

Book Review: The Globalized Library: American Academic Libraries and International Students, Collections, and Practices

Andrew A. Wakelee

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Abstract

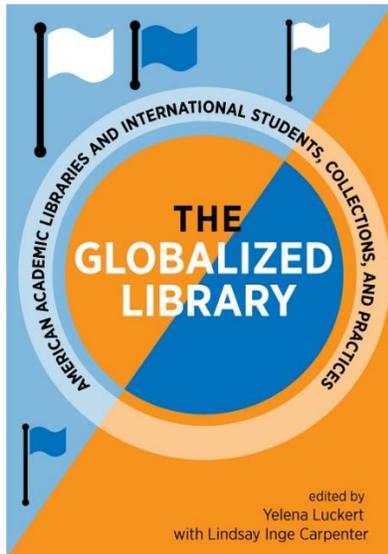
Andrew A. Wakelee reviews *The Globalized Library: American Academic Libraries and International Students, Collections, and Practices* edited by Yelena Luckert with Lindsay Inge Carpenter.

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Keywords

academic libraries, universal design, diversity, inclusion, international education

The Globalized Library: American Academic Libraries and International Students, Collections, and Practices



Edited by Yelena Luckert with Lindsay Inge Carpenter
Association of College & Research Libraries, Chicago, IL, 2019, \$90
ISBN: 9780838989517

As famed library pioneer S. R. Ranganathan noted, “the library profession is international” (p. 401). Yelena Lukert and Lindsay Inge Carpenter’s edited book, *The Globalized Library*, provides an excellent overview of how academic libraries further this proud tradition of global librarianship on their campuses and around the world. This book consists of 33 case studies written by librarians from across North America regarding successful international initiatives. These wide-ranging case studies are engaging and provide key insights that libraries across the globe may take to improve their service to international students. The book is divided into five themed sections: information literacy, outreach and inclusion, collections and digital humanities, establishing libraries and services abroad, and career and professional development. Throughout all the sections, it is clear libraries can improve international students’ experiences by being conscious of their diverse backgrounds and partnering with international libraries and campus organizations.

A common theme throughout, particularly in the information literacy section, is the need for awareness of the library context of international students' home countries. Many international students mention that there is no "library culture" in their home countries and that they are accustomed to the library as a place reserved for quiet study, rather than the learning commons environment typical of academic libraries in North America (p. 128). Authors from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign noted that students from China may struggle to understand the western norms of citing individual authors, as they understand information to belong to the collective society (p. 24). Multiple chapters (i.e., 4, 6, and 12) suggest that libraries use universal design to alleviate cross-cultural confusions that affect information literacy. Universal design calls for environments to be designed to be easily accessed, understood, and used by everyone to the greatest extent possible. In the library context, this means creating spaces with an inviting, easily understandable physical layout that can be accessed and interacted with in multiple ways. Universal design for learning allows for multiple ways of engaging students, representing content, and expressing learning, which is especially helpful for language learners who may struggle with a particular mode of learning (p. 141). Universal design benefits everyone while not singling out international students.

Another major theme that emerges for libraries serving international students is an ongoing pivot from focusing on collections and resources to forming international and on-campus partnerships (p. 295). One case study that stands out comes from Appalachian State University. Their university library co-organized a global film series to engage international students, hosted legislative fellows from South Africa, and provided travel budgets and sabbaticals for tenured librarians (p. 345). Several of their librarians took advantage of this opportunity by traveling to France, Nepal, and Honduras among other locations to teach and research abroad. These experiences gave their librarians a rich international perspective that they now apply to non-English collection development and service to international

students. For libraries where travel expenses are limited, cultural exchanges may also be done through virtual mentoring and networking with international peers (p. 357).

This book provides an array of ideas for institutions seeking to improve their cultural competence, as well as for library professionals seeking to align their life's passions for travel and cultural learning with their career goals and their institution's mission of diversity and inclusion. One of the most important insights found here is that every specialization within academic libraries can have an international angle (p. 347). These case studies provide many great ideas for international engagement that I will use and continue learning about as a member of the global library community throughout my career in academia.

Andrew A. Wakelee is an MLIS Student and Graduate Research Assistant at the University of South Carolina. He enjoys international travel and learning about different cultures.