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Demise of the Reference Desk: Tradition and Transformation

Ann Ellis

Stephen F Austin State University, aellis@sfasu.edu

Tina Oswald

Stephen F Austin State University, toswald@sfasu.edu

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Demise of the Reference Desk:

Tradition and Transformation

Presented by Tina Oswald and Ann Ellis,
Stephen F. Austin State University



Our University

- Size – 11,000 students
- Description – state university in a small rural city
- Programs - 93 bachelor's, 61 master's and two doctoral programs

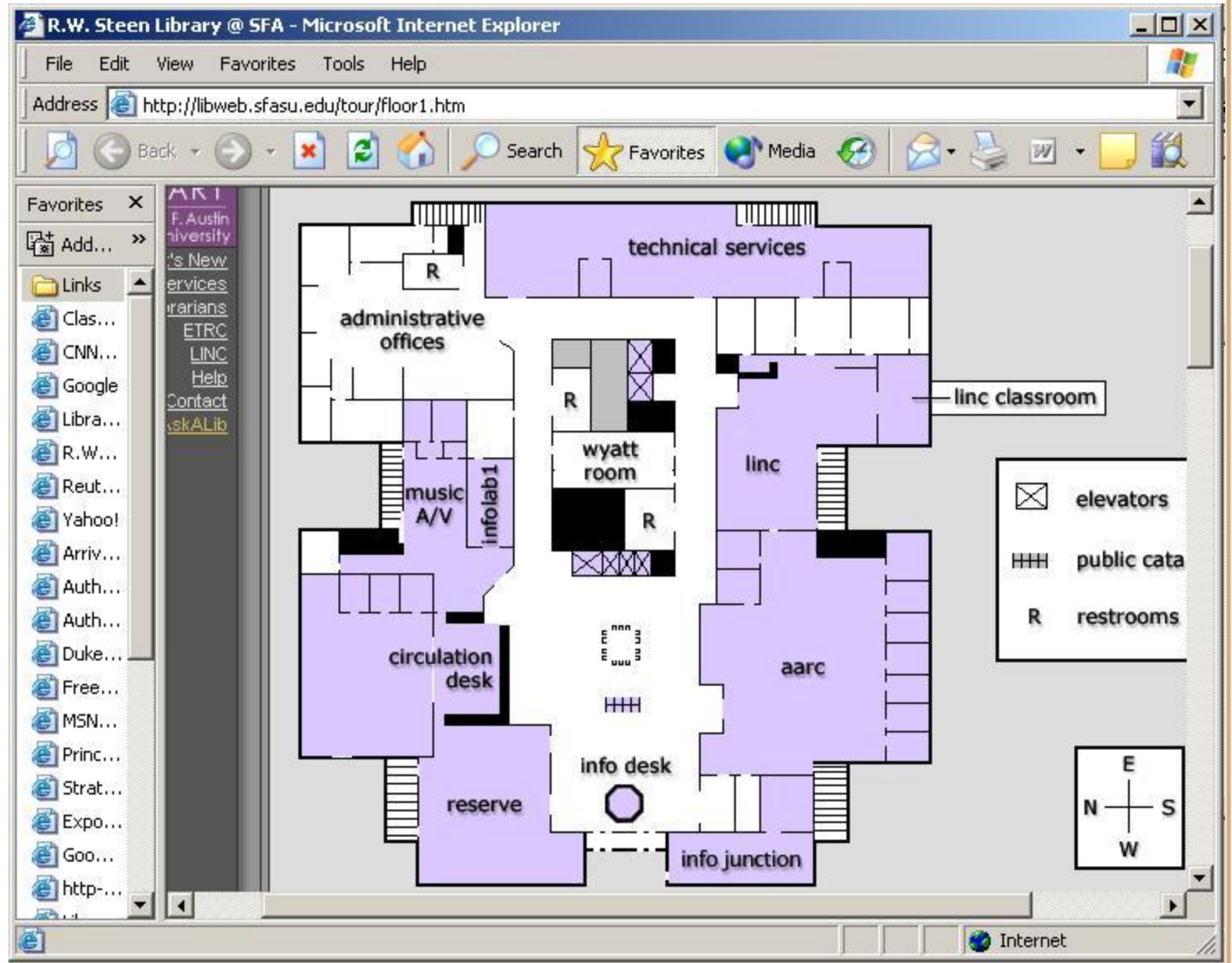


Our Library

- Size – 1.9 million volumes
- Layout – 4 floors
- Features – offices, computer labs on first floor; reference dept. on second floor
- Special areas – tutoring center, 3 computer labs, computer classroom, meeting rooms



First Floor



Second Floor

R.W. Steen Library @ SFA - Microsoft Internet Explorer

Address: <http://libweb.sfasu.edu/tour/floor2.htm>

LIBRARY
Stephen F. Austin State University

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Legend:

- ⊠ elev
- H pub
- R rest
- ⊞ mic
- A Don
- B Susa
- C Prisc
- D Nata
- E Caro
- F Tina
- G Inter
- H Facu
- J Kayc
- K Docu

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- Auth...
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- MSN...
- Princ...
- Strat...
- Expo...
- Goo...
- http...

Internet

Reasons for Change

- Building layout
- Desire for fewer service points
- Decline in number of reference questions
- Flexibility in scheduling work responsibilities



Beginnings of Change

- Reorganization workshop
 - Entire staff involvement
- Suggestions for changes
- Discussions
 - Administrative Committee
 - Reference Department meetings



Implementation of Changes

- Steps taken to begin change
- Staff issues
- Trial and error
- Discussions continued
- Name changed to Research and Instructional Services
 - Reduction in reference staff



Information Desk

- History of desk – began as security checkpoint
- Ideas to change it
 - Limit scope of responsibility
- Staffing issues
- AARC involvement
 - supervision
 - training
- Transfer responsibility to RIS



- The Info Desk is not a reference desk:



Lobby Area and Info Desk



Info Desk



Research Services

- Office hours with on-call hours
- Faculty liaison program
- Information literacy focus
- Consultations
- Training/workshops
- Community outreach
- Other responsibilities



Is it Working? - Outcomes

- Results of user survey
- Satisfaction of current staff
- Problems encountered
 - Workload issues
 - Visibility of librarians
 - Changes continue to be made
 - Consider relocation of department to 1st floor

