



SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES for Gail McMillan's Promotion to Professor

October 2, 2000

This summary covers many of my professional activities since I was promoted to Associate Professor in 1993 and it addresses the criteria outlined in the University Libraries' *Procedures on Promotion and Continued Appointment*. In November 1993 I assumed full responsibility of the Scholarly Communications Project (SCP), two years later I assumed responsibility for Special Collections, and in July 1999 combined these two units as the Digital Library and Archives (DLA).

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

As the director of DLA I have taken the initiative to establish new digital library services and to create new online resources that compliment existing services and resources available through University Libraries. Of course, I have not done these single-handedly, but in collaboration with many others in the library and the university, and particularly with programmers.

The Scholarly Communications Project was originally established to experiment with new technology to improve scholarly communications for the library and for the university. When I became director, SCP had one activity--putting journals on the Internet. Since then I have worked with faculty at Virginia Tech and other universities as well as MIT Press to add 21 titles to the ejournal roster. I negotiated with MIT Press for SCP to mirror its four ejournals in exchange for eliminating the subscription fees for our university community. Past and current titles are available from <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals>.

Additional scholarly communication services and resources that have been developed under my direction include:

- ◆ electronic reserve at <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ereserve/> (EReserve)
- ◆ electronic theses and dissertations at <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/theses> (ETDs)
- ◆ news reports from a regional television network and international newspapers at <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/NewsOnline/NewsOhp.html>
- ◆ digital image database at <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/imagebase> (VT Imagebase)

As early implementers of new forms of scholarly communications, such as ETDs, DLA has largely had to learn as it developed new systems, making adjustments as needed. This university, however, has a wealth of technological expertise and we freely share our experiences and learn from each other. I have also learned from and shared with colleagues at other libraries who are experimenting with similar new online library services such as EReserve.

SCP was not created to oversee the ongoing maintenance or multiple services and resources, but over time this became necessary and I helped my make adjustments as needed to continue established services and to create new ones. For example, following the successful experiment with EReserve during spring semester 1995, the Reserve Desk unit could not add oversight of EReserve to its already busy work environment. However, its staff and some in Library Systems helped with the manual processing of electronic files until SCP programming improvements could eliminate most of the hands-on work. Incorporating a new service like EReserve was not

an easy transition, but service goals for students and faculty were not compromised while we worked out internal processes.

We continued to improve EReserve annually through 1999/2000. For example, through working on VTOnline, we got access to the Registrar's records so that existing information from the course timetable and catalog could also be accessed by the EReserve system. This eliminated the need for instructors to rekey existing information. This fall I will lead a reevaluation of EReserve in light of campuswide initiatives such as Pipeline. My goal is to invite the participation in this evaluation from all those who have a state in EReserve, including library personnel, DIS, and Institute for Distance and Distributed Learning.

EReserve also marked the beginning of my participation in the Faculty Development Institutes; since 1996 I have also introduced faculty to copyright laws and fair use guidelines as well as ETDs. This has been a challenging opportunity to change from my comfortable behind-the-scenes role in technical services into a more visible role as an instructor and a liaison to faculty. Through FDI faculty had the opportunity to put a face on EReserve, and I invited them to call, email, or visit me for a personal demonstration of digital library systems. I have also been on-call for faculty who were uncertain or who experienced problems and I pride myself in giving prompt, helpful, friendly service. Especially at the beginning of each semester, but particularly in the fall, I have fulfilled this unplanned role relatively well based on the feedback I have received from faculty.

I formalized the evaluation of several DLA services through surveys beginning with EReserve in the spring of 1995 and adding ETD surveys in 1997. Since fall 1999 the easily adaptable, Web-based survey instrument developed the DLA programmer has gathered survey responses from faculty and students using EReserve as well as from ETD authors and users. With the help of Caryl Grey, the 1995 survey went online and now we can say with data that those who use it value the EReserve system. The ETD surveys also gather helpful information that I have used this to improve the system and to document authors' and users' opinions.

I also encouraged a Canadian librarian to use the DLA survey system and she gathered data from publishers and their opinions about ETDs that was reported at an international conference last spring. Next semester a graduate student at the University of South Florida will use it to gather responses for her dissertation and I am on the master's committee of a Virginia Tech student in computer engineering who may also use it. I believe that we should share our resources and our skills with our library and university communities and beyond.

