

Collaborating with Graduate Students to Improve Library Systems and Processes

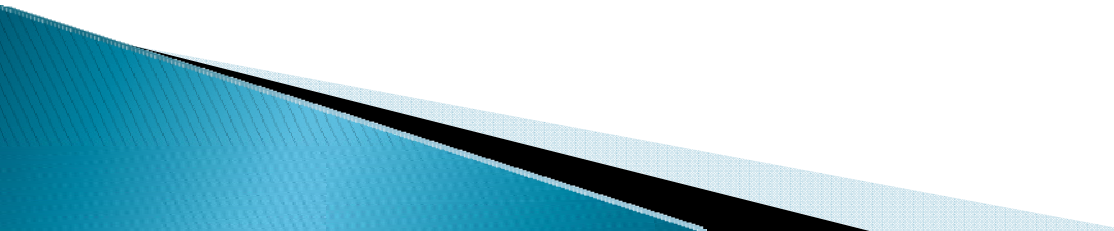
Rachel Wexelbaum

Collection Management Librarian

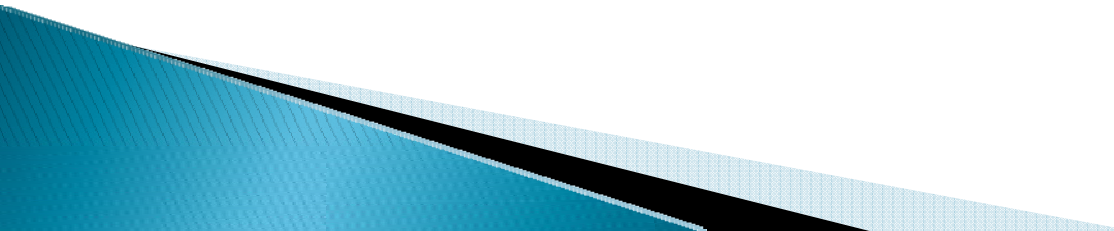
Saint Cloud State University

rswexelbaum@stcloudstate.edu / 320-308-4756

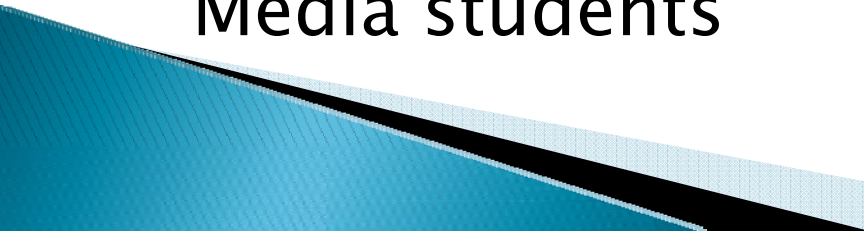
Librarians as Collaborators

- ▶ Librarians and college faculty
 - ▶ Librarians and community organizations
 - ▶ Librarians from different types of libraries in consortia
 - ▶ What about...librarians and non-library program students?
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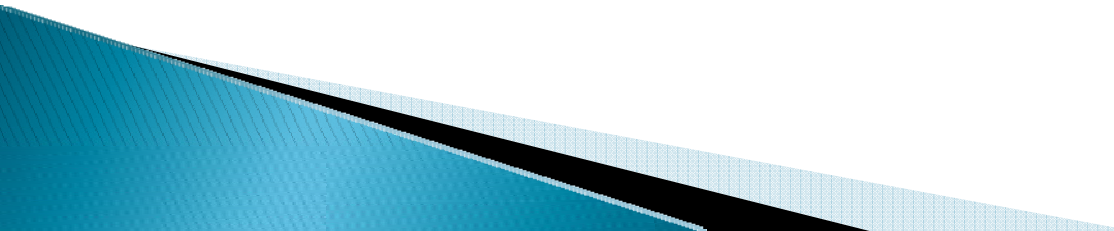
Librarians as Mentors

