

Mini-profile:

a day in the life of a head librarian, serials and e-resources



JILL EMERY

University of Texas at Austin Libraries, USA

Jill (pictured left) with Robin Fradenburgh, the Associate Director for Technical Services

Last week, I started my new position as the Head Librarian, Serials and Electronic Resources Department at the University of Texas (UT) at Austin Libraries. Right now, the campus is in intersession before the start of the summer term so there's hardly anyone about and there isn't a whole lot of campus activity to capture in photos. I work on the ground floor of the Perry-Castañeda Library in the technical services area. My job is to oversee the acquisition of both print and electronic subscriptions as well as provide various types of management support for the electronic resources purchased by the UT Libraries. This is no small task given that the UT Libraries purchase over 23,000 serial subscriptions, manage 12,000 unique e-journals and over 30,000 aggregator titles, and are currently



This is the view of the State of Texas capitol building from the parking structure where I arrive each morning



Jill checking in with a library assistant

providing access to more than 230 electronic databases. In short, I have my work cut out for me!

Luckily, I have the good fortune of working with a very talented and dedicated staff of employees. Above is a picture of me discussing an order issue with Kim Wallace, an upper-level library assistant who processes all of our orders and renewals. After arriving at work and checking the latest e-mail and voice messages, my first task is to check in with the three upper-level library assistants to see what assistance I can provide to them. Along with Kim, Santiago Hernandez oversees check-in of subscriptions, invoice payment and management of the current periodicals room and, last but certainly not least, is Janina Hurtado, who oversees the management of SFX and access activation for the electronic subscriptions. Each of these supervisors has at least two other library assistants reporting to them, bringing the staff total to eleven.

My first meeting of the day begins at 9:30 am. On this morning, I'm meeting with the librarians who make up the core of the Research Services Division. Pictured with me (above right) are Dennis Dillon, the Associate Director of Research Services, and Jo Anne Newyear-Ramirez, the Assistant Head of the Division. Along with Ronda Rowe, the Networked Information Resources Bibliographer (not pictured), we discuss the various ways to better co-ordinate the acquisitions and management of our electronic resources and print subscriptions. Since the UT Libraries are in the early stages of implementing the III Millennium ILS, there is much to discuss and go over. We also touch on an upcoming SFX training session that Ronda has



Meeting with fellow librarians

co-ordinated to help bring all of us together on the management of targets and resources provided through this service.

After this meeting wraps up, I go and check e-mail and voicemail again and learn that there are some aspects of the payroll system that I need to be clued into in order to process my online timesheet and the staff timesheets correctly. After a quick jaunt across the road to the local fast food establishment for a bite to eat, I meet with a member of the library human resources to make sure I have the payroll procedures down. This is definitely an area of high importance and one in which mistakes will not be tolerated!

Next, I return to my office in time to receive a phone call from a colleague outside UT and catch up on a few matters relating to professional committee work. Following the phone call, one of the members from facilities services drops by to see if I need any changes in my office furniture. We go down to the loading dock area and survey the options available to me in regards to office chairs and filing cabinets. I choose a filing cabinet smaller than the one currently provided in the office.

When this meeting concludes, I meet with Janina Hurtado to go over some recent changes to the SMEAR (Serial, Monographic & E-Resource Action Request) form. Yesterday, there had been a meeting of the SMEAR committee where



Meeting with Janina Hurtado

(Now why didn't I choose one of those cool, bouncy seats?)

suggestions had been made to split the form into two: one for ordering and one for reporting problems. The changes had been made to the forms and we worked on some additional minor changes to be incorporated. Once we discuss the necessary changes, I e-mail these suggestions on to the Research Services division.

Then it is time to meet with my boss, Robin Fradenburgh, the Associate Director for Technical Services. Robin has just returned from the

Innovative Users Group (IUG) meeting in Denver, Colorado and wants to check in to see how the rest of my first week went, how I'm settling into things, and to update me on some of the news from the IUG meeting. We discuss the various meetings I've had while she was away and the possibility of an ERM tool purchase in the next fiscal year.

After this meeting wraps up, I spend some time selecting desk accessories and checking the supply cabinets for various items for the office. I spend some time refreshing my memory of the various vendor tools for subscription maintenance and investigating a new series management tool from Blackwell's Book Services. Before I realize it, the day is done. While this is still my first week of work, I can imagine that many of my days will be spent in a similar fashion of impromptu meetings with the staff who report to me to resolve any issues they are facing, going to pre-set and prescribed library management meetings, working with vendors and vendor products, and working on other professional commitments as time allows. All in all, it is a very challenging position with some fantastic staff to work with and I'm looking forward to trying to make everything work smoothly and consistently!