Another important responsibility I have is oversight of copyright compliance for EReserve and other DLA resources. I took the initiative to learn about US copyright law so that my department and the library could confidently operate a variety of Web-based library services within the law. In addition to studying legal materials, I also participated in copyright workshops sponsored by national library organizations and led by experts. Copyright is such an important issue for the university that on Nov. 11, 1996, Beth Hanson, librarian and director of the Virginia Technical Information Center, and I hosted a well-received campus workshop featuring copyright experts.

I've worked diligently to determine that DLA services operate within the appropriate laws and established guidelines and also to accurately inform faculty and students about their rights and obligations as creators and authors. FDI planners recognized my expertise and invited me to share my knowledge during the last three years of the institutes. I also worked with my library colleagues to establish a Web site that included the library's various copyright policies and served as a resource for faculty and students. We shared information and brought various library policies into alignment, such as those at the various branches, the Reserve Desk, and

EReserve. The copyright Web site, <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/copyright/> is quite small with only 20 pages but it was accessed 9,391 in 1999/2000 from 3,416 distinct Web addresses.

Another area of responsibility is the ETD initiative. When John Eaton approached the library about six years ago, as the director of SCP I welcomed this opportunity to continue the library's implementation of new electronic resources. I immediately saw that the library could save precious shelf space, we could automate processing, and we could radically improve timely access. My first step was to convene all the library personnel who had a role in processing the paper copies so that in designing the system we would closely replicate the necessary processes where appropriate and add features that were desirable in an online environment. It was also necessary to learn Graduate School policies and procedures to design the system to meet its needs. I also worked with Technical Services librarians to streamline processing as much as possible and to keep them informed of the progress of the initiative. I also met with many faculty and students to inform them about the variety of issues surrounding ETDs. I worked closely with the programmer so that security measures were in place so that every ETD is copied and lives on multiple machines in multiple locations so that none would be lost or destroyed.

My responsibilities grew with each new digital library service. In addition, my supervisory responsibilities increased considerably with the merging of the Scholarly Communications Project and the Special Collections Department. My unit grew from one and a half positions in SCP to seven positions with the addition of Special Collections and the temporary assignment of one and a half librarians. As a supervisor, I have a very hands-off attitude and do not find it necessary to tightly manage my staff; they each are very skilled in their areas of responsibility and most have had excellent work ethics. In addition, DLA staff continually work with new technologies and we each understand the need to continually update our skills. We largely do this on our own initiative and by teaching each other what we have learned; I also support their outside training as needed. Together we set priorities and usually communicate informally though we have prearranged meetings and formal evaluations. This has generally worked well, but new staff receive a thorough introduction to the goals of the department and the library. I have been fortunate that my staff are very professional and work well together to meet our goals to serve the public well, preserve the unique materials in our care, and to improve access to our departmental resources. My department is a small but productive unit as can be seen from the materials and information available in the department and through the Web at <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu>.

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES

I have worked hard to be a well-rounded librarian who contributes not only to the library and the university, but also to the profession. Throughout my career at University Libraries I have been active in the profession through committee service, editorial responsibilities, publication, and conference presentations. My record of publications and presentations is substantial among the faculty of University Libraries with a number of peer reviewed publications and papers accepted for formal presentations, as well as many invited presentations. During this evaluation period, my presentations and publications have largely focused on aspects of digital libraries as they relate to my work at University Libraries.

My publications and presentations about ETDs are largely the result of the cutting-edge initiative at Virginia Tech, the successful transition of this library resource to a new format and access mode, and the desire of many other universities to learn from our experiences. I am concerned in my presentations that others learn from the things that we did correctly as well as those we

might have done differently. I also want them to appreciate the relative ease with which such an initiative can be initiated and maintained.

John Eaton, Vice Provost for Graduate Studies, and Ed Fox, Computer Science, and I wrote a successful grant that resulted in \$208,000 from the US Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education. With it we established the Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD), a loose organization with over 100 academic institution members. Together and individually we have made many presentations at other universities and academic conferences, hosted several university delegations at Virginia Tech, co-authored publications, and hosted a conference in 1998 that was attended by representatives from over 30 institutions.

I have also recently begun collaborating with Dr. Saifur Rahman, professor of electrical and computer engineering and Director of the Alexandria Research Institute. He led a successful grant application resulting in an award of \$600,000 from the National Science Foundation for DLNET: Digital Library Network for Engineering and Technology. As a co-Principal Investigator, I will work on streamlining the flow of information between authors and readers, drawing on DLA's work with electronic journal editors. I will also be working on a validation service so that readers can construct personal digital libraries of quality Web resources along the same lines that professionals accumulate quality resources for libraries.

