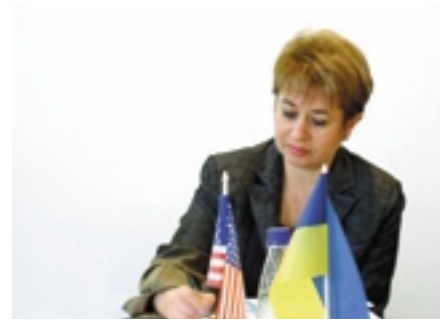


The Library and Access to Information in the University

March 18-19, 2004

Information access and the state of modern university libraries were topics of discussion at the conference held in Kharkiv on March 18-19, 2004. The conference was organized by the Fulbright Exchange Program in Ukraine and by the Central Scholarly Library at the Kharkiv National Karazin University. Participants included library professionals from university libraries in Kyiv, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Sumy, Ostroh and Uzhhorod.

Participants discussed the idea of an academic library as the main information section of a modern university. Several lectures and round table presentations raised the issue that the university in Ukraine is not yet considered to be a collection of academic and educational structures organized around a main library. In Ukraine's institutions of higher education, the library is still seen as just a collection of books, manuals and journals rather than as the principal reserve of an educational process based on intensive independent research and unlimited informa-



Iryna Levchenko, Director, Kharkiv University Library



Tetiana Horbachenko and Nadia Strishenets, Fulbrighters



Participants at the Conference



tion access. Participants stressed that the modern library should provide free, consistent access to professors, deans, teachers and students and that restricting access to library resources or information centers should not be used as punishment or as a disciplinary measures.

Corporate relations between libraries of higher education and mutual corporate projects were also discussed as prospective models of library management.

Participants reviewed the viability of organizing a consortium of university libraries in Kharkiv, consolidating library electronic catalogs, and providing users with computers and access to electronic documents in Kharkiv university libraries.

The Conference concluded that the databases of Ukraine's academic libraries lag far behind their western counterparts in access to information and in developing library technological infrastructures.

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