Significant campus budget shortfalls have resulted in units across campus making budget cuts. The library has also stepped up to meet these fiscal challenges. In 2009-10, the library budget was reduced by 5.5% ($135,000), resulting in the elimination of one staff position and the cancellation of many subscriptions and databases.

Starting this semester, to make the most of our resources while providing key services to the academic community, we have reduced library hours by 8 hours; cutting 4 hours from the Friday evening schedule, closing at 5pm instead of 9pm, and 4 hours from the Saturday schedule, opening from 1pm to 8pm. This decision was made after a careful review of library usage records in consultation with the Interim Provost. Late Night Study Room will remain open until 3am from Sunday to Wednesday, with Thursday hours added during midterm and final exams.

Library assistance is also available 24/7 via the library’s web page “Ask Us247.Org.” Please note that postings and updates will be made on the STL home page in the event of closing during this unpredictable winter.

In collaboration with the English Department, the library offered an experimental 1-credit course as an additional way to help students better employ library-based inquiry in their research. Offered as an English Special Topics course and taught by Rus Springer, an instruction librarian, the course was part of the “Exploring Controversies” Freshman Interest Group (FIG) with Rachel Rigolino’s English Comp I class.

Students were asked to consider arts, humanities, natural and behavioral sciences, and various professions as major areas of knowledge in order to better understand the roles those areas play in controversial public policy debates. Students studied nature and organization of knowledge, inquiry and information and techniques for seeking information about public policy controversies. They also completed weekly assignments linking concepts and practices of library-based inquiry with reflective thinking and writing. The linking assignments in each of the course’s four units provided material for writing assignments in the Composition I course.

If you’d like to hear more about this course please attend a presentation to be held Wednesday, February 9th at 11:45am at the Teaching and Learning Center.
Library Offers “LibGuides” Workshop for Faculty

The library kicked off the 2011 library education year with a “LibGuides” workshop for faculty and staff, held, as fate would have it, on another snowy morning. All who attended left with a strong notion of how to enhance their own coursework by creating a course or assignment guide to use in tandem with BlackBoard.

These guides can be thought of as mini-websites that are not limited to library resources. You can create guides on any topic, for any purpose, and easily customize them with images, embedded videos, web links, podcast feeds, documents and files, Google search boxes and more. You may also use them as your personal web page.

You need to have a login name and password in order to create a guide using LibGuides. Your New Paltz user i.d. should be fine for the log in. To get started submit a password to Susan Kraat kraats@newpaltz.edu or Colleen Lougen lougenc@newpaltz.edu. You may change this password when you log in for the first time.

Preview Library Guides at:  
http://newpaltz.libguides.com/research_areas

Here is the link to our Create a Guide tutorial:  
http://newpaltz.libguides.com/createaguide

Want to know more about using a database, tool, or research resource? Let us know if there are particular workshops you would be interested in attending. Also please let us know if you would like to lead a workshop.

A Desk By Any Other Name...

We have put up a new sign on the desk that meets you as you enter the library. Over the years we have called it the “Information” Desk and then the “Reference” Desk. As you can see we are now calling it the “Research” Desk. What’s with the identity confusion? We are trying to find the best way to communicate to students that this is where they can obtain significant help from a librarian for their work and research, as well as offering directions to the nearest restroom.

New Collection Development Librarian

Following Gerlinde “Lynn” Barley's retirement, Heather Whalen Smith has been reassigned to head Collection Development. Heather has become increasingly involved with collection development since her arrival at the Sojourner Truth Library in 2006. If you have questions or concerns about the collection feel free to contact her at x 3731.

If you have material to recommend for purchase please continue to use the recommendation form that is available on the library’s web page under “Requests and Suggestions.”