

## An Ohlone Story

### Ohlone Library 2.0

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#### **OVERVIEW**

Once upon a time, there was “Ohlone Library 1.0.” That was when students came into the library on foot, asked librarians a lot of reference questions, checked out books in large numbers, and used the microfiche reader to look at old issues of the *New York Times*. Many years passed, and libraries around the world changed. Computers replaced card catalogs. Computers replaced the *Readers’ Guide to Periodical Literature*. Computers replaced journal stacks. The Internet happened. Google became a verb. Librarians became data curators, and took high paying jobs creating directories for Yahoo. Under the guidance of our former Library Director, Shirley Peck, the Ohlone Library responded to new technologies and opportunities, investing in 1999 in a fully automated state-of-the-art library system; replacing study carrels and book stacks with numerous computer stations for research; and migrating from printed volumes of periodical indexes to CD-Rom indexes and finally to Web-based full-text periodical databases.

One day, towards the end of 2005, the term “Library 2.0” was used at a library technology conference. In the following months, much discussion and debate ensued, primarily in the library blogosphere. Given the lack of consensus on the term, we provide here a quick local definition:

**“Library 2.0,”** modeled on the “Web 2.0” concept, seeks to employ strategies and technologies that provide a more interactive, **user-defined** library experience, proactively **meeting library users wherever they are**, in or out of the library, and exploiting such multimedia features of the **“social web”** as blogs, wikis, social bookmarks, and collaborative categorization including user-defined “tagging” and “folksonomies.”

The Ohlone librarians value and champion such traditional aspects of librarianship as in-person reference, the library as a physical space, and, well, books. We also agree with many commentators that libraries have *always* been about innovation and interactive, user-centric experiences, so we don’t think Library 2.0 concepts represent a revolution in librarianship. After all, photo-sharing sites like flickr are very nice, but libraries have been around a long time. It might be more appropriate to use a term like “Library 2.0” for say, the first time the library was opened to the public in ancient Greece than for the current activity of allowing users to add comments to online catalog records. Nevertheless, we find many Library 2.0 concepts useful and exciting, and, in the past year, have been at work implementing some aspects of the Library 2.0 movement that hold promise for better serving our students and the learning college model. These implementations are surveyed below in two categories: “Library Without Walls” and “The Social Web.”

**Library Without Walls.** One of the conceptual threads running throughout the Library 2.0 discussion is that the library must meet users where they are, not requiring them to come into the library, or even to the library web site, for service. In the past year we have asked ourselves the question: where are our students when they need us most? And come up with these answers:

- **They are in their online or hybrid course learning environments (WebCT)**, or at the web site their instructor has provided for their web-enhanced class. In the Library 1.0 model, we asked all online instructors to provide a link from WebCT to the library home page, so that students would be encouraged to “come to the library” to do their research. This year, we took these efforts to a new level, sponsoring a workshop for faculty during the Spring flex days that introduced ways of more seamlessly integrating library resources into online, hybrid or web-enhanced classes. To date, a “search box” that searches directly out of WebCT (or any web page) across all our

periodical databases and online catalog has been placed on the WebCT page, web site or blog for twelve courses. One of our librarians, KG Greenstein, has also served as a “librarian presence” in an online technical writing course, actively participating with students in discussion threads related to research. In the coming term we hope to increase participation in both these activities and reach higher numbers of students with these initiatives.

- **They are studying in the English Learning Center**, working with English department faculty to research and write essays. This semester we will pilot a project of having reference librarians physically present in the English Learning Center for two hours each day during peak traffic times. According to writing instructors working in this lab, questions related to using library research tools arise in their work with students, and our online tools should enable us to effectively work with students away from the main library collection.
- **They are Googling**. This semester we have integrated our journal holdings with the web search tools Google Scholar and Microsoft Live Academic Search. Now when students use one of these major academic search engines their results include clearly marked links to the full-text articles included in Ohlone Library subscription databases.
- **They are searching one of our databases, but the information they need is in a different one**. A new subscription to a suite of products from the vendor Serials Solutions makes search more “user-centric” by allowing searchers to find information using whatever starting point they are most comfortable with. These new products create links between all our search interfaces, thus allowing searchers to start from any one of multiple starting points (our online catalog, any of our eleven subscription databases, Google Scholar, or our Central Search tool that includes all these in one search) and find information wherever it may be located.
- **They are in the library, using our computers for research, but not necessarily talking to a librarian or using the best available resources**. To address this situation we created a library-designed toolbar, which integrates into the Internet Explorer browser installed on the library PCs, and provides search functionality right from the browser across our databases and online catalog. We plan to promote use of this toolbar campus-wide, and our users can also download it for home use.

