

From Froebel to Maynooth

merging library collections

Marie.G.Cullen@nuim.ie Mary.Robinson@nuim.ie
Maynooth University Library

In 2013 Froebel College of Education in Blackrock Co Dublin merged with Maynooth University (MU), becoming the first teacher education college physically incorporated into a university campus. This collaborative process included the integration of the Froebel library collections and two staff members into MU Library.



Froebel College

Established in 1943, the teacher training curriculum was influenced by the philosophy of 19th century educator Friedrich Froebel.



Collaborating

Preparation began in 2012. In 2013, 3000 items were selected for integration, 500 of these were prioritised as essential for the new academic year.



Merging collections

Collaborating with the Froebel Department, material was prioritised based on reading lists. Two former Froebel library staff offered valued insights on the collection and eased the merger by quickly answering queries. The project took one academic year to complete.



Maynooth University

In September 2013 Froebel College became the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education, retaining the Froebel identity. Maynooth now offers the full spectrum of teacher education, from pre-school to adult education.



Challenges

- ◆ Continuing service during the merger
- ◆ Managing staff and student needs
- ◆ Project management and logistics
- ◆ Library systems not interoperable
- ◆ Creating original records
- ◆ Time constraints
- ◆ Culture change for staff

Impact

- ◆ MU library collection enriched
- ◆ Students benefit from enhanced library collection
- ◆ Froebel students now receive a university experience
- ◆ MU library and Froebel Department relationship cemented through integrated staff
- ◆ Importance of library's role in facilitating merger
- ◆ Applications for places have soared



Froebel College

Froebel College of Education was established in 1943 and located in Blackrock, Co. Dublin. It was named after the 19th century German educator and founder of Kindergarten, Friedrich Froebel (1782-1852). He advocated reverence for the child, learning through activity, exploration of the environment, enjoyment of beauty in all its manifestations and acceptance of the gifts of each individual.

In 2010 the merger of Froebel College of Education with Maynooth University (MU) was announced. The merger date was set for September 2013. As part of the process the collections of Froebel College were merged into the collections of Maynooth University library.

Collaborating

Froebel Library Preparations

Preparations began in 2012. Froebel College library began by checking their collection against the MU library catalogue for items already held by MU library. Froebel library staff and MU library staff liaised with each other to agree processes and procedures in advance of the Froebel collections arrival in Maynooth.

Deselection of material began in June 2013 and 3000 items were selected for integration, 500 of these were prioritised as essential for the new academic year.

Remaining material being integrated into MU library were partially processed - tattle tape and MU library barcode. Teaching Practice material was deemed suitable to be stored in a resource room within the Froebel Department. The physical moving date was set for August 2013.

Maynooth University Preparations

Considerations included temporary storage space and existing shelf space as many of the items were in the 300 Dewey range. Staffing of the project team and data exchange – possible migration of MARC records from Froebel library system into MU library management system? Liaison with Froebel library Staff and Allen Removals regarding the logistics of the collection move.

The 500 high priority items required for the beginning of the semester were delivered to MU library in early August 2013. The balance was delivered at the end of August.

Maynooth University

In September 2013 Froebel College became the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education, retaining the Froebel identity. Maynooth now offers the full spectrum of teacher education, from pre-school to adult education. Two Froebel library staff became MU library staff bringing with them valuable knowledge, experience and insight into the Froebel Department's resource requirements and established relationships with Froebel staff and students.

Merging collections

The integration of the migrated collection began in September 2013. The retrieval of MARC records was not possible as the systems were not interoperable. The Froebel library system (AccessIT) was maintained to aid record creation. If available OCLC records were downloaded. Froebel library classification numbers were retained for all items with the exception of literature. MU library uses a different in option in Dewey for classifying literature.

Material was processed by subject with items prioritised based on reading lists provided by Froebel Department academic staff and requests from department staff and students. The department was contacted each time a reading list was completed and available.

Concerns from Froebel staff and students were managed through an enquiry system and dealt with in consultation with former Froebel library staff members. A meeting was held with the Froebel Department Student Union representative to explain the process.

The project took one academic year to complete.

Challenges

- Continuing service to Froebel staff and students while the collections were being merged
- Managing staff and student needs based on reading lists and requests
- Project management and logistics - between Froebel library staff and Maynooth library staff, the moving company and the project team in MU library
- Library systems not interoperable - It was not possible to export records from AccessIT the Froebel library system to MU library management system
- Creating original records if none available in OCLC
- Time constraints - items moved in August with semester beginning mid-September
- Culture change for staff - Former Froebel College staff now members of a Department in a University

Impact

- MU library collection enriched. The specialised Froebel College library collection, centred around teacher training, enhanced the existing MU library collection and filled gaps in literature, special collections and education. The MU library collection enriched Froebel students' access to wider material and facilities
- Students benefit from enhanced library collection
- Froebel B.Ed students are the only primary teacher training students in Ireland studying at the heart of a major university. Applications for places have soared
- MU library and Froebel Department relationship cemented through integrated staff

- Importance of the library's role in facilitating merger by prioritising the integration of the Froebel collection and dealing with staff and student concerns, requests and queries promptly
- The merger was eased by continued communication between institutions and well laid plans
- Former Froebel library staff in MU library helped allay Froebel student and staff concerns and were on hand to answer queries almost instantly. The relationship between the library and the new the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education was cemented through the existing relationship of former Froebel library staff and Froebel Department staff

References and links

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Friedrich Froebel Portrait

<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/82/Frederick-Froebel-Bardeen.jpeg/200px-Frederick-Froebel-Bardeen.jpeg>

Froebel College of Education crest

http://campus.ie/sites/default/files/froebel_0.jpg

Maynooth University

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/>

Maynooth University Library

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library>

Maynooth University Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/froebel-department-primary-and-early-childhood-education>



Mary Robinson



Marie G. Cullen