

Dr. Gwen Alexander is the New Dean of Slim

by Robert Grover, Dean of Graduate Studies, Emporia State University

Dr. Gwen Alexander is the new dean of Emporia State University's School of Library and Information Management (SLIM), beginning June 18. She comes to ESU from Wichita State University (WSU), where she has served as Associate Dean of University Libraries since 2001.

Dr. Alexander earned both a Ph.D. and Master of Arts in Information Resources and Library Science from the University of Arizona, where she minored in higher education. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from Regis University, Denver. She is continuing studies in Management at the WSU Barton School of Business MBA program and has also earned a leadership certificate at Wichita State University's Center for Management Development and a certificate in the ACRL/Harvard Leadership Institute in the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Dr. Alexander taught Management of Information Agencies for SLIM in the summer of 2006. She says she is impressed with the enthusiasm, intelligence and skills her SLIM students brought to the course.

"Being involved with the SLIM students last summer influenced my decision to make this change," she says. "It's exciting to me to move from being a library administrator and practitioner to being involved in the education of new librarians and other information professionals. I have respect for both the theory that informs our profession and the skills that are necessary to function successfully in the new information environment. I'm pleased to have the opportunity to make a contribution to the education of those who are entering our profession."

Dr. Alexander has several scholarly publications and presentations to her credit. Her research interests include organizational development, continuous organizational improvement, information retrieval, and management of information agencies. Her professional service in Kansas includes serving as vice-chair of the Kansas State Library Advisory Commission. At Wichita State, she serves on the Center for Teaching and Research Excellence Advisory Board. At WSU Libraries, she has chaired and served on numerous committees, including the Website Redesign Committee and the Information Literacy Committee. She has chaired and served on numerous faculty search committees. Dr. Alexander is also the present vice-chair of the State Library of Kansas Board.

Before entering the library profession, Dr. Alexander worked for United Airlines, owned and operated several small businesses, was a daily newspaper writer/editor, and developed and managed grant-funded programs for a non-profit organization.

Dr. Alexander is a fifth-generation Kansan who has three grown children and eight grandchildren. She enjoys golf, travel with friends and family, and participating in Rotary Club service activities. She is chair of the Rotary Club of Wichita Ambassadorial Scholarship Committee and is a dedicated reader of children's books for elementary school classes.