This will be my first collaboration on a digital library project that was aligned with my philosophy that the digital library should be another component of the multiple media and services libraries traditionally provide. Through research, writing, publication, and presentations, I have been developing my philosophy of digital libraries. That is, we must recapture the digital library moniker from computer scientists who have usurped it and defined it largely as remote online search and retrieval systems. Many computer scientists working on digital library projects include in their digital libraries the broad range of services and resources that are typical of academic libraries. It is my goal in publishing and presentations to promote the digital library as part of the library that provides the full range of services and resources to remote as well as local clients.

I believe I have a significant record of research and scholarly activities, with over 20 articles, chapters, and papers in conference proceedings published. I also made nearly 40 presentations at professional meetings during this evaluation period. I have made invited keynote presentations to international professional conferences as well as to statewide library organizations, in addition to presentations to small and large meetings of the American Library Association sections. In the notebook accompanying this summary you may read over 20 of my publications and presentations.

I have also organized panels, institutes, and presentations for national and regional conferences. These include the "Electronic Library: Administrative Issues for Organization and Access Institute" where I was a member of the Planning Committee for three years, on the faculty for Boston institute, and moderated the San Antonio institute. In 1996 I organized a half-day workshop on scholarly communications for the CAUSE/CNI Southeast Regional Preconference to "Teaching and Learning in Cyberspace." At this year's annual conference of the Society for Scholarly Publishing, I organized and moderated two panels, "Library Collection and Access Issues in the Third Millennium" and "Archiving Digital Content."

UNIVERSITY AND LIBRARY SERVICE

Last year I served on the Dean's Five-Year Review Committee and the Promotion and Continued Appointment Committee for Extra-Collegiate Faculty. I was a member of the Faculty (Grievance) Review Committee for two years and I served for four years on the Parking Committee including one year as its chair. I have also been involved in a variety of university-related activities directly relevant to my responsibilities in the Digital Library and Archives, such as the advisory boards of the Center for Digital Discourse and Culture, the Institute for Distance and Distributed Learning, and the Electronic Theses and Dissertations Initiative. I served on the development team for VT Online and the VT Web Group. During my tenure on the VT Web Group I was able to keep the library as a link from the university's homepage. I am also currently on two doctoral committees and one master's committee, and I already saw one ETD on the readability of on-screen type through to completion.

For the library I have held a variety of committee appointments, and as a committee member, I actively participant to accomplish the committee's purpose. Three times I have been elected to the Promotion and Continued Appointment Committee. I also served on the Library Faculty Association's Faculty Affairs Committee for three years, chairing it once, and on the Travel and Research Committee, also chairing it once. I have chaired two and served on three other search committees for librarians, and I have served on six task forces, chairing one.

PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND SERVICE ACTIVITIES

I have participated in the profession at the national, regional, and state levels. In addition to the serving on the planning committees for the institutes mentioned above, I was also on the planning committee for the "Serials Cataloging in the Age of Format Integration Institute" and the Library of Congress's CONSER (Cooperative Online Serials) Electronic Resources Task Force. For three years I participated in the Online Computer Library Center's Resource Sharing Advisory Committee. I served for two years on the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries Electronic Resources Project where we addressed issues such as archiving, licensing, and publishing.

Since 1995, I have been active in VIVA, the Virtual Library of Virginia. As a member for one year of the VIVA Web Team, I had input on the current logo design and helped established guidelines for the Web site. I have also been an active member of the VIVA Special Collections Committee, helping to establish and maintaining its Web site (<http://spec.lib.vt.edu/viva>). The committee successfully lobbied for funds to digitize unique images of regional importance; this is the major reason the VT ImageBase has 10,000 of its digital images. I was also a member of the successful grant application team. As the Virginia Heritage Project, NEH awarded us \$250,000 to apply new national standards to finding aids and to create a union database that will improve access to historical materials documenting African-American history and culture housed in academic libraries throughout Virginia.

In attempting to summarize my working life at Virginia Tech's University Libraries over seven years, I find that I have accomplished a tremendous amount. During the seven years of this evaluation period I have made important contributions to the library, the university, and the profession that are worthy of promotion to professor at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.