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Continuing Education Report for IACRL Conference 2012

At this year's IACRL Conference, I attended presentations on a wide variety of library resources and services. I was greatly interested in an early session on managing library school interns and practicum students. This is always on the minds of Dominican's library staff, of course. Though the content of the session was different than what the program advertised and somewhat less relevant to me, it was intriguing and timely. Ben Rodriguez of UIUC is developing resources for Chicago-area LEEP students looking for internships and other library experiences. As more programs move partially or fully online, students may never meet with their schools' placement advisors and must look to online resources or to the communities in which they live. Ben wants to make sure this is easy to do. Check out his project at www.libraryinterns.com.

In the same time slot, Harper College's Amy Kammerman reminded us of all the Google tips and tricks our students might not know about. I got way too excited over little things like the search that limits to file type. I decided to use an instruction session early this week to see for what, exactly, my students use Google. It turns out they were not familiar with features (Google Scholar, domain-specific search) that I use all the time and assume everyone else knows about. I plan to spend more time in future sessions explaining the different Google functions and how they can enhance research. As the title of Amy's presentation implies, students are going to use Google anyway. Help them use it to their advantage.

Lightning Talks always pique one's interest in one way or another. Because I could not attend Steven Bell's entire luncheon keynote, I liked that he did a talk on organization restructuring. We are currently looking to edit and improve our library mission statement, and Steven's words on a Why We Serve Statement were helpful. Also interesting was University of Illinois – Springfield's use of WorldCat Local lists for all student course materials (textbooks, reserves, online articles and more.) It doesn't have the greatest functionality – and UIS admitted this – but seems to help students and instructors. Another UIS librarian presented on her library's use of Pinterest for online book lists and event information. Sorry, Library 2.0 world, I can't get on the bandwagon. It feels like a case of using the popular new tool simply because it's new and popular.

My presentation, with other librarians from Dominican, Elmhurst and Benedictine, was on our new consortial institutional repository, Constellation. It's open to participation by all LIBRAS libraries – contact me It focused on the planning stages of an IR and was complemented nicely by librarians from IL Wesleyan and Parkland who discussed how their repository is working several years after implementation. It was encouraging, to say the least. Thank you to the LIBRAS librarians in attendance. LIBRAS was well-represented at the entire conference.