

Using a community of practice to support librarian bloggers in an academic library

Congrès des milieux documentaires 2012

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McGill Library



McGill

Library
Bibliothèque

Weblogs at the McGill Library


Initially (pre-2012)

- Individuals and branches starting blogs to support liaison work, branch services
- Using free blogging platforms (WordPress)
- Constituted a service offering (user expectations)
- Operating outside of Library policies, branding, etc

McGill Library Blogs (March 2012)

The Turret | Miscellanea f x

← → ↻ 🏠 🔒 https://blogs.library.mcgill.ca/schulich/ 🔒 📄 ⭐ 📧 🖨 ⚙ ⚡ ☰

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🔍 Search

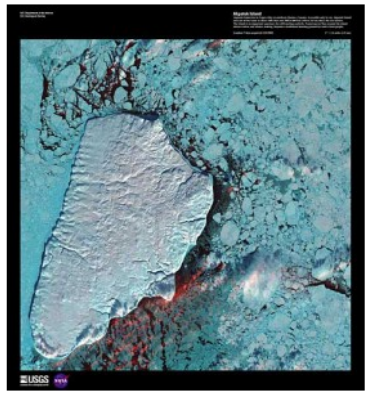
The Turret

Miscellanea from Schulich Library of Science and Engineering

Home About

Earth as Art and other images

Posted on October 29, 2012 by [April Colosimo](#)





If you are looking for images to spruce up a class presentation or a conference poster here are just a few of my favourites. [Google Images](#) may be the most obvious place to start, with the option to limit to faces, photos, clip art or line drawings, or to a particular size or colour. I use the colour option a lot to find images with a white or transparent background.

[Flickr: Creative Commons](#) is another resource that I use often. Here you can find images that others are willing to share, so that you can use them and credit whoever they belong to, based on a [Creative Commons license](#) as an alternative to copyright.

Most science magazines have image galleries online but I do love to browse NASA's [image gallery](#) and [3D resources](#). They are [generally not copyrighted](#) and can be used with acknowledgements.

Lastly, there is a gorgeous set of images from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). The



 [Subscribe](#)

LINKS

- [Schulich Library of Science and Engineering](#)

CATEGORIES

- [Blog \(86\)](#)

[Alan Turing Arctic](#)
[Chemistry Citation](#)
[software](#) [Climate change](#)
[Computers](#) [Coursera](#)

Implementation

- **Technology: WordPress**

Local installation

Library branding

Minimal feature set (important!)

- **Migrated existing blog content**

Next → How to evolve weblogs into an effective communication channel between librarians and their specific audiences?

Option 1: Top-down implementation

- Define policies

 - Permissions

 - Roles / responsibilities

 - Content

 - Time-allocation

 - Liability

- Develop training materials

- Implementation of new features

Issues

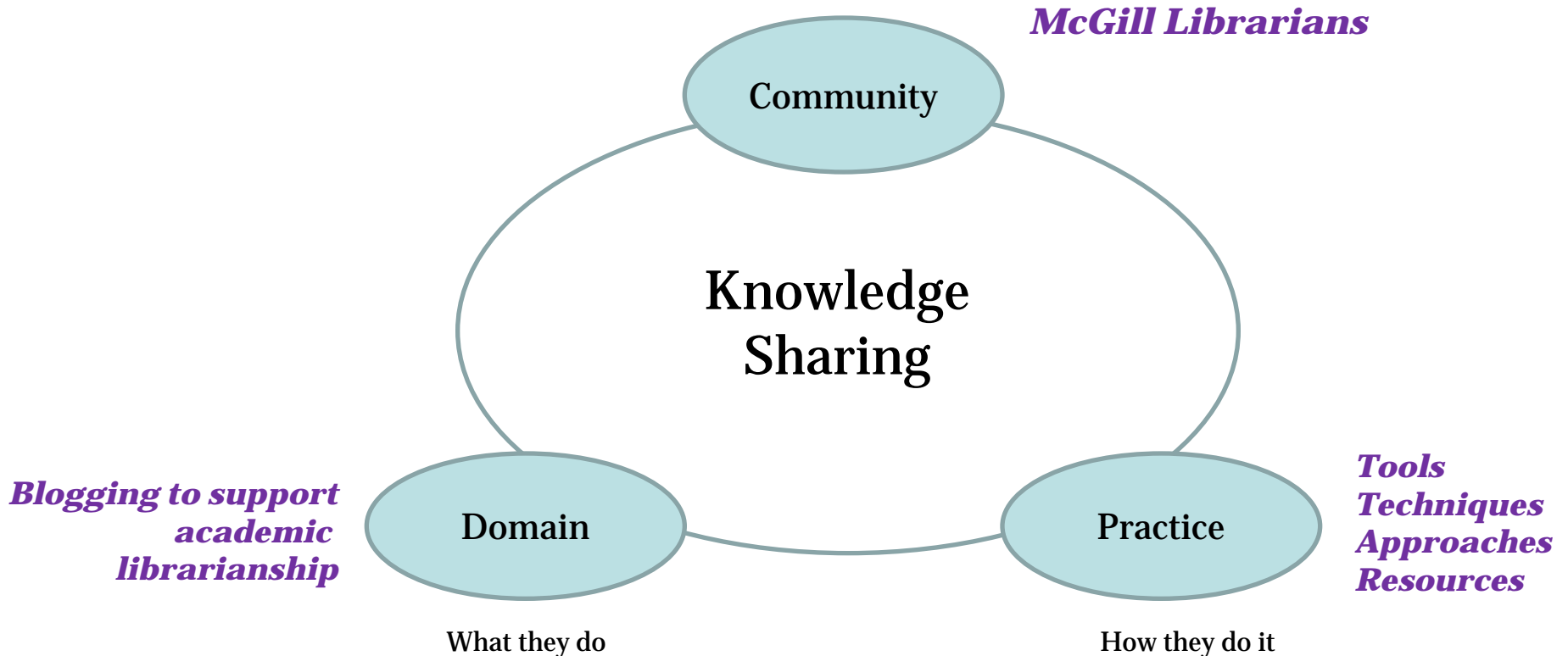
- Few resources not available for grassroots initiative
- Longer process to get to launch
- Risks impacting voice/nature of communications
- Reduced sense of ownership for bloggers

