

Annual Report 2009/2010

Summary

Throughout the whole 2009/2010 academic year Panitza Library continued to transform its collections, facilities and services in response to significant changes in the University and information environments, and to ensure that the Library contributed to the achievement of the University's objectives as effectively as possible. The Library built strong electronic and print collections in cost-effective way, and provided quality information resources and services in support of the educational and research needs of AUBG students and faculty. The collections were further enlarged through acquisition and donations. The library staff focused its activities on promoting the library services and resources thus increasing the usage and visibility of the Library. Panitza Library strengthened its role as a social place and university community center by launching a series of presentations of faculty newly published books, poetry readings, and exhibitions. The Information Literacy program was expanded, focusing on discipline-specific instructions and program assessment. "Friends of the Library" initiative was organized to collect contributions by offering unnecessary donations and discarded library books. Professional growth of library staff to meet the demands of the changing user environment continued to be a high priority.

Resources

Panitza Library acquired and provided access to a diverse collection of print and non-print information resources directly aligned with the University's academic priorities. The Library staff continued to collaborate with faculty members to build a collection responsive to the University's education and research needs. A wide range of print and electronic resources were reviewed or trialed for potential acquisition, including monographs, new databases, e-journals and e-books packages. Despite the impact of the global financial crisis and a tight University budgeting environment, the Library resources grew significantly during 2009. The number of items in the physical collections increased slightly, however, the growth in electronic resources was over 20% and the proportion spent on electronic resources was almost 56%. Increasing prices of scholarly

publications has been a challenge to the collection development. The total number of purchased print books is 426 titles. However, the library staff efforts to increase the resources through seeking external funding, negotiating discounts with vendors and establishing consortium agreements enabled AUBG Library to add 355 individual and institutional donations to its collection. The most significant contribution to the Library's resources enlargement was made by John Dimitry Panitza, who donated 153 books and became a driving force for numerous donated items. Dimi Panitza assisted the Library staff in establishing cooperation with the American Library in Paris, which resulted in a valuable donation of books. Two Library staff members visited the American Library in Paris to negotiate the possibilities of future cooperation and partnership, to select the books and exchange experience with colleagues. The generous donations from our faculty, Board members and friends allowed Panitza Library to further enlarge its collections. All acquired materials were cataloged and now their bibliographic information is available in the online catalog. New materials were promoted by sending a list of new acquisitions to faculty members and by shelving them on a special display. The collection development policy was revised to reflect changes in the curriculum. The new gift policy allows for more selective titles to be added to the collections through donations. New weeding and retention policy also reflect the changes in format offering and preservation of information.

More effective collaboration with faculty was implemented by involving them in the selection process of new titles. Special attention was paid to the latest electronic formats of scholarly communications which complement on-site materials. Free trials of electronic databases were arranged, the patrons' feedback was analyzed and the databases evaluated, which resulted in subscription to new electronic resources.

The constantly rising prices of journals, magazines and newspapers forced us to extend our collaboration with the team of the Journal Donation Project (managed by New School for Social Research, New York). Thus, we were able to subscribe to 112 periodical titles for only \$9,186.93 instead of paying their full cost of \$36,815.28. The total number of print periodical subscriptions is 276, of which 214 are purchased periodicals and 62 are donated subscriptions.

Services

Important progress was made towards achieving the priorities set out in the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan. The Information Literacy Program continued to be of first priority for Panitza Library and the University as a whole. By conducting orientation lectures and in-class trainings, patrons were made aware of the library's resources in different formats and were taught how to locate, evaluate and use information ethically and thus become information literate and life-long learning members of the society. Orientation sessions were organized for freshmen and EMBA students in Sofia. The library staff collaborated with the faculty members for the improvement of the program as a whole and for the discipline-specific instructions in particular to ensure that information skills were taught as part of the curriculum and that students exploit effectively the Library's collections and services. A total of over 40 in-class trainings were conducted with the participation of over 800 students. Pre-test and post-test surveys were implemented to assess student's learning outcomes, which showed considerable improvement of information literacy skills in specific areas. Panitza Library understands its important role in developing a culture of respecting authors' copyrights and strictly applies the requirements of the Bulgarian and US Copyright Laws.

The Library's reference service provided professional help to library patrons in locating and retrieving information in various ways – personal consultation, instant messaging, e-mails, and drop-in sessions. The working hours of the reference desk were extended. The reference librarians usually answered to all email questions even during the weekends so that students could get help whenever they needed it. More productive and efficient communication with library patrons was achieved by implementing Meebo instant messaging virtual reference tool.

Interlibrary Loan service was an essential element in the Library's strategy to provide additional resources not held in the Library in order to support the research needs of AUBG faculty and senior students. During the 2009/2010 academic year, the ILL service was promoted among the faculty members, which resulted in an increased number of ILL requests. All requests were successfully fulfilled in due time. Some of the loans were provided free of charge through our partners from AMICAL institutions. Panitza Library

shares resources and expertise within AMICAL and BIC Consortiums, which has been extremely valuable for all members.

