

Report from the 4. Leipziger Kongress für Information und Bibliothek
Menschen wollen Wissen! - Bibliotheken im 21. Jahrhundert: international, interkulturell,
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Recently I had the opportunity to travel to Germany to attend and present at the at the BID Kongress Leipzig 2010.

My presentation focused on the integration of information literacy into the undergraduate curriculum at the University of Colorado at Boulder. It was a part of the panel “Vermittlung von Informationskompetenz an den Hochschulen: Konzepte für die Praxis” that took place on Tuesday 16 March, from 4:15pm to 6:00pm. The panel was moderated by Katrin Steiner of the Universitätsbibliothek Münster and was a part of “Themenkreis 3: Bibliotheken als Partner für Medien- und Informationskompetenz.” The panel’s four presentations gave attendees a broad view of information literacy practice based on examples from Canada, the USA, and Germany, as exemplified below:

- “Optimizing our Teaching: Teaching and Learning with Technology”
Tatiana Usova, Edmonton, Alberta (Canada)
- “Anforderungen zur professionellen Planung und Durchführung von Informationskompetenzschulungen in Bibliotheken: ein Beispiel aus der Lehre der Fachhochschule Hannover”
Anke Wittich, Hannover (Germany)
- “Media and Information Competence: The Role of Personal Information Management”
Kate Brooks, Minneapolis, Minnesota (USA)
- “Integrating Information Literacy Skills into Undergraduate Education at the University of Colorado at Boulder”
Thea Lindquist, Boulder, Colorado (USA)

The session was well-attended. There was good synergy between the presentations on the panel, and yet they provided a touchstone for discussing different approaches to information literacy between university libraries in the countries represented. Attendees posed thoughtful questions to the presenters after each contribution and also approached us for one-on-one conversation after the panel was over. From the questions, it was clear that garnering the buy-in and active involvement of teaching faculty, particularly for a discipline-based information

literacy program of the sort I developed in Colorado, is also – and perhaps an even greater – challenge in Germany.

Among other sessions, I attended a related offering on “Vermittlung von Informationskompetenz an den Hochschulen: Sachstand und Strategien,” which featured three German and one American colleague, Atoma Batoma from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Their panel provided an interesting extension of the conversation on information literacy. This session was also well-attended, and since the room was much smaller,, participants were standing out into the hall and created a situation that made it more challenging to focus on the content of the presentations.

The BID Kongress Leipzig certainly felt much more personal to me than the humongous American Library Association (ALA) annual conferences that take place in the United States. It was much easier to make contacts with colleagues and visit vendors in the more intimate atmosphere of the Leipzig conference. The Festabend in the Moritzbastei, a Leipzig institution, offered the opportunity to mingle with colleagues in festive environment. Networking continued throughout the conference. A highlight was the “Blaue Stunde” at the BID booth, where I met a librarian from the UK who is involved in this year’s IFLA conference in Gothenburg, Sweden. I also learned about an innovative project called PaperC, a new platform providing freely accessible electronic books developed by a team in Leipzig, about which I will make colleagues at my institution aware.

After the conference, my North American colleagues and I had the opportunity to make two further professional visits. The first was to the Leipziger Buchmesse. The convergence of the conference with the book fair provided the occasion to combine professional development with library business that was particularly valuable to me as the Germanic Language & Literature librarian at my institution. The book fair was also a unique experience to take in the wide variety of readings and related events in the city of Leipzig. Our group also had the chance to visit the Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden (SLUB), organized by Shawn Whately of the Goethe-Institut Toronto. As both a university and a state library, the SLUB serves a wide variety of user populations. It is an impressive modern facility, with great use of natural light, wireless networking, scanning stations, and a robotic automated materials delivery system. A 25-year veteran librarian at the SLUB conducted our tour. Since she had worked there before the fall of the wall, it was quite interesting to hear about how things had changed (or stayed the same) in the library over time.

My attendance at the BID Kongress Leipzig was made possible by generous grants from Bibliothek & Information International and the Goethe-Institut North America that helped cover the costs of transportation to and lodging in Leipzig. By all accounts, international representation at the conference allowed for the presentation of more diverse points of view

and generated interesting discussions around the role of information literacy in post-secondary education across continents that promise to inform my work in this area. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to attend and participate.