Faculty

Nancy Benoit, Ph.D
Professor
Faculty of Arts
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Background

Nancy, a 25-year veteran of Waterloo is a tenured history professor in the Faculty of Arts. While she works mostly alone, she collaborates regularly with colleagues and students. She is well published in her field of Canadian History. She supervises graduate work of students in her department, and relies partly on a research assistant for her own research work. For the courses she is teaching, Nancy relies on current published scholarship in her field. She occasionally uses examples from the popular news sources in class.

“Nancy visits the library website often. She keeps up to date via Primo and academic journal databases. Nancy also uses news databases and primary sources of information such as government documents, statistics and archives, many of which are open access. She takes advantage of various alerting services. When it comes to a really new idea/topic/concept, she uses tools such as Wikipedia, and Google Search. However, she uses Google Scholar rarely--preferring library databases. She relies predominantly on online access, email inquiries, and delivery services.”

‘The library is just as important to me when I started. I’m not one to keep up with all the new things going on at the facility but luckily the folks coming up the ranks fill me in. I’m not up to speed on Copyright though.”
Motivation
Nancy recently became interested in a new topic. She started by consulting a relevant subject guide. Nancy often relies on reference sources on hand and uses their bibliographies to continue her research and to get a better grasp on the research topic. This time the trail led to a book that was not available locally and could not be located in RACER, the interlibrary loan database.

Frustrations
The main problem that she sometimes encounters is that she cannot always find easily what she needs. She will not try endlessly; if several searches fail to locate desired information, she will ask for help. When referring her students to resources, she does so via specific library subject or course guides as starting points. She is sometimes puzzled about how to submit requests for items and often asks for help from her liaison librarian. She lacks confidence in using the copyright guidelines on her own and prefers consulting with the copyright contact person.

Ideal Experience
Nancy…
- Assumes that there will be seamless online connections with library content and services
- Wants a unified search experience that highlights the distinction between local library and other content
- For the most part, takes advantage of online accesses, but will enter library space if convenient
- Relies on a certain level of service, some from her graduate students and secondarily from library staff
- Would like a personal online space that would keep track of her research efforts
- Would prefer a simplified and intuitive interface for requesting materials via RACER