

# features

## OhioLink program connects students to other libraries in Ohio

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Assistant Editor

The Ashland University library is known for being one of the tallest buildings in Ashland County and for housing books, academic advising and the Ashbrook Center.

While all of this is true, there is more to the Ashland University library than meets the eye.

The library has five floors with books that students can check out. If students do not find what they are looking for, the library has a solution.

“We belong to a consortium called OhioLink,” Judi Humphrey, head of Library Circulation and Reserves said. “You can borrow books and even articles of things we don’t own.”

OhioLink allows students to borrow items from other colleges in the state of Ohio.

Students are able to select the materials they would like to borrow and then have them delivered to the library.

Other colleges and universities in Ohio who are part of the OhioLink Consortium can also borrow books from the Ashland University Library.

“None of us has every single book” Carrie Halquist, Instruction and Reference Librarian said. OhioLink allows books to be shared.

OhioLink broadens the catalog of books available to students far beyond the reaches of Ashland University. This way, students can access almost anything they might need. It is seen as an asset to the library, although some students may not be aware of this service.

“I found out about OhioLink when I was doing research for a paper,” Karli Ingle, sophomore K-12 Intervention Education major said. Ingle was researching a unique topic when she was told the library could contain the books she needed.

“I was introduced to this whole world of being able to order books from anywhere in the state,” Ingle said.

If students are unaware of OhioLink and how it works, reference librarians such as Halquist



The AU library standing tall over campus.

GRACIE WILSON

are available at the information desk in the library to help students find the resources they are seeking.

“First, I look at our catalog to see if we have it and I always show it to them on the other screen,” Halquist said.

By showing the students how to use the catalog and go to OhioLink, they learn how to do it themselves and can utilize it from anywhere. If our library does not have it, they can find it on OhioLink and request it.

Students often ask how much it costs to request books from OhioLink, but it does not cost the student anything, Halquist said.

OhioLink allows students to order books for free rather than having to purchase them in a bookstore or online. It does not stop at library books either. Students can order textbooks that they can borrow and renew for classes.

Most people do not realize that OhioLink offers textbooks

and that students can use them as long as no one else requests them, Ingle said.

“The student benefit is, it saves them money from buying books they won’t necessarily want to keep” Humphrey said.

Books through OhioLink take anywhere from five to seven days to arrive at the Ashland University library. Once the materials arrive, they can be picked up and checked out from the library.

If it is close to a school break,

books can be ordered to a location closer to home, providing access on and off campus.

“I like that I can get books ranging from personal enjoyment reading to academic books” Halquist said.

Some universities with larger libraries have more available resources and OhioLink makes them accessible to a broad network of students.

“We have access to The Ohio State University library, and they have a lot more resources than we do,” Halquist said.

OhioLink introduces students to possibilities from other schools. If students need a book that the AU library does not have, students can easily find another school to provide them with what they need.

“I use it a lot for school. While we have a lot of books here, if you want something specific you can still order it,” Ingle said.

“You can look at it and if it’s really not what you want, you can just send it right back.”

OhioLink also works with Search Ohio, which expands the library catalog for AU students to public libraries in the state of Ohio. Students then have access to books at various Ohio public libraries.

“I started realizing there’s even more than I thought,” Ingle said. “If OhioLink doesn’t have it you can go to Search Ohio which extends your search.”

Students tend to know the features of the campus library, since it is part of the college tour and typically utilized for class work, however OhioLink seems to be less common to students.

“A lot of students don’t know about it and I recommend it all the time,” Ingle said.

AU students would not have nearly as many resources if not for OhioLink. It improves our library in many ways, Halquist said.

OhioLink and Search Ohio bring more content to the already large AU library.

“It does broaden the range,” Ingle said. “It’s nice for busy people, and who isn’t busy in college?”

## Counseling services offered at AU

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Features Editor

Adjusting to college can be hard for even the toughest of people. Ashland University provides the services to make big problems seem a little smaller with the counseling center located on the second floor of the Hawkins Conard Student Center.

Licensed Professional Counselor for AU, Jenny Preston, believes mental health resources are necessary in colleges because of the level of stress involved.

“You are changing environment, you are changing friend groups, especially for incoming freshmen, and there is a lot of academic pressure on students,” she said.

The hours of service change each semester but generally, the counseling center is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Preston said.

Director of Counseling Services and the Health Center, Oscar McKnight, has been working with Ashland University for over 25 years.

With multiple university locations, such as the Mansfield nursing campus and the Cleveland and Columbus Centers, McKnight and Preston travel to meet with students.

“Jenny will be down at the

nursing campus one day in the evening,” McKnight said. “I typically go to Columbus on Fridays.”

The AU counseling center also includes distance counseling which allows students to communicate via text and telephone.

“A lot of students do student teaching, study abroad or they don’t want to come in here,” he said. “People would prefer to do distance counseling so we offer that as well.”

This also provides a bigger opportunity for students at other AU sites to utilize the services that are included in the student activities fee and are free of charge.

“We have contact with over 400 students a school year,” McKnight said. “Some people we see every week, every two weeks or every month.”

Session times range anywhere from 15 minutes to over an hour but depend on the student’s need, he said.

Many times, students are referred to the counseling center by professors or coaches, Preston said. However, students are able to request an appointment at any time and for any reason.

Preston and McKnight try to schedule appointments within two days of being contacted. From there, they balance sched-

ules with the student to find a time that works best.

“A lot of students who come here have already been in therapy and received medication,” McKnight said. “We do what is called wrap-around treatment, so we just extend their treatment here.”

AU counseling services are prepared to meet with students who have been previously placed under institutional care. Those with clinical depression, anxiety, and eating disorders are also treated.

The three biggest crises that students come to counseling for are divorce, death of a grandparent and death of a pet, McKnight said.

“Those three things seem to always happen within the first 6 weeks of school,” he said.

The counseling center also offers learning tools, career assessments, IQ tests and personality profiles. “There are other positive reasons students would come here that are not clinically related,” he said.

The stigma placed upon counseling is a generational problem, according to Preston. “It is changing which is great,” she said. “But it’s still very underlying that in order to come to counseling you must be crazy, which is not the case.”

McKnight sees the issues that

bring someone into counseling as the reason for fear and stigma. “There are things that can happen to you that you don’t really want to address,” he said.

Previous perceptions of what the counseling experience will be like may also hinder a person’s willingness to reach out.

“It is just a conversation,” McKnight said. “Students shouldn’t be fearful of anything.”

The focus tends to become

watch kids work through that and to be a part of it.”

McKnight frequently teaches learning techniques and appreciates seeing dramatic grade changes from the students with whom he works.

If a student does not feel comfortable seeking help from the AU services, there are many private counselors around the area. “There is also the community mental health center who we are very close with and refer back

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**- Jenny Preston**

about being relational with students, Preston said. “And that kind of takes some pressure off.”

Both McKnight and Preston agree that the most rewarding part of being a college counselor is watching students succeed within their personal and professional lives.

“College is a really interesting time, everything is new and you are trying to figure out where you fit in the world,” Preston said. “It is really enjoyable to

and forth,” McKnight said.

Nonetheless, students are using the AU counseling center. “I don’t think students feel intimidated coming here,” he said.

The center provides coffee, tea and pretzels as small gestures to welcome students. It is a safe space to relax if nothing more, McKnight said.

Preston also usually brings her dog in on Fridays for students who might just need a puppy fix to make their day a little brighter.