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Maureen Cech
University of Maryland Libraries

Nevenka Zdravkovska
University of Maryland Libraries

Robert Kackley
University of Maryland Libraries

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Maureen Cech, Nevenka Zdravkovska and Robert Kackley

University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA

The Pulling Power of Marquee Courses: The Changing Curriculum and Quality Reference Services

University curricula are showing signs of customization, interdisciplinarity, and relevance to current events. The University of Maryland's 2008 Strategic Plan states the University's intention to revise the concept of traditional Core courses to a General Education Program that more heavily emphasizes lifelong learning, global perspectives, and interdisciplinary study.

The Marquee Courses Program at the University of Maryland is an innovative, cross-college program that endeavors to demonstrate the relevance of science and technology to non-sci/tech majors by integrating science and technology with environmental, global, and social issues. The Marquee Program is already making strides toward the changes envisioned in the Strategic Plan.

This poster will explore the ways in which librarians at the Engineering and Physical Sciences Library (EPSL) have undertaken efforts to address the Strategic Plan's goal for UM Libraries to adapt their services and resources for students conducting twenty-first-century research and studying disciplines that were once viewed as separate. EPSL librarians have begun taking steps in this direction by proactively marketing library resources and services for the Marquee Program, interacting with Marquee coordinators and professors, and providing reference instruction for individual courses. EPSL Librarians have connected with program coordinators to understand the makeup of the program and to integrate the Libraries into the functions of the program. In making itself more than "visible" to Marquee professors and program coordinators, librarians are demonstrating their services and resources as relevant to an increasingly independent and "online" user community of undergraduate students

The main presenter, Robert Kackley, is a reference librarian at the Engineering and Physical Sciences Library (EPSL) at the University of Maryland with subject responsibilities in Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Materials Engineering, Geology, Astronomy and Meteorology. Nevenka Zdravkovska is the head of EPSL at the University of Maryland and has subject responsibilities in Mathematics and Computer Science. Maureen Cech is a graduate assistant at EPSL and intends to graduate in May 2009 with a Master's in Library Science.