

Study visit to James Madison University Library, May 2009

Senior librarian Lotta Wogensen and Library Director Jette Guldborg Petersen, both Malmo University, visited James Madison University Library 18-20 May 2009.

The aim of the study visit was to look at and get inspired by James Madison University Library's work with the library organization and staff development, and to look closer at the library's public service and teaching. We also had a plan to study James Madison University's Centre for Faculty Innovation to see if we could develop our own thoughts about the cooperation and dialogue with faculty regarding library and information literacy issues. Last but not least we wanted to find out more about the possibilities, conditions and possible output of staff exchange for our own staff and vice versa, encouraged by the INU Shadowing Program for administrative staff.

Basically we have a lot in common with James Madison University Library, not only regarding number of FTE's and the main objectives of our universities, but first of all our common view of the role of a modern university library.

As expected we got many great ideas from James Madison University Library's cooperation with faculty.

The library organization also consists of the Center for Instructional Technology, which to some extent can be compared to the IT support department at Malmo University. However the way this center was organized and equipped and the very focused and reflective way of approaching faculty needs was definitely a great inspiration to us and we certainly will encourage our IT staff to go to James Madison to study this center closer.

Together with our hosts we discussed the possibility of common webinars about different issues. We should like to bring together a group of people from each library to webinars

discussing for instance the library's role in the curriculum, e-publishing, distance learning support etc

At James Madison University Library we found a very well developed system for liaison librarians. We have a similar system, but not as developed as the system at JMU. We got the impression that the JMU librarians have their main identity as liaison librarians and we should like to develop our own contacts with faculty in this direction, too. More information:

<http://www.lib.jmu.edu/instruction/liaison.aspx>

We have a humble but strong feeling that we might have given our hosts some good ideas too. We had a meeting with staff planning a remodeling of the library, where we presented our ideas about "The Library as a Village" and the impact of the study environment offered by a university library.

We also had some interesting discussions about staff development and our own attempts to create a strong "we" within the library organization.

Our study visit was a very good investment in the future development of Malmo University Library. Although we went to JMU off season our hosts had set up an interesting program for us including welcoming and nice social events, too. We spend a great time there and want to thank everybody involved in this visit for their enthusiasm and willingness to share their experiences and ideas with us. A special thank to Ralph Alberico, Dean of Libraries and Educational technologies, to Sharon Gasser, who took us home for dinner at her lovely house in the countryside, and to Lynn Cameron, who went on a beautiful hike in the mountains with Ralph and us.