



## **Tartu University Library as a medium between different patrons**

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This paper introduces ongoing research about university library communication with university staff and students: besides being a supporting facility for Tartu University as a whole, Tartu University Library is seen as a medium between those two important patron groups. Nevertheless, there are hypotheses that:

- a faculty member does not expect much support from library staff while putting together a particular course and
- it is considered (among academic staff) that preparing a course's syllabus requires the knowledge of an expert rather than knowledge of a librarian,
- but as the university and town libraries' collections have their limits (both financial and physical), compulsory and/ or recommended reading materials may be hardly accessible among students.

In order to provide better supporting services for both academic staff and students, 10 unstructured interviews with faculty members will be conducted to find out:

- how much are faculty members counting on university library while providing students with lists of compulsory and/or recommended reading materials,
- how integrated is the compulsory reading material into particular courses; can or cannot students manage without it.

Additionally, the lists of reading materials of those particular faculty members will be juxtaposed with data from:

- ESTER (an OPAC that contains books of member libraries of ELNET Consortium),
- ÕIS (Study Information System of Tartu University where some digitized articles and chapters are preserved),
- available scientific databases for University of Tartu,

to find out the accessibility of the compulsory and recommended readings. The results of current research are expected by the end of April 2009. The sample of those data collections is small, though. Still, it might give us a pattern for further research in order to fill gaps in the communication between academic staff, students and library.

Filling gaps does not necessarily mean ordering more books or digitizing reading materials as we may be aware of those mentioned gaps, but low budget may be an obstacle for doing so. Instead, university library might act here as a medium not only in academic staff – student communication, but also as a medium between different faculty members: helping to improve the “logistics” of lending books. Proper “logistics” helps us to avoid situation “first comes, first served” among students (largest group of patrons of the university library) and therefore provide peaceful learning environment and contentment with university library services.