLD, 2020, p. 7).

Fewer new programs were announced this year than in previous years. McGill is launching a new school of Retail Management, with bachelor's and PhD degrees offered at the start. An MBA will follow (ABLD, 2020, p. 59). Southern Methodist is launching MBA Direct, where graduating students enter a part-time MBA program while working (ABLD, 2020, p. 91). UC Irvine is beginning a part-time Masters in Innovation and Entrepreneurship (ABLD, 2020, p. 100).

Programs in analytics continue to expand. Georgetown announced a new master's program, and Columbia and Penn State began new programs (ABLD, 2020, pp. 38, 25, 88). Penn State also launched an accelerated residential analytics program, supplementing its online program (ABLD, 2020, p. 88). Georgetown is beginning a Bachelor of Science in Business and Global Affairs joint degree with the School of Foreign Service (ABLD, 2020, p. 38). NYU began a B.S. in Business, Technology, and Entrepreneurship and a Certificate Program in Real Estate Data Analytics (ABLD, 2020, p. 77). UBC is undergoing a complete review of its undergraduate curriculum, which will likely have effects on library services (ABLD, 2020, p. 17).

HEC announced a new downtown center that is scheduled to open in 2022 (ABLD, 2020, p. 44). Construction began on Alabama's new building which was announced last year (ABLD, 2020, p. 5). Virginia is expanding programs in Washington, DC, but is not building new space as of yet (ABLD, 2020, p. 109).

There is general uncertainty stemming from COVID-19. Carnegie Mellon and Washington reported enrollment was down prior to the pandemic (ABLD, 2020, pp. 21, 114).

Spaces

Renovations were planned or completed at several members' libraries. A renovation at Hayden Library at Arizona State doubled its seating capacity to 1800 and now provides a variety of types of spaces for patrons, including lactation space, gender neutral restrooms, a meditation/prayer room, and additional food/beverage outlets (ABLD, 2020, p. 6). First floor renovations of the library at Babson College relocated the Information Desk, increased seating capacity, and moved all staff into a shared office space. The President's Office also relocated to the first floor of the library (ABLD, 2020, pp. 8-9). The School of Business at Columbia is slated to move to a new campus in January 2022 (ABLD, 2020, p. 25). Fiat Lux Library is undergoing major renovations to transform the Humanities and Social Sciences Library at McGill (ABLD, 2020, p. 58). At the University of Chicago, the Center for Digital Scholarship is planned to move into the current reference office space, requiring new offices for reference staff (ABLD, 2020, pp. 22-23). Planning is underway for renovations/expansions/new construction for the Cox School of Business at Southern Methodist, which will include new space for the Business Library, and the Kitt Investing & Trading Center (ABLD, 2020, p. 91). Humanities and social sciences librarians moved to new and renovated offices at University of Maryland (ABLD, 2020, p. 56). Yale completed a major renovation of the Science Tower, which neighbors the Marx Library, formerly known as the Center for Science and Social Science Information. This caused a large increase in undergraduate use of study space (ABLD, 2020, p. 121).

Planning was underway for renovations at many members' libraries, but was put on hold when the COVID-19 pandemic occurred. All planning at the University of Alabama has been put on hold for a year (ABLD, 2020, p. 4). The Management Library at Cornell was slated to undergo renovation of back office workspace, but was put on hold (ABLD, 2020, p. 28). Campus construction at Dartmouth was supposed to include modifications to Feldberg Library, but it is now unknown whether it will go forward (ABLD, 2020, p. 31). UC Berkeley planned a renovation in 2018, but it still hasn't been funded (ABLD, 2020, p. 96) and all projects at Georgetown are on hold due to lack of funding (ABLD, 2020, p. 38).

Other Issues Affecting Libraries

Uncertainty about budgets, staffing and working conditions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic dominated members' discussion of other factors affecting their libraries. Vanderbilt summarized this well, commenting "I can't even remember, did anything happen before March?" (ABLD, 2020, p. 106). Members were also concerned about how and when students would return to campus and what adjustments would need to be made in the fall. However, many members see the shift to more online instruction as a way to explore new ways of delivering services and collections.

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