The library working hours on Saturdays were changed to be in line with the students' preference for afternoon and evening usage of Library space. Procedure for tracking lost and misshelved books was established by involving work-study students into doing a regular checking of books' shelf order. Access policy issues were clarified and operational procedures put in place to manage effectively the reserve and circulation materials.

Initiatives

One of the main objectives last year was to increase the visibility of the Library and to strengthen its role as a social place and University community center. Panitza Library staff launched a series of presentations of new books, published by AUBG professors, poetry readings and exhibitions. The series were designed to highlight the work of AUBG faculty in the publication of scholarly books and articles. The organized presentations were visited by students, faculty and staff proving to be a successful collaboration in an informal way.

Library promotional brochure was published to serve as an important marketing tool to prospective users.

The reference service started two initiatives – “drop-in sessions” and “Roving librarian” that aim to reach out more students. The Roving librarian was a pilot project whose goal was to bring library services into the students' everyday life. Using a wireless laptop, the reference librarian was available in the residence halls to answer questions, assist in research and locating materials, and encourage students to use the library resources. Drop-in sessions were topic oriented presentations that instruct students how to make a successful research project. However, these reference initiatives did not prove to be successful.

“Friends of the library” campaign was organized to collect contributions by offering unnecessary donations and discarded library materials.

Projects

The Library fostered and maintained its consortium relationships with AMICAL institutions for provision of free exchange of resources and sharing ideas and expertise for mutual benefit. Panitza Library continued to participate in the RESPOND Project (Resource Sharing Project for Network Discovery), whose aim is to facilitate resource sharing, management and efficiency of interlibrary loan requests among AMICAL institutions and libraries worldwide. RESPOND Project allowed us to expand the access of the AUBG community to educational and research resources providing fast, cheap, and high quality document delivery of materials not available in our Library. AUBG benefited through consortium agreements for significant discounts on purchasing electronic resources and by participation in professional development activities.

Panitza Library, together with the Central Library of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” and the Central Library of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, started the NALIS (National Academic Library Information System) Project supported by the America for Bulgaria Foundation. The prime objective of the five-year project is to aid the integration of the Bulgarian research and university libraries by creating an online union catalog. It will allow the search through a web portal in the catalogs of the participating libraries and will grant access to both the bibliographic information concerning their holdings and their digital resources. NALIS will also organize training of the library professionals in how to use a standard for cataloging materials and for the improvement of the librarians’ qualification in the field of library information and communication systems. Another major NALIS benefit is the program for a retrospective conversion of bibliographic records. Panitza Library will convert 25 000 catalog records which will substantially improve the quality of the Library’s OPAC.

Professional development

The complexities in the technology changes have made professional development and cross-training a high priority. The comprehensive and systematic professional development program ensured that Library staff skills are enhanced so that they are able to keep pace with a rapidly changing environment, better assist in the achievement of the

Library's strategic goals and enable individual staff members to enjoy more satisfying careers. Each Library staff member had the chance to participate in conferences, workshops and seminars organized by the Bulgarian Library Association or by the University's Human Resources Office. Three staff members attended the Seventh AMICAL conference held in Budapest, Hungary. Extremely beneficial was the opportunity for attending webinars organized by LYRISIS via AMICAL consortium. The librarians have taken advantage of AMICAL Small Grant Awards professional development fund – library staff members participated in ACRL Immersion Program 2010 on Information Literacy, in Umbrella 2009 conference - Hatfield, UK and in Glasgow University Library training.

Panitza Library also took the lead in organizing a popular professional development event for Bulgarian librarians, the Technology Day, which took place in March at Elieff Centre in Sofia. The main goals of this professional forum were to introduce emerging new library technologies to the Bulgarian professional community, to increase awareness and understanding of all the changes that affect higher education and universities libraries as well as to offer practical approaches for catching up with rapid changes. AUBG is committed to serving as a role model for transformation of higher education in the region. The library software VIRTUA was upgraded to the latest version. The two-day training from VTLS qualified personnel was conducted in May to solve problems and acquaint the staff with their new products.

User needs assessment tools were developed to respond to the changing needs of the AUBG community and improve Library programs and services. The library partnered with a professor teaching marketing research class. As a class assignment, his students conducted a survey to evaluate students' perception of Library services and resources.

AUBG senior students' survey positioned students' satisfaction from library staff's services and resources in the top three out of all departments surveyed. This result is a reflection of our ongoing efforts to create a fair, stimulating and satisfying work environment that in turn enables the Library to play a meaningful role in supporting and advancing the University's goals.

Statistical data

Collections		
	2008-2009	2009-2010
Total print volumes	100 665	101 171
Electronic books	40 000	45 000
Print serial subscriptions	280	276
Full-text electronic journals	18 650	26 730
Media materials	272	362

Traditional Reserves			
		2008-2009	2009-2010
	courses supported	89	90
	items on reserve	1267	1212
E-Reserves			
	courses supported	9	10
	items on e-reserve	95	130

Information Literacy		
	2008-2009	2009-2010
Total sessions	45	50
Total attendance	808	898

Reference Services		
	2008-2009	2009-2010
In-person reference questions	3839	6949
Virtual reference questions	880	2708

Hours of operation/week	88
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