Option 2:

Community of Practice

Community of Practice (CoP)

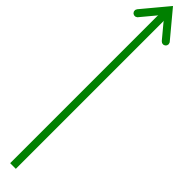
- CoP consists of: Community, Domain, Practice
- Knowledge about effective practice is shared socially



Behaviour independent of awareness of CoP



People with a shared interest in a particular domain, who interact with each other, sharing what they know, learning together how to improve their practice



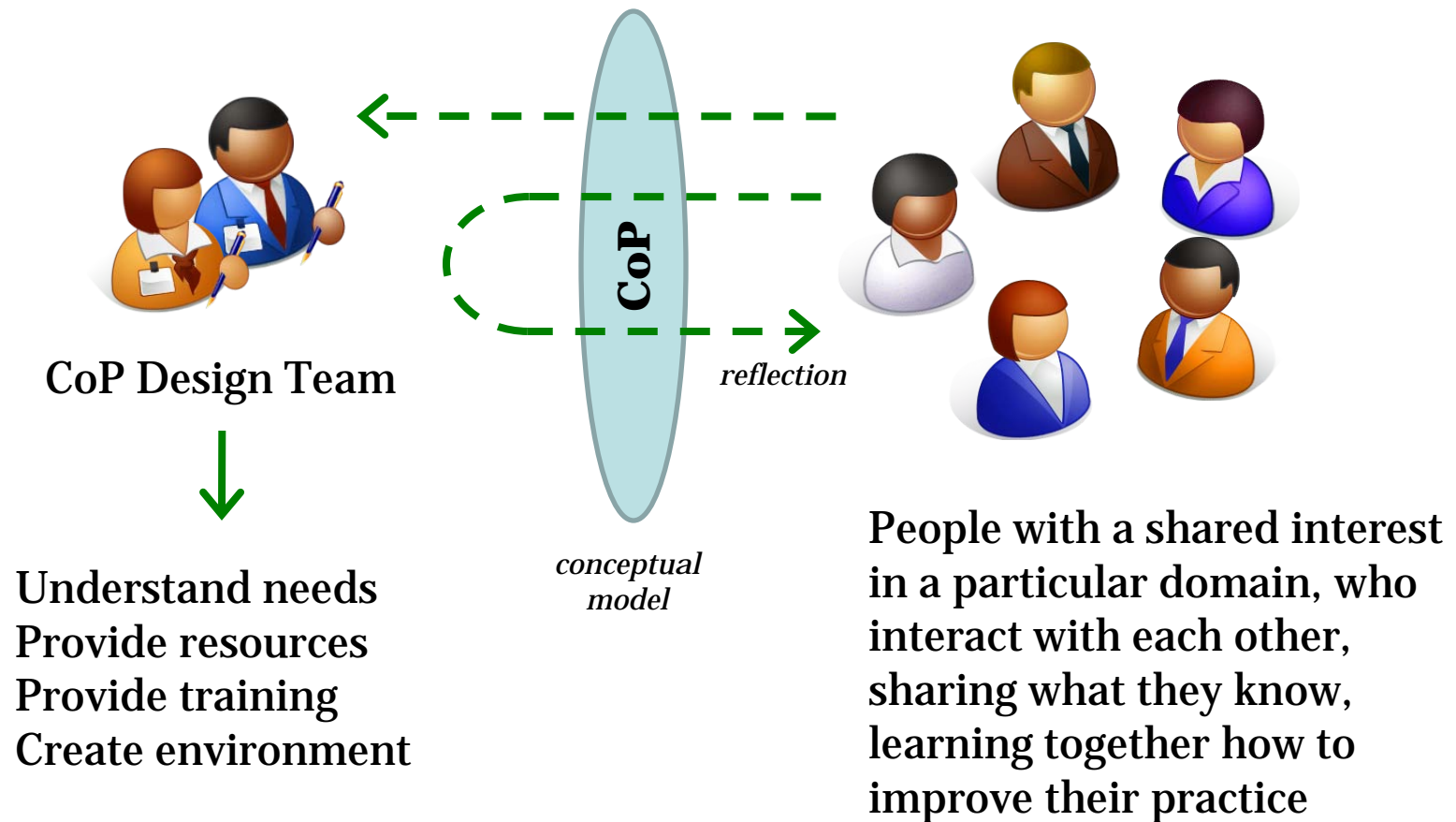
No awareness of CoP required for this to take place!

