

Assignment 4:

Proposal to Evaluate an E-reader Pilot Program in an Academic Library

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## **Introduction and Literature Review<sup>1</sup>**

“The Horizon Report 2010” identifies electronic books (e-books) as a technology that will grow substantially on university campuses in the next two to three years (Johnson, Levine, Smith, & Stone, 2010, p. 17). Although the latest array of electronic readers (e-readers)—hand-held devices that hold e-book content—on the market for consumer use have been quite popular for leisure e-book reading, e-book usage in academic institutions has been slow (Johnson, Levine, Smith, & Stone, 2010, p. 18). Nancy Herther (2008) explains that e-readers and e-books have a surprisingly long history, dating back to the ideas of Vannevar Bush's memory extender from 1945 and Alan Kay's Dynabook from the 1960s (“The Rather Long Tail,” para. 2). Project Gutenberg also began in the 1970s (Gibbons, Peters, & Bryan, 2003, p. 3). According to Anne Behler (2009), “E-books are nothing new, and librarians and library patrons have long struggled with their lack of utility... However, in early 2008, e-books began to make waves thanks to the launch of Amazon’s Kindle” (para.1). The buzz around e-books has resurged in recent years partly due to the growth of e-reader products (Gregory, 2008; Shelburne, 2009).

Early studies of e-books in academic environments, such as Bailey (2006), Christianson & Aucoin (2005), and two studies by Dillon (2001), focus more on usage statistics. While these studies are helpful to show that e-books have been used more over time and also reveal that e-books in certain academic subjects are more heavily accessed than other subjects (Rowlands, Nicholas, Jamali, & Huntington, 2007), they do not indicate how or why people use e-books. There is, however, a growing body of American and British literature regarding user attitudes toward e-books, including how and why students and faculty use e-books (Gregory, 2008;

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<sup>1</sup> The following is a revised introduction from a paper written for Robert Boyd’s section of LIBR during the Spring 2010 term. The paper was about the use and utility of e-books and e-readers in academic settings.

Jamali, Nicholas, & Rowlands, 2009; Levine-Clark, 2006; Rowlands et al., 2007; and Shelburne, 2009).

Although e-readers began appearing for consumption in the 1990s (Herther, 2008, “Memex, Dynabook,” para. 3), there is little research about e-reader usage or user attitudes in academic institutions before 2001. Only very recently have researchers begun exploring the problems and benefits of e-reader usage in colleges and universities due to a series of pilot programs head started by several university libraries (Behler, 2009; Clark, 2009; Gibbons, 2001; Johnson, Levine, Smith, & Stone, 2010; Kiriakova, Okamoto, & Zubarev, 2010; Thompson, 2009; Young, 2009). Some of the programs are still under experimentation, but first results, based on surveys and focus groups, from universities using the Amazon Kindle DX, Sony Reader, and iRex iLiad have not been overwhelmingly positive. According to Penn State University Libraries, “there is currently no single, ideal device for reading [digital publications and textbooks]” (“7 Things You Need to Know,” para. 1).

In May 2010, the University Library at California State University, Stanislaus began circulating e-readers to students, faculty, and staff in its own e-reader pilot program (CSU Stanislaus Library, 2010). The evaluation of the program proposed in this paper will add to the growing body of work about the pros and cons of using e-readers in academic work. E-reader developers can also benefit from the information from such evaluations by focusing on the problematic aspects of the technology to help improve it for academic use. In particular, the results of this evaluation will help library administration and librarians at CSU Stanislaus make better collection management decisions and/or other changes to the pilot program.

### **About CSU Stanislaus and the University Library<sup>2</sup>**

California State University, Stanislaus, located in Turlock, California, is one of the 23 campuses in the California State University system (CSU Stanislaus, 2010a). The University was founded in 1957, opened for classes in 1960 at the Turlock Fairgrounds, and was opened at its current location in 1965 (CSU Stanislaus, 2010a). In 1974, the Stockton Center was opened in Stockton, California, to serve as an extension of CSU Stanislaus (CSU Stanislaus, 2010a). CSU Stanislaus “offers over 100 majors, minors, concentrations and teaching credentials, 24 master's degree programs and six graduate certificate programs as well as an Executive MBA and a doctoral degree program in Education Leadership” (CSU Stanislaus, 2010b). Some of the most popular undergraduate programs include Business Administration, Liberal Studies, Nursing, Biology, Psychology, and Criminal Justice. The most popular graduate programs include Education, Social Work, Business Administration, Public Administration, Psychology, and English (CSU Stanislaus, 2010b).

