Library Council
University of Toronto Central Library System

Annual Report of the Instruction in Library Use Committee
September 2011 – August 2012

Date of submission, 23 January 2013
Submitted by Richard Carter, Chair, June 2009-June 2012, and Jenaya Webb, Chair, June 2012-

Membership
The Instruction in Library Use Committee is a Standing Committee of Library Council, with members appointed by department heads to serve one-year terms with the possibility of reappointment. Membership includes staff from Central and campus libraries with direct responsibilities for library instruction. Members elect a chairperson annually.

Members during reporting period
Ex-Officio
Carla Hagstrom (Coordinator of Instruction in Library Use, Gerstein Science Information Centre)
Debbie Green (Head, Reference and Research Services Department, Robarts Library)
Eveline Houtman (Undergraduate coordinator for Instruction in Library Use, Robarts Library)
Jeff Newman (College Librarian, D.G Ivey Library, New College)
Sara McDowell (Coordinator of Instruction in Library Use, Graduate and Faculty, Robarts Library)
Rita Vine (Information Literacy Librarian)

Appointed
Cris Sewerin (Engineering & Computer Science)
Roma Kail (Victoria University)
Candy Yip (Richard Charles Lee Canada-Hong Kong Library)
Suzanne Meyers Sawa (Music Library)
Patricia Serafini (OISE)
Jenaya Webb (OISE)
Sarah Fedko (UTSC)
Mindy Thuna (UTM)
Kathleen Scheaffer (FI INFORUM)
Richard Carter (St. Michael’s College)
Maria Buda (Dentistry - until January 2012)

Summary
In addition to responding to concerns and activities across campus—such as the first year experience, the course evaluation framework, and the curriculum review—the ILU Committee between September 2011 and June 2012 focused on the assessment, organization, and promotion of library instruction.

Details
Much of the fall of 2011 was spent preparing for the December 14 ILU professional development event with speaker Megan Oakleaf, who specializes in information literacy assessment. The large turnout prompted interest among many librarians in continuing to develop assessment skills. In response, Mindy Thuna and Simone Laughton gave briefer follow-up workshops in January and February 2012, and more than a dozen librarians took part in the webinar “Assessment in 5 Minutes.”
To follow this, Rita Vine conducted an environmental scan of UofT librarians to find out how they assessed their instruction sessions. She found many did not assess their teaching, and those that did used widely different methods of measuring their success. Her conclusion was that we may want to standardize our IL assessment. Related to evaluating your success, is methods of measuring and testing instructional efforts using statistics. Rita Vine has been investigating a number of options for that purpose.

Measuring your success in the classroom is one way to improve your teaching. Another is to coordinate more effectively with your colleagues so that your work doesn’t overlap. This past summer, Rita Vine and other members of the ILU committee organized and participated in a meeting of librarians who teach drop-in workshops to help prevent duplication of efforts and ensure major topics got covered for September 2012. Additionally, the group worked to develop more consistent course information (such titles and descriptions) of several undergraduate courses, and RefWorks course offerings in particular across campus.

Librarians work with faculty and many others across campus to help enrich student learning. For that reason, the committee made several efforts over the past year to reach out such partners as professors, CTSI, the UofT writing centres, and the Academic Success Centre. A small ad-hoc committee of and Sara McDowell, Cristina Sewerin, and Rita Vine collaborated on revising the UTL Supporting Teaching page, linked from the UTL homepage under faculty. Changes include YouTube links, faculty testimonials, videos, and FAQs. Meanwhile, six UofT librarians took part last year in the CTSI course The Fundamentals of University Teaching. Their involvement was part of a pilot project to help develop librarians’ teachings skills. More recently, Rita Vine has been liaising with the Faculty of Arts and Science, the UofT Writing centres, the Academic Success Centre, the Office of Academic Integrity, and UofT Press, with the aim of organizing workshops for students on such topics as avoiding plagiarism; publishing your first academic book (aimed at new faculty and grad students); getting permissions to use copyrighted material in your own work (for grad students and faculty); and how to read a scholarly article and take notes.

Professional Development

Building the Case for Librarians in the Classroom: Communicating the Value and Assessing the Impact
14 December 2012

An expert on the role of libraries and assessment techniques, Megan Oakleaf discussed ways to persuade faculty, students, and administrators of the value of library instruction. She also provided a broad overview of library instruction assessment tools in an effort to help us quantify that value and make it clearer to administrators, faculty, and students.

Communications

Roma Kail compiled a list of all the tools we use for communicating with one another on the committee. These include: the ILU listserv, the wiki, and a new IL blog. Rita created a Libguide Instruction Staff Portal to serve as a central place to find shared instructional resources and links. This guide could lend support to instructional librarians—especially new ones.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Carter and Jenaya Webb, Chairs