- ▶ Library school programs
 - ▶ Independent study classes
 - ▶ Library-related internships
 - ▶ No literature to address mentorship outside of librarianship
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Librarians as Faculty

- ▶ Saint Cloud State University: librarians are faculty
 - ▶ Must fulfill the faculty duties of teaching, advising, mentoring, and providing student support as needed or requested
 - ▶ Normally SCSU librarians teach, advise, mentor and support Center of Information Media students
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Librarians as Faculty

- ▶ Librarians publish and present on a variety of topics
 - ▶ Librarians work with people from many other disciplines on campus
 - ▶ Librarians become valued members of the academic community based on their service to that community
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WE WANT YOU



WE WANT YOU!

Meet Rachel Wexelbaum

Librarian



Humanities/Social Sciences background

Loves Books

“Digital Immigrant”

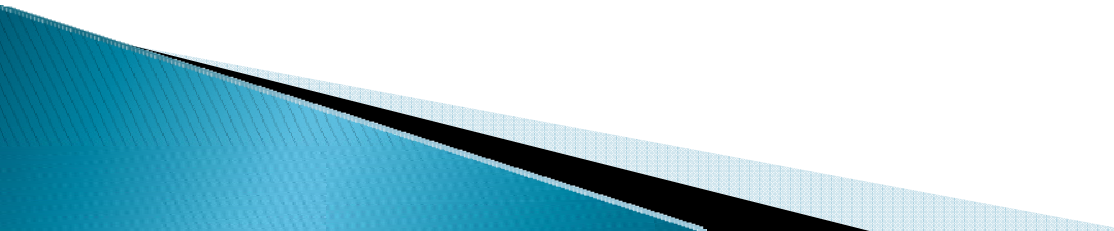
Meet Murali Lakshman

Graduate student from the Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering Department



Science/Engineering Background
Numbers Speak Louder Than Words
“Digital Native”

Murali's Capstone Project

- ▶ RFID system technology
 - ▶ How to apply RFID technology to shelving and inventory processes in the Miller Center Library
 - ▶ Comparison of time taken to scan and shelve books using RFID vs traditional methods
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Rachel's Reaction



Realization 1


WE ARE BOTH RESEARCHERS!

Murali is going to present and publish for the
first time

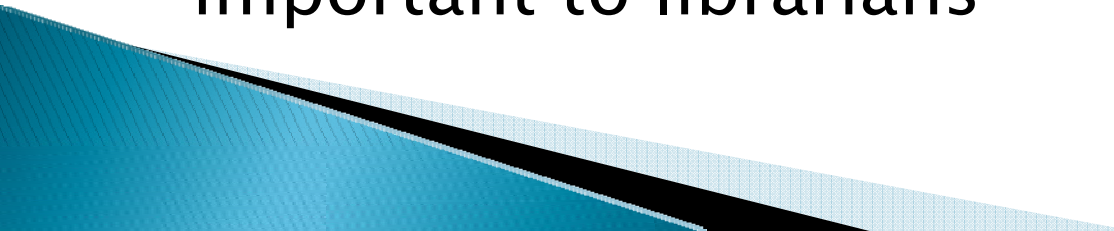
I can help him do a good job.



