The program began with three presentations representing diverse, yet notable, faculty liaison practices. The panelists included: University Librarian Brenda Johnson; Eunice Schroeder, Music, Classics, and German Librarian; and Sylvia Curtis, Black Studies, Dance and Drama Librarian. Discussion and sharing followed the presentations.

The Field Librarian Program
Brenda Johnson discussed the field librarian program at the University of Michigan, where librarian subject specialists were imbedded in academic departments. The purpose of the program was to establish more collaborative partnerships with faculty. National librarian searches were done for the departments chosen to participate in the program – Women’s Studies, Classics, and Art & Design.

The field librarians maintained offices in the library and academic departments. The librarian-faculty relationship evolved differently for each librarian, based on the departments’ unique needs, and the librarians’ skills and expertise. Experiences ranged from teaching credit bearing classes, accompanying a faculty person to an international conference where library materials were acquired, to helping students find materials for art projects. All attended department meetings and activities, and maintained a high visibility amongst students and faculty, while also holding down reference desk hours, doing course integrated instruction, and collection development. Such accessibility allowed for more in-depth librarian-faculty relationships.

For more information on the Field Librarian Program see the article “In the Field,” by Brenda Johnson and Laurie Alexander, in the February 1, 2007 issue of Library Journal.

Librarian-Faculty Collaboration in a Branch Library
Eunice Schroeder admitted that being in a branch library gives her an advantage when it comes to developing strong faculty relationships – everyone who walks into the music library has an interest in teaching and researching music. As a result, she sees what faculty use the library; how faculty use the library; and she generally has increased access to her faculty.

Eunice also gives her highly knowledgeable and credentialed (many hold advanced degrees in the field) staff credit for providing a high level of service for faculty and students. Eunice’s own extensive post graduate training and background in the field enhances her relationship with the faculty. Collaborations with the faculty and the department include:

- Writing the book review column for the department’s online scholarly journal Music and Politics
- Contributing to the departments research methods course
- Participating in two department search committees
- Working closely with the department library committee

Other liaison activities include:
- Notification of new books to faculty and grads in their subject areas of interest
• Outreach to new graduate students and faculty

Traditional Faculty Liaison
Sylvia Curtis discussed some of her strategies for reaching out to her departments - Black Studies, Drama and Dance.

• Attend faculty meetings
• Spend time walking the halls of the department
• Send emails and follow up with face-to-face contact
• Inquire about courses and projects
• Have office hours in the department
• Stay out of department politics

From the discussion that followed:

• Attend faculty meetings
• Establish a relationship with the department administrative assistant
• Sit in on classes
• Be proactive, whether faculty are or not
• Attend department events, be visible
• Establish a relationship with the department chair
• Ask to be added to department email lists
• Contact new faculty immediately
• Send email updates of new resources
• Arrange library orientation for new students