Relevance of Communities of Practice

- CoP knowledge is embedded in community of people
 - Applied continually to organizational work
 - Difficult to duplicate
 - Resilient to individual departures
- CoP continually assess, adapt, and create knowledge
 - Source of innovation
- CoP knowledge grounded in organizational practice
 - Highly relevant, practical

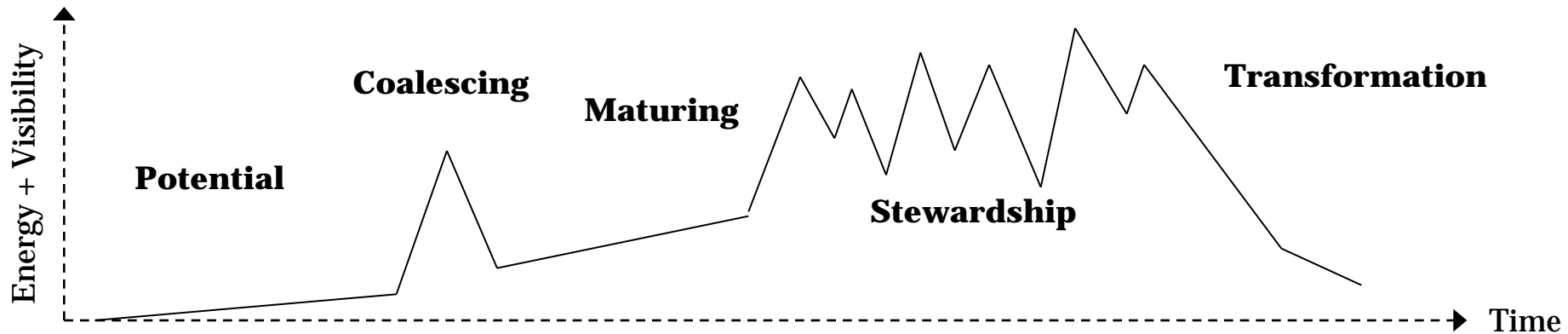
CoP as a Perspective

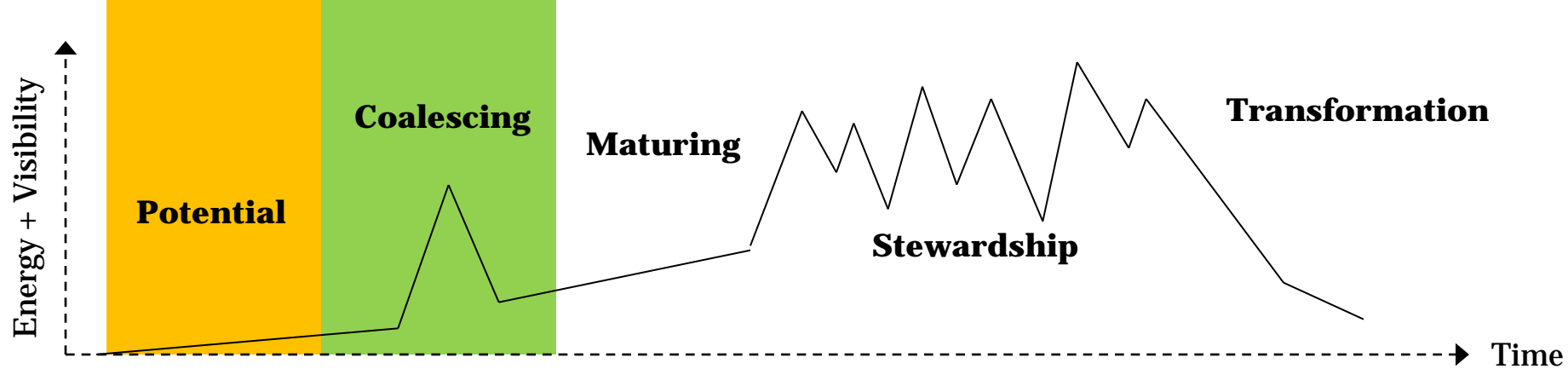
- Communities of Practice are a lens through which one can make sense of phenomenon



CoP Lifecycle

- Communities of practice move through several stages

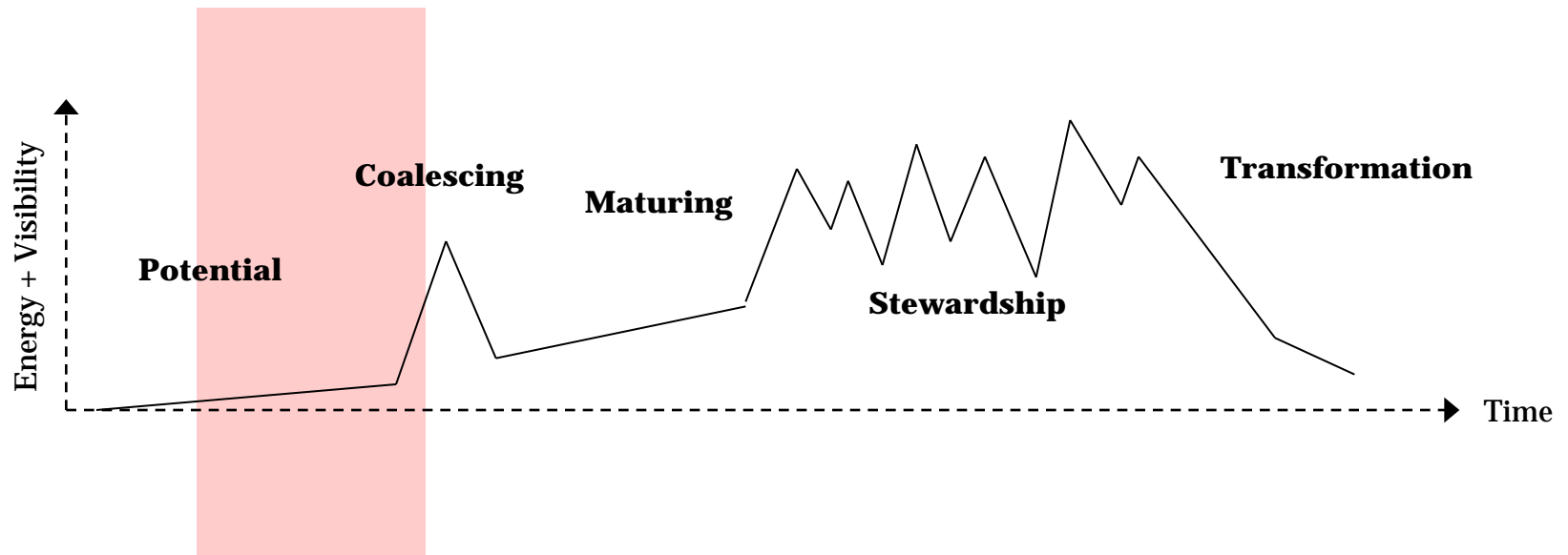




| | | Potential | Coalescing |
|------------|-----------|---|--|
| Key issues | Domain | Define key domain issue as meaningful to people and organization | Establish value of sharing knowledge re: domain |
| | Community | Identify existing social network and help them to envision value of CoP | Develop relationships + trust |
| | Practice | Identify common knowledge needs | Discover what knowledge to share and how |
| | Work plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define primary intent of CoP • Define domain and identify engaging issues • Build a case for action • Identify potential coordinators/leaders • Interview potential members • Connect members • Create preliminary design for CoP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build case for membership • Launch the community • Initiate community events and spaces • Legitimize coordinators • Build connections between core members • Find practices worth sharing • Document judiciously • Identify opportunities to provide value • Engage managers |