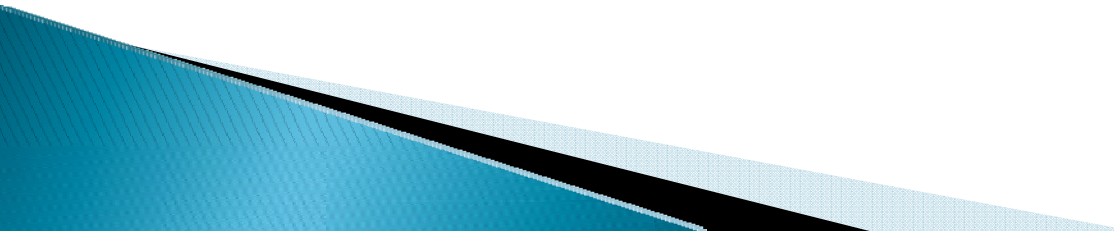
Realization 2

- ▶ Great opportunity for the library to gather information on a potentially expensive RFID system
 - ▶ Would address pros and cons of adopting RFID
 - ▶ Would build bridges between Miller Center Library and Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering Department
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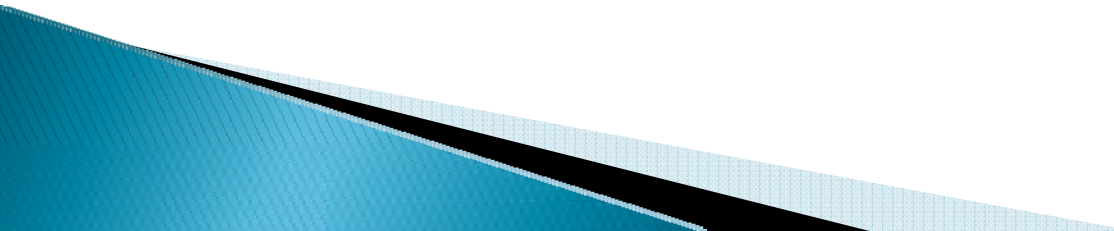
Exchange of Skills

- ▶ Murali knew how the system worked, and could explain it in simple English
 - ▶ Rachel could help Murali express it in writing
 - ▶ Murali knew what information would be important to engineers
 - ▶ Rachel knew what information would be important to librarians
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Exchange of Knowledge

- ▶ Rachel explained the current circulation/inventory system in the library and its challenges
 - ▶ Murali explained how the RFID system was more efficient and cost saving in the long run
 - ▶ Rachel assisted Murali with the writing of an abstract, proposal, and presentation
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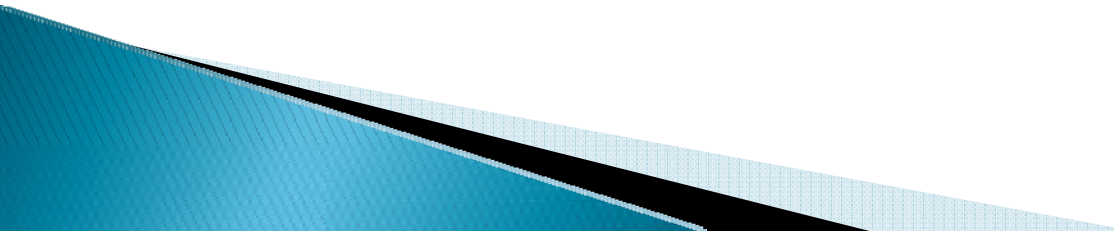
Challenges to the Project

- ▶ What section of the library could Murali use for his project?
 - ▶ How could he tag the books without interfering with current barcoding system?
 - ▶ Would these issues create a problem for his results?
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Tagged Library Books



Lessons Learned

- ▶ The most difficult part of research: bureaucracy
 - ▶ Graduate students often need the most assistance with negotiating and publishing
 - ▶ You don't need to be an engineer to help an engineering student
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Resources on Mentoring

Espinoza–Herold, M. & Gonzalez, V. (2007). The voices of senior scholars on mentoring graduate students and junior scholars. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 29 (3), 313–335.

Johnson, W.B. (2007). *On being a mentor: A guide for higher education faculty*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Ragins, B. R., & Kram, K.E. (Eds.). (2007). *The handbook of mentoring at work: Theory, research, and practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Trask, B.S., Marotz–Baden, R., Settles, B., Gentry, D., & Berke, Debra. (2009). Enhancing graduate education: Promoting a scholarship of teaching and learning through mentoring. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 20 (3), 438–446.

Questions?

