



## Terry Plum

ASSISTANT DEAN FOR TECHNOLOGY AND  
GSLIS WEST PROGRAM

B.A., Middlebury College

M. Libr., University of Washington

M.A., University of Connecticut

### Teaching/Research Areas

Reference; assessment/evaluation; information  
technology; international librarianship

**SIMMONS**  
Graduate School of Library  
and Information Science

## Terry Plum: 21st Century Librarian

Terry Plum tried a few jobs after college, but the one that inspired him to apply to library school was with Seattle's Braille and Taping Service of the Washington Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. The work wasn't complicated — volunteers recorded textbooks onto tape, which Plum then duplicated onto cassettes to lend — but it sparked a lifelong interest in technology. "I've always been a big believer in cheap, low-rent technology," says Plum. "It makes a big difference. That's why I'm so interested in technology and libraries, particularly in international settings."

Most of Plum's career has been spent in academic libraries, including doing reference and bibliographic instruction at Middlebury, where he spent summers as the librarian for the Bread Loaf School of English. "We had a beautiful little collection," he says. "Four thousand books, all catalogued. We were one of the first adopters of online catalogs. We connected to the college's main frame by two 12-hour phone calls. People thought we were wizards because we had an online catalog in the woods!"

In 2000 Plum was coordinating technology at the University of Connecticut Libraries when he first taught at Simmons. The following fall he was made assistant director of the brand-new GSLIS West program, taking over as director a year later, when his predecessor, Dr. Sheila Intner, retired. Now he's working in administration, creating new digital projects for the GSLIS community, teaching classes, and wrestling with the future of the field. "One of the things we have to think about," Plum says, "is what is a librarian? We want librarians to be change agents. They have to be very comfortable with change."