State of the McGill Librarian Blogger CoP

Potential → Coalescing



"Potential" Activities

- People have met, discussed platform, practice, etc
- People have started blogging!
- Still to do:

Share/develop vision of our CoP

Identify knowledge needs

"Coalescing" Activities

- Schedule regular meet-ups (monthly?)
No desire for yet another online space!
- Shared activities
 - Feature development
 - Comments management
 - Community-driven recruitment
- Increase visibility of blogs
 - Raise profile
 - Increase opportunity to learn through observation



[McGill.ca](#) / [MCGILL LIBRARY](#) / [About](#) / [News & announcements](#)

- General information
- Collection policies
- News & announcements
- Follow the Library**
- Renovations
- Events & exhibitions
- Library publications
- Friends of the Library
- Giving to the Library
- Employment

Follow the Library!

There are a number of different ways for you to keep up to date with what is happening in and around the Library.

| General News & Events | |
|--|---|
| Library Announcements | |
| Library Events | |
| | |
| Social Networks | |
| McGill Library | McGill Library |
| Education Library | Islamic Studies Library |
| Islamic Studies Library | Marvin Duchow Music Library |
| Macdonald Campus Library | |
| | |
| Library Blogs | |
| Chapbook Digitization Project | Rare Books and Special Collections |
| Elemental Musings | Web Services |
| Flipside | Marvin Duchow Music Library |
| Islamic Studies Library's blog | Islamic Studies Library |
| Law Library Blog | Law Library |
| Library Notes for Political Science | Political Science |
| Management Matters | Management |
| Rare Books and Special Collections at McGill | Rare Books and Special Collections |
| The Turret | Schulich Science and Engineering Library |



- Resources by subject
- Agriculture, environmental sciences
- Art, architecture, urban planning
- Education
- Health, biological sciences
- Humanities, social sciences
- How to find Canadian biographies
- How to find book reviews
- African studies
- American literature
- Anthropology and archaeology
- Bible studies
- British history
- Canadian history
- Canadian literature
- Canadian politics
- Classics
- Communication and media studies

Political science

1. Sources for Background Information

1.1 Dictionaries

- Blackwell Dictionary of Political Science (Credo Reference)
- Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics (Oxford Reference Online)
- Dictionary of Political Biography (Oxford Reference Online)
- Oxford Companion to Politics of the World (Oxford Reference Online)

1.2 Encyclopedias

- International Studies Encyclopedia (Blackwell)
extensive, detailed resource for international studies and international relations. Includes substantial review essays that range from art in international relations to multilateral diplomacy to xenophobia.
- Encyclopedia of Political Science (CQ Press)
comprehensive survey of the world of politics at the beginning of the twenty-first century
- Blackwell Reference Online
Includes: [A Companion to American Foreign Relations](#); [A Companion to the Anthropology of Politics](#); [A Companion to International History 1900 – 2001](#); [The Blackwell Companion to Political Sociology](#); [A Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy](#)
- Gale Virtual Reference Library
Includes: [Encyclopedia of American Foreign Policy](#); [Encyclopedia of Espionage, Intelligence, and Security](#); [Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity](#)
- Encyclopedia of Nationalism:
[Volume 1](#) (Fundamental themes) and [Volume 2](#) (Leaders, movements, and concepts)
- Encyclopedia of Political Economy (Routledge)
- Encyclopedia of Democratic Thought (Routledge)

Liaison Librarian

- Deena Yanofsky
514-398-1087
Humanities and Social Sciences Library
- Megan Fitzgibbons
514-398-4696
Humanities and Social Sciences Library

Office hours
Thursdays, 13:30-15:30
Leacock 112A (first floor)

Library Notes for Political Science

- Latest posts:
- Statista database
 - MyResearch, Fall 2012
 - Presidential Nomination Acceptance Speeches: 1880 – 2012
 - Database trial: Digitalia
 - SFU Library Editorial Cartoons Collection

More

How my role will be changing

Leading



Facilitation

Training



Trusting

Giving Orders



Taking Orders

Promoting



Protecting

Conclusion

- CoP provide an alternative, resilient, authentic, effective way to improve practice
- Can be applied to any aspect of librarianship where community/domain/practice exist
- Provide context for engagement with work that makes "how we do things" open to real change (change that comes from people with expertise)
- Opportunity for people to change their relationship with their work and with the library, reaffirm shared goals and connection to their peers.

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