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ITS and NYU Libraries Orientation for New Faculty

By **Kate Monahan**

To help raise awareness of the many services available to NYU faculty, ITS and the NYU Libraries recently co-hosted an information session for incoming instructors. Held in the Avery Fisher Center at Bobst Library on September 19, 2003, the orientation was hosted by Lucinda Covert-Vail, Director of Public Services at NYU's Division of Libraries, and Vincent Doogan, Director of ITS Academic Computing Services at NYU.

After welcoming the attendees, Covert-Vail distributed copies of the Services for Faculty and Student Guide brochures that the Libraries and ITS co-produce. She recommended that all faculty use them as a helpful overview of the ways in which the two divisions support teaching, learning, and research at NYU. She then began a tour of the Libraries' newly-redesigned website (<http://library.nyu.edu>), which she opened on the room's laptop computer and projection screen.

As she pointed out the many resources linked from the site's main page, Covert-Vail explained that the Libraries "have been making huge strides in the services you can access online, from your desk, your office, and at home". Clicking the "books" link brought us to the gateway for searching the NYU Libraries' catalogs (BobCat, Julius, WebCat, and MedCat) and those of other libraries: http://library.nyu.edu/collections/find_books.html.

There are also more than 12,000 e-journals available through the website, with new materials being added on a regular basis. These materials are easy to access using a wide range of databases (http://library.nyu.edu/collections/find_articles.html) or The Arch, the Libraries' new gateway to electronic resources (<http://library.nyu.edu/collections/arch.html>). See the article [NYU Libraries New Website Unveiled](#) in this issue for more information.

Beyond access to library materials, faculty can also use the website to put print and electronic materials on reserve for students, recommend that new journal subscriptions or copies of texts be purchased by the Libraries, and recall or renew materials.

After encouraging each faculty member to further explore the website on their own, Covert-Vail then discussed the ways in which faculty can make the most of Libraries resources. Each faculty member has an individual Subject Specialist Librarian with discipline-specific expertise who can "work with you to build collections, provide bibliographic instruction to your class, create assignments, and assist you with Libraries resources". A list of Subject Specialists can be found at http://library.nyu.edu/research/lib_arc.html.

Turning our attention back to the website, Covert-Vail showed us the online Ask-a-Librarian service (<http://library.nyu.edu/ask/>), which offers both chat reference (real-time online discussion with a Librarian) and e-mail assistance to all NYU faculty, staff and students. Before turning the podium over to Vincent Doogan to discuss ITS services, she also pointed out the collection of helpful online tutorials available at <http://library.nyu.edu/research/tutorials/>.

Doogan began his portion of the talk by walking us through the ITS website (<http://www.nyu.edu/its/>), encouraging faculty to pay particular attention to the "Instruction and Research" menu. This area contains links to such services as the Blackboard online learning system, broadcasting and Internet2, wired classroom and multimedia facilities, and discipline-specific IT services.

He also pointed out the frequently asked questions (<http://www.nyu.edu/its/faq/>) and computer security (<http://www.nyu.edu/its/security/>) sections of the site as helpful resources, and showed us that the Faculty page contains a handy list of faculty-specific ITS links (<http://www.nyu.edu/its/faculty.html>).

Doogan then opened NYUHome (<http://home.nyu.edu>), the University's portal to a wide variety of electronic resources and services. In the "Home" tab, he pointed out the channel offering convenient access to NYU Forums, threaded discussion lists that can be used by faculty to interact with their students (described in more detail at <http://www.nyu.edu/its/forums.html>). In the "Research" tab, he demonstrated how many Libraries resources can be quickly accessed through the Library channel.

In the "Academics" tab, Doogan pointed out the "Classes" channel, explaining that it contains links to each faculty member's Blackboard classes. A Blackboard class can be created as a supplement for each course a faculty member instructs, and is "an easy interface for uploading and accessing content and integrated communication tools". More information, including instructions on how to request a course and use the software, is available at <http://www.nyu.edu/its/blackboard/>. (Also see the article [What's New in NYU Blackboard?](#) in this issue.

He continued with an overview of the Academic Computing Services department (ACS) within ITS. ACS offers a variety of useful faculty-specific resources, including the Studio for Digital Projects and Research on the second floor of Bobst Library, which is jointly operated by ITS and the NYU Libraries, and the ITS Faculty Technology Center (FTC) on the second floor of 35 West 4th Street, a facility which is "oriented toward the instructional, digitization and training needs of faculty".

Doogan recommended that faculty members come to the FTC to discuss projects and take advantage of the "drop-in access to computers and scanners, and a cadre

of instructional technologists who provide training and assistance in creating digitally-formatted content".

Doogan closed with a description of the ITS computer labs and the wired classroom facilities available to faculty. A video highlighted NYU's new classroom complex at 194 Mercer Street and the ITS hands-on computer classrooms, which offer computers for student use, SMARTBoard technology, wireless access, and on-site staffing by ITS. Additional information is available on the ITS website at <http://www.nyu.edu/its/classrooms/>.

This orientation was not only useful to new faculty, but also a helpful reminder to all instructors that there is a wide range of services available to enhance teaching at NYU, and a variety of staff to keep you informed and help you make the most of these resources. For more information about Libraries services, please contact your department's Subject Specialist (see above for details); for ITS services, contact the ITS Faculty Technology Center at 1-212-998-3044 or its.ftc@nyu.edu.

For copies of the publications mentioned in this article, please visit the ITS Client Services Center at 10 Astor Place or the Bobst ERC, 70 Washington Square South, B-level. You can also visit the ITS Publications website (<http://www.nyu.edu/its/pubs/>) to access electronic versions, or contact the ITS Publications Group at its.pubs@nyu.edu to request multiple print copies of most publications.

Author Biography

Connect Editor Kate Monahan is a Technical Writer within the Publications Group of ITS Client Services. She can be reached at kate@nyu.edu

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