University of Rhode Island
DigitalCommons@URI

Technical Services Reports and Statistics | Technical Services

7-15-1997

Annual Report, Department of Technical Services, 1996/97

William T. O'Malley
University of Rhode Island, rka101@uri.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/ts_rpts

Part of the Library and Information Science Commons

Recommended Citation
O'Malley, William T., "Annual Report, Department of Technical Services, 1996/97" (1997). *Technical Services Reports and Statistics.* Paper 1.
http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/ts_rpts/1

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Technical Services at DigitalCommons@URI. It has been accepted for inclusion in Technical Services Reports and Statistics by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@etal.uri.edu.

ANNUAL REPORT
DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL SERVICES
1996/1997

1996/1997 was a successful year for the department. The general work of the department continued on schedule; some long term projects were completed; some new projects were begun; and a milestone was reached.

This report is dedicated to Prof. Nadine Baer, a loyal and faithful servant to the University since 1947. Her fifty years of dedicated service was noted with a retirement fete attended by the staff, the Provost, former colleagues, and family in May. A dedicatory plaque was placed at the exit gate so that all who have been served will note the wonderful accomplishment of Nadine Baer, librarian.

The resignation of James Barrett, systems librarian, did and does impact on our work. This situation must be resolved immediately, if progress is to be maintained. This department is fully automated, and must have the professional support of talented systems specialists if we are to fully utilize the potential of the present systems available to us. We are now automated to such a degree that no work can be done when the equipment is not operating, or the system is down. It is the height of foolishness to allow this investment which we have made over the years to create a thoroughly modern organization, to lay fallow for any length of time due to downtime of equipment or inexpert technical leadership. The productivity of this department continues to improve in spite of the dramatic downsizing which has taken place during the past ten years. The support staff have found the means to improve productivity through efficient and imaginative uses of improved computer tools and networks. However, the demands of time-sensitive procedures [ordering, check-in, cataloging, etc.] require the constant attention to these priority routines; necessitating an even greater reliance upon the systems librarian to train staff, monitor equipment, and mentor us as we concentrate on our main priorities. Our department will "wither on the vine" [to quote the Administration] if this situation is allowed to continue.

The statistical summaries of the year's work of the department appear in the reports from Amar Lahiri and Martha Kellogg which are appended. Productivity levels have been maintained, and no new backlogs have been created. Our priorities have been assiduously maintained in order to get library materials into the hands of our patrons as quickly as possible. Of particular note this year is that because of stable staffing and an early library materials budget, the Acquisitions Unit was able to maintain a steady flow of ordering/receiving during the year. This is in contrast to [what had become "normal"] the situation in years past whereby monograph orders were seriously delayed as we awaited budget allocations into the fall months. This created a "stop and start "

atmosphere [stop everything to place orders, drop everything to get the receiving done] which impedes the efficient workflow of acquisitions and of cataloging. Our intention is to order 1/12th of annual acquisitions every month, month after month. We nearly approached this ideal this past year, and hope that we can continue into the next. Current backlogs will not develop if we are able to keep this workflow in operation at present staffing levels.

Continuing projects such as the acquisitions of on-line cataloging records for some of our microfilm sets continued with over 5,000 records for the American Culture series [if funds permit we will acquire over 50,000 records for the Early English Books II (Wing STC) this year]. The reclassification and retrospective conversion of our Dewey monographs is nearly at an end, with all of the 900's completed last year, and many of the 800's. This project will definitely be completed by 1999. Of note as well is that we have been able to continue to work with Circulation to declare titles missing. Nearly 5,000 titles were removed from Helin this past year.

A number of new projects were launched this past year. One of the priorities identified by the Taskforce was the creation of holdings records in Helin for non-current serials. This project began in 1997 with CPR staff entering over 5,000 holdings statements: at this rate of progress we should complete this task sometime in 1999. Another Taskforce recommendation was to utilize the Marcive service for cataloging and processing Government Documents. Deborah Mongeau has overseen this project, with the result that we have added over 3,000 catalog records into Helin this past year. So in addition to the normal work of the Catalog Unit of adding 22,756 to Helin, we also added 5,004 American Culture titles and 3,017 Marcive records [30,777 total].

Projects which will demand our attention in the years to come include cataloging of the microforms collection, the IEEE collection, dewey journals, and manuscript collections. We must also reprocess the Rare Book Collection [the tape load in 1990 was insufficiently specific when it came to status, location, special notes, and copy information]. Barcoding of our serials collections should also be considered as time permits.

One project which we hope to begin in Sept. 1997 is to have Yankee Book Peddler provide PromptCat cataloging and processing of the majority of our current monograph acquisitions. We have been meeting with Bob Aspri, YBP and Nelinet for over six months without much success. It seems that III release 11 will allow the proper interfaces among III, OCLC and YBP to allow this to work to our satisfaction. We expect to test this in Sept. '97 before committing to any long term project.

Martha Kellogg, Amar Lahiri and I met on a weekly basis to discuss routines, projects and events. These were always productive meetings [summaries of these meetings were distributed by e-mail to participants and the management team]. My sincere thanks to both of them for their high professionalism, imaginative suggestions, and dedicated leadership of their units. We also held monthly meetings of all staff in the department, which was not as successful. These meetings were agendaless, open sessions for any and all discussion. I expect to tighten up the agenda, and structure more training sessions in the coming year.

The support staff continue to give their best to the department, in spite of increasing vacancies, changing workloads, new and difficult procedures and tools. The stability, progress and accomplishments of the department are due, as usual, to their good will and talents.