According to figures from Fall 2009, “the diverse student body includes many first generation college students and working parents. The student body of 8,586 includes 7,086 undergraduate students and 1,500 graduate students” (CSU Stanislaus, 2010b). The University also reflects the racial diversity of the area, as nearly 39 percent of students are White and almost 31 percent are Hispanic or Latino. CSU Stanislaus’ student body is 70 percent female (CSU Stanislaus, 2010b).

The CSU Stanislaus Library is located on the second and third floors of the Vasche Library building. The first floor of the building is devoted to a computer lab, the library

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<sup>2</sup> The description of CSU Stanislaus and the University Library is taken, with some revision, from a paper written for Nancy MacKay’s section of LIBR 202 during the Spring 2010 term. The paper was an evaluation and comparison between the OPACs of CSU Stanislaus and UC Merced.

administration office, various department offices, and tutoring facilities. According to the Library's *Collections* webpage, the CSU Stanislaus Library offers two floors worth of open stacks (n.d.a). The Library subscribes to 600 print journals, and it "also houses older issues of an additional 1500 titles in print and/or microfilm" (CSU Stanislaus Library, n.d.a). The Library "provide[s] access to over 30,000 periodicals online, including 12,000 titles (mostly peer-reviewed journals) from scholarly collections, as well as an additional 20,000+ magazines, newspapers, newsletters, and other non-scholarly periodical titles" (CSU Stanislaus Library, n.d.a). Print reference materials are also available, but many article and research indexes are online (CSU Stanislaus Library, n.d.a). Because the University has a large teacher education program, the Library also has a separate children's book collection (CSU Stanislaus Library, n.d.a).

Besides access to the computer lab on the ground floor of the Vashe Library building, students also have access to another lab Library itself on the second floor. According to the *Library Computer Facilities* webpage:

The Library offers a combination of multi-function computers that include productivity software (i.e., word processing, spreadsheet and PowerPoint software) and research computers that enable access to databases and the Internet but do not include productivity software... Stand-alone terminals are also available in the Library catalog area and on the third floor and provide access to the Library Catalog. (CSU Stanislaus Library, 2008)

Wireless computer access is also available in some parts of the Library.

To support the learning of students with disabilities, the Library also have assistive

technology available at both the Turlock and Stockton campuses, including a Kurzweil 1000 Scanner, ClearView Optelac Reader, Jaws Screen reader, Dragon Naturally Speaking, and MAGic Screen Reader and Magnifier. "Access is by appointment or drop-in, and sign-up sheets are available at the Circulation Desk" (CSU Stanislaus Library, n.d.b). The computers with these programs are also connected to the Internet and have Microsoft Office programs.

The Library also has a few meeting rooms, a reading room, and several study nooks in various parts of the Library, ensuring that quiet and group study areas are available. Designated quiet study areas are for individual use and are mapped out on the library floor plan. Areas for group study include two rooms on the "south side of the 2nd floor Book Stacks," three rooms on the "west side of the 2nd floor Book Stacks," and the Galloway Room (CSU Stanislaus Library, 2009).

### **About the E-book Reader Pilot Program**

In May 2010, the University Library launched its E-book Reader Pilot Program. The program was "...designed to explore how these devices may contribute to study and scholarship on the CSU Stanislaus campus" (CSU Stanislaus Library, 2010). Current students, staff, and faculty can check out an Amazon Kindle, a Barnes & Noble Nook, or a SONY Daily Edition for a loan period of 14 days. Only one e-reader may be checked out at a time. The e-readers cannot be renewed for another loan period, so other users may have the opportunity to check them out. The library has also stipulated that the e-readers can only be returned in person to staff at the circulation desk to check for damage; they may not be returned via any of the drop boxes on campus or at the Stockton center. The fine for late returns is \$5 a day, "beginning on the day after the reader is due; after 10 days, you will be charged the full replacement cost of \$350 plus

\$10 service charge” (CSU Stanislaus Library, 2010). If a user damages the reader, the library will “determine the cost of repair or replacement” (CSU Stanislaus Library, 2010). Users “will be charged a replacement cost of up to \$350 if the reader is damaged extensively” (CSU Stanislaus Library, 2010).

Regarding content, the university library has indicated:

All books available on the e-book readers are cataloged in the University Library Catalog, <http://millennium.csustan.edu/>. Searching for a book title will bring up a record for that title if it is available on an e-reader. You may also search the catalog using the name of the device, such as “Kindle E-book.” This will bring up a catalog record listing the Kindle readers and also all the titles available on those readers. Talk to the reference librarian for additional help. (CSU Stanislaus Library, 2010)

The library will also “pay for one e-book below \$30” that a user downloads from an e-book store or from a free site on the Internet during the 14-day loan period (CSU Stanislaus Library, 2010). Users “will be charged will be charged for any costs resulting from more than one download, or cost for one item exceeding \$30” (CSU Stanislaus Library, 2010). If users download a book that the library would normally not buy, “such as cookbooks and comic books,” the book “may be removed when the reader is returned” (CSU Stanislaus Library, 2010).