*The “Social Web” and Other Web 2.0 Technologies*. One of the hallmarks of the Library 2.0 movement is the use of social networking tools to engage library users. For example, some libraries feature blogs as their library home pages, some allow user reviews in the online catalog, some have established strong presences in social networking sites such as Myspace, Facebook and Second Life, and some capitalize on the popularity of gaming to create community and deeo learning opportunities for their users. Beyond social networking tools, other Web 2.0 technologies include exploiting open standards to connect existing web services in innovative locally useful ways (Mash-ups) or enabling RSS (Really Simple Syndication) so that users can “subscribe” to library generated data such as Podcasts, Blogs, database search alerts, new books added to the library catalog, or other services. In our library, we are exploring many of these ideas. To date, the technologies holding the most promise for our setting include:

- **Blogging**. For the college book club, sponsored by the Library, we have a Book Club Blog, intended to facilitate discussion on the current club selection. The Blog is RSS-enabled, so that anyone interested can receive blog postings as they appear.
- **Ohlone Librarians’ wiki**. This wiki is a forum for discussion among the Ohlone Librarians, primarily with respect to the program review process, but also to share ideas learned from conferences and to act as a gateway to current awareness tools.
- **Podcasts of library readings**. We have joined the Itunes University community and have plans to begin a daily podcast of library generated content highlighting and promoting new, interesting and recommended books in the library collection.
- **RSS**. Example applications would include: subject guides created by the library that employ RSS connections to the catalog to keep themselves up-to-date; enabling RSS connections to our catalog and databases as current awareness tools for faculty and students.

## ***RELATIONSHIP TO COLLEGE VALUES***

*We provide life long learning opportunities for students, college personnel, and the community.*  
Library 2.0 initiatives seek to ensure that as many students as possible “find” the library and its superior resources in the thicket of information sources available to them. This experience increases their sophistication as researchers, instilling skills they will carry with them throughout their lifetimes in the information age.

*We practice innovation and actively encourage risk-taking and entrepreneurship.*  
Moving our operations out of the physical library and even out of the library’s web space; using new and popular technologies (podcasting and blogging) to promote time-honored educational values such as reading – these are examples of innovative library service models. Library 2.0 ideas will also be a cornerstone of our operation at the Newark Center for Health Sciences and Technology, to open in January 2008, where the whole campus is envisioned as a Learning Resource Center and lines between the library and the campus as a whole are blurred.

*We demonstrate stewardship for our human, financial, physical, and environmental resources.*  
The college invests thousands of dollars annually in its online catalog, electronic books, periodical databases and electronic reference tools, yet students perform simple web searches rather than using these superior research tools, often because library tools are not as visible as other popularly available tools. Along with our information competency efforts, which seek to educate students about appropriate research tools, our “library without walls” initiatives increase the visibility of, and thereby maximize use of, these valuable resources.

## ***CONTRIBUTION TO ACHIEVING COLLEGE GOALS***

*Develop across the curriculum the Learning College Model, utilizing methods and technologies that hold the most promise for improving student course and program completion success rates.*  
Library 2.0 initiatives contribute to this goal by making it easier for students to benefit from the resources best able to help them succeed.

*Provide continuous learning for all personnel associated with the District and promote an organizational structure that is adaptable, collegial, and supportive of the Learning College Model.*  
The Ohlone Library 2.0 story both grows out of continuous learning opportunities (professional development activities of the faculty librarians) and contributes to the Learning College Model by strengthening the research “heart” of the college. One of the catch phrases of Library 2.0 is “continuous beta,” implying constant learning, assessment and adaptation in response to new conditions.

*Promote the health, environmental, cultural, and economic vitality of the communities served by the District through programs of outreach, community services, and partnership ventures.*  
We envision our library Podcast as an outreach tool for the entire community, highlighting literary and other intellectual discussions at the College and inviting listenership and participation beyond the college grounds.

## ***DEMONSTRATION OF MEETING ONE OR MORE OF THE ACCREDITATION STANDARDS***

The Library 2.0 initiatives are most directly related to Accreditation Standard II. C.1.c, which reads:  
*The institution provides students and personnel responsible for student learning programs and services adequate access to the library and other learning support services, regardless of their location or means of delivery.*

By providing flexibility in terms of physical and virtual location (students don’t need to come into the library or even into the library’s web space) and by proactively targeting distance learners via WebCT, our Library 2.0 projects help to ensure that we are meeting this standard.

## ***EXPRESSION OF ACCREDITATION THEMES***

### *Institutional Commitments*

We could not seriously pursue Library 2.0 initiatives without institutional commitments to our program. For example, our subscription to the suite of products provided by Serials Solutions has been instrumental in creating linkages necessary for our library without walls initiatives, and, when we asked, the institution came up with the necessary funds for this project out of limited instructional software funds. Similarly, without institutional commitments to professional development and funding of conferences such as Internet Librarian, our ability to keep abreast of cutting-edge library technologies would be greatly weakened.

### *Student Learning Outcomes*

Given the many possible applications for library 2.0 ideas and technologies, it is most important to balance innovation and experimentation with a careful consideration for intended Student Learning Outcomes. Ultimately, there is no reason to invest time and energy in creating Library 2.0 applications unless they are likely to improve learning outcomes for students. Some experimentation without clear rationales can result in innovative ideas for new library services, but most of our financial and human resources must go to meeting known needs. Our forays into Library 2.0 territory have thus far been judicious; we have preferred low-tech but high-student-impact concepts like sending librarians to the English Learning Center in Hyman Hall to high-tech but high-cost or uncertain-impact ideas such as creating “mash-ups” using Google Maps. As we look to the future, we will seek to include grounded assessments of our Library 2.0 initiatives to ensure that they are not just new and innovative, but of enduring value to our students.