The library specifies:

The e-book readers are intended to provide access to books. We ask that you do not download such materials to the library e-book readers as the University Library provides access to hundreds of magazines, newspapers and journals through our library databases.



If such materials are downloaded to the readers and do not meet collection development criteria, those materials will be deleted when the readers are returned. (CSU Stanislaus Library, 2010)

Attached to this proposal in a separate PDF file (19 pages) is the library's collection development policy, which can also be electronically accessed at <http://library.csustan.edu/services/collecdev.policy.pdf> (CSU Stanislaus Library, 2004).

### **Data Collection**

Studies of e-books and e-readers, as previously discussed, have taken one of two forms, usage studies, which reflect what types of books were downloaded and the correlation between these and students' (or faculty and staff) demographics (class level, major, etc.), and user studies, which focus on how the e-books or e-readers are used and what users actually think about them. When used together, these analyses offer a wider and deeper look at the use and utility of e-readers in the academic setting. It is suggested CSU Stanislaus evaluate its e-reader pilot program using analysis of usage statistics and surveys akin to those used in previous e-book and e-reader studies.

As the program began in May 2010, it is suggested that the CSU Stanislaus Library collect usage data for the books downloaded to the e-readers and other circulation information that is normally collected for the 2010-2011 academic year. To make sure that anonymity is maintained, surveys will be distributed to the entire campus community, including students, staff, and faculty, via email regarding their use of e-readers at CSU Stanislaus for academic work. The email will indicate what the study entails (a survey with details about how long the survey

might take), what the results will be used for (to determine how e-readers and books are used in academic environments, which will also influence the Library's collection decisions and how the e-reader program will operate), and how results will be shared (report published by the University Library which will be distributed via campus-wide email and posted to the University website, the University Library website, and social media accounts that the Library maintains, including Facebook and MySpace).

Those who have not had experience using the e-readers will also be able to indicate that they have not used e-readers and answer some questions related to their non-use. Non-use information may help the University Library focus on other marketing methods or even develop training materials. The Library will not know how to reach potential users without knowing why some students, faculty, or staff members have not used the e-readers.

Because there are both traditional and non-traditional college students at the university, and that there are both undergraduates and graduate students at CSU Stanislaus, demographic data may be an important element on which to focus. Patterns may emerge among certain age groups, class level, major, or whether they are students, faculty, or staff members. This information will also be collected from non-users to analyze as well, as other patterns may emerge.

In those articles pertaining to student, faculty, or staff member experience in using e-readers in academics, there are not many that include a copy of the survey questions or focus group questions asked in the study. However, there are some examples from the e-book usage and user studies that could serve as guides as the University Library develops its own survey. One such example can be found in Shelburne's (2009) study of e-book use at the University of

Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. This survey was also distributed by email to the entire university campus (Shelburne, 2009, p. 61). Appended to this evaluation proposal in the Appendix is a copy of the background information and consent form sent to participants as well as the survey questions. Depending on the results of a similar survey, the University Library at CSU Stanislaus may wish to also use focus groups to supplement or further explore the use of e-readers on campus.

### **Conclusion**

The main goal of the E-book Reader Pilot Program at CSU Stanislaus is to explore how e-readers can be used in academic environments, particularly at CSU Stanislaus. It is hoped that results from an evaluation can further contribute to the growing body of literature about e-reader usage and utility in college coursework or other research work. It is also hoped that the University Library can gain more insight into how students or faculty use e-books and e-readers to perhaps make different collection decisions, create other training materials or tools, or find other ways to better serve student and faculty needs.

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## Appendix

**Appendix B (e-book survey)***University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign – eBooks end-user survey***Welcome Screen**

The UIUC Library, in cooperation with Springer, the international academic publisher, is sponsoring this research survey to gain a better understanding of how researchers use and value electronic books. Wendy Shelburne, Electronic Resources Librarian and Assistant Professor of Library Administration at UIUC Library, is conducting this research.

Your participation in this survey is strictly voluntary. You may refuse to participate or discontinue participation at any time without penalty, and you may additionally skip questions with no negative consequences. The decision to participate, decline, or withdraw from participation will have no effect on your grades at, status at, or future relations with the University of Illinois. There are no known risks involved in your participation in this study beyond those experienced in everyday life. You must be 18 years or older to participate. You are welcome to contact the Library (Wendy Shelburne, 217-244-2068, shelburn@uiuc.edu) at any time if you have questions concerning this survey. You may also contact the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign's Institutional Review Board (217-333-2670), irb@uiuc.edu) with your questions about research participants' rights. If you agree to take this survey, you will be providing the Library with invaluable information that will help us to better understand and document the value and acceptance of electronic book material.

All responses will be treated anonymously and in the strictest confidence. No information will be traced back to you. The results of this survey will be analyzed and disseminated within the library and publishing profession through conference presentations, Springer's website, journal articles, and/or scholarly reports. Springer will publish the results in a White Paper on Ebooks.

Thank you for taking the time to fill out our brief survey. Completing this survey should not take more than 10 minutes of your time, and you may wish to print out a copy of this page for your records.

PS: The survey addresses only academic and scholarly electronic books which will simply be referred to as eBooks throughout the survey.

Before continuing please indicate your consent with the terms of the survey. You may wish to print a copy of the online consent form for your records:

**I have read and understand the above consent form, I certify that I am 18 years old or older, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.**

*[Ticking the box is required before participant can move on]*

**Current use of electronic books**

**1. Did you know before this survey that you – through your University Library – have access to a large number of eBooks?**

- Yes
- No

**2. Have you ever used eBooks?**

- Yes (Filter: go to question 4)
- No

**3. Why have you never used eBooks before? (Filter: go to question 18)**

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**4. On average, how often do you use eBooks?**

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Less often

**5. For what purposes do you usually use eBooks? (Please tick all that apply)**

- Teaching
- Study
- Research
- Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**6. What types of eBooks have you used so far?**

	Used regularly	Used sometimes	Used rarely	Never Used	Don't know
Textbooks/Course books	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research monographs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reference works/ Encyclopedias/Dictionary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



7. **Would you like to use more eBooks?**

- Yes
- No

8. **What are the main obstacles for you not to use more eBooks?**

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9. When you are looking for eBooks, where do you usually start your search?

*(Please rate your answer; the boxes in-between help you to qualify your opinion)*

	Very often				Never		Don't know
	1	2	3	4	5		9
UIUC University Library's Online catalogue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
General search engine, e.g. Google	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Directly at a vendor-provided site, e.g. Springer Link or ebrary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

**Advantages and disadvantages of eBooks**

10. **How useful do you find eBooks?**

- very useful
- somewhat useful
- might or might not be useful
- not very useful
- not at all useful
- don't know

11. What are the main advantages for you of eBooks compared to print books?

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12. Are there any disadvantages? Which?

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**13. How do eBooks compare to print books on the following items?**  
*(Please rate your answer; the boxes in-between help you to qualify your opinion)*

	eBooks are much better			Print books are much better		Don't know
	1	2	3	4	5	9
Ease of making copies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Up-to-dateness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Space / Storage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24/7 accessibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Everywhere availability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ease of use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ease of reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pleasure of reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**14. Please share your opinion about the following statements.**  
*(Please rate your answer; the boxes in-between help you to qualify your opinion)*

	Totally agree			Totally disagree		Don't know
	1	2	3	4	5	9
I mostly read print books	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Because of eBooks, I now read fewer print books	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have online access to all the books I want to use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I use eBooks complementary to print books	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When I want to read a book from cover to cover, I prefer a print book	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I only use eBooks when online features - such as searching or hyperlinking – are important	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Feedback on SpringerLink eBooks**

Your library provides you with access to several thousand eBooks from Springer. You can access these titles directly on the SpringerLink platform at: <http://www.springerlink.com>.

**15. Have you used eBooks on SpringerLink?**

- Yes
- No (Filter: go to question 18)

16. What do you like about SpringerLink eBooks?

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17. How can SpringerLink eBooks be improved?

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### *Outlook for eBooks*

18. What do you expect to happen with eBooks in 5 years time?

In 5 years time ...

- ... I will mostly read eBooks
- ... for some books I will prefer to read the print book, for others I will prefer the eBook
- ... I will mostly read print books
- Don't know

19. In your opinion, are there particular book categories or purposes where the transition to eBooks will be faster than others?

The transition will be fastest ...

in the following book categories:

- Textbooks
- Research monographs
- Reference works
- All book categories
- No book category
- Don't know

for the following purposes:

- Study
- Research
- Teaching
- All purposes
- No purpose
- Don't know

**Demographics****20. Which faculty do you belong to?**

- Humanities
- Mathematics and Natural Sciences
- Medicine
- Law
- Social Sciences
- Education

**21. What best describes your current primary position?**

- Professor
- Assistant Professor / Post-Doctoral Researcher
- Lecturer
- Research Scientist
- Ph.D. Candidate/Doctoral Student
- Graduate Student
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**22. Which age group do you belong to?**

- < 30 years
- 30-39 years
- 40-49 years
- 50-59 years
- 60-65 years
- > 65 years

**Additional Comments****23. Do you have any further comments?**

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**Closing**

**Thank you for your help and time! We appreciate your feedback very much.**