Reference Services Committee is a Standing Committee of Library Council, with members appointed by the heads of libraries or units. A list of current members is appended.

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

1. To identify, consider and recommend initiatives to enhance reference services in the central library and, where appropriate, in the campus libraries.
2. To share information related to reference services.
3. To coordinate activities related to the provision of reference services.
4. To anticipate and respond in a coordinated manner to developments in the library system which may have an impact on reference services: for example, forming subcommittees charged with working on specific areas of reference services deemed necessary and beneficial by the committee.
5. To recommend annually two of its members from the central library system to the Electronic Information Resources Committee. One of the recommended members shall represent areas with science reference responsibilities, and one shall represent areas with social science and humanities reference responsibilities.
6. To communicate relevant information related to reference services to other areas of the library system, as appropriate.
7. To review, from time to time, existing reference services.
8. To meet regularly, at least eight times a year.
9. To report regularly to Library Council in May of each year.
10. To collaborate with the Staff Development Committee in order to facilitate opportunities for reference-related staff development activities.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The committee’s activities during this period are summarized below. We met 11 times during the year.

1. **Reports:** Sian Meikle, the Digital Services Librarian, continued to report to the committee on OPAC, web issues, the UTL web redesign process, and the implementation of a content management system. Sara McDowell, the Coordinator of Digital Acquisitions, and Warren Holder, the Coordinator of Electronic Resources, continued to report on electronic titles up for consideration, titles purchased, and other news and issues related to the e-collections, such as consortia arrangements, product reviews, problem resources, and usage statistics. Warren also reported that there are many e-books buried in packages that need to be entered in the catalogue and encouraged committee members to report any they were aware of. Members report on conferences and workshops attended, and Reference Services subcommittees provide reports of their work.

2. **Subcommittees of Reference Services:**
   - **Web Advisory Group (WAG) 1999** – Chaired by Heather Cunningham, the subcommittee worked closely with the Web Redesign Committee to suggesting improvements to the UTL website and access to e-resources. A separate report is appended. The Reference Services Committee thanked Patricia Bellamy for chairing the WAG for the past several years.
   - **OPAC Display subcommittee 2003** – Chaired by Susanne Tabur, the subcommittee continued its work on improvements to the display of information in the catalogue. A separate report is appended.
• **Scholars Portal Search subcommittee 2006** - Chaired by Elena Prigoda, this subcommittee began meeting in January 2006 to consider ways of improving access to Scholars Portal Search at the University of Toronto. A separate report is appended.

3. **Presentations**:
   - In June, 2005 Peter Clinton presented "The Transition from Distributed to Unified, Federated and Combined Searching" followed by a question and answer period.
   - In October Dan D’Agostino presented his findings on the course of the future of Open Access e-journals and libraries; forecasting possible directions for the next four years.
   - Rea Devakos presented an update on T-Space in October and December, including the current progress of T-space, a summary of consultation results, and a questionnaire for Reference Services members to complete.
   - In November Sheril Hook and Ian Whyte described their experience of developing and teaching a half credit course titled “Introduction to Scholarly Research (ERI203)”, which is offered at UTM.
   - In January 2006 Sara McDowell shared the *Guidelines for Crediting Instructional and Reference Works* as developed by Margaret Fulford, Cris Sewerin, and Sara on behalf of the Instruction in Library Use Committee.
   - Marian Press presented an update on CORIL, the learning materials repository, (https://ospace.scholarsportal.info/handle/1873/6) and encouraged committee members to submit learning objects in a variety of formats.
   - In March Gail Nichol reported on a session, “Citation Searching” that she had presented at the OLA Conference the previous month.
   - Jenny Mendelsohn reported on Robarts Reference and Research Department providing an overview of the projects that were priorities over the past year for the department. Outreach was the number one priority since so many users do not come to the library and two goals were identified: faculty liaison and effective website access.

4. **UTL Website Redesign** – Sian Meikle and Marc Lalonde reported on the progress of the UTL web redesign, keeping the committee informed of user testing results, proposed language changes (e.g. reference to research) and the implementation of a content management system. Sian asked the committee to write some content of what reference services are available at UTL. Gail Nichol, Ian Whyte, Sandra Langlands, and Patricia Bellamy met to discuss this and drafted a document that was forwarded to Sian.

5. **Scholars Portal Search** - We discussed how to promote, teach, and improve access to Scholars Portal Search. The suggestions of committee members led to changes in the search algorithm for the article search from the UTL homepage so that a searcher’s keywords are combined with ‘AND’ and are limited to ‘Keyword’ rather than ‘Anywhere’. A Scholars Portal Search subcommittee was struck to continue discussions on improving access to this resource.

6. **Reference Web Form (“Ask Us”)** – Debbie Green reported on the progress of the Email Reference Form Group. After user testing, a focus group, and feedback from the RSC, the redesigned web form was mounted on the library webpage (http://www.library.utoronto.ca/services/reference/reference.html).

7. **Representative from the Cataloguing and User Authorities Group** – The committee has benefited from having a representative from the CUAG attend the meetings. On several occasions Alastair Boyd was able to explain issues pertaining to cataloguing and the OPAC display. He also reported on proposed changes and enhancements to the OPAC (e.g. the display of non-roman script) and solicited feedback from the committee on other issues (e.g. the display of books which have a uniform title as the main entry).
8. **Scholars Portal Working Group (SPWG)** – Sandra Langlands represented University of Toronto Libraries on the OCUL Scholars Portal Working Group and reported on the group’s usability tests and collection of comments and concerns about the search interface and functionality from librarians at Ontario institutions. Sandra also reported on the Scholars Portal Search Summit and the Working Group’s report presented at the summit.

9. **Reference Services Committee minutes online** – With the assistance of Richard Hydal, the minutes, reports, and membership list of the Reference Services Committee are now posted online, listed in the Library Committees section of the staff intranet (www.library.utoronto.ca/news/reference_services/index.html).

10. **Theses Records in the Catalogue** – Questions were raised at a meeting in the fall 2005 about which of the U of T Proquest Thesis records were being entered into the OPAC. After consultation with Proquest, Elizabeth Black advised that U of T (SGS), Nursing, and Emmanuel records were being sent by Proquest but that the other federated colleges’ records were not. Members from these colleges were encouraged to contact Karen Turko.

11. **Research tips and Resource tips** – Members were encouraged to submit 15 to 20 word tips to Marc Lalonde for inclusion in a collection of research and resource tips that will randomly appear on the library’s homepage. This is an ongoing project.

12. **Representative on the Resource Sharing Services Committee** – The RSSC amended their terms of reference to include a representative from the Reference Services Committee. Gail Nichol is the current representative.

13. **OLA Super Conference** – Several members of the RSC attended the 2006 Super Conference and reported on sessions attended.

14. **OCULA Spring Workshop** – Members of the RSC and other U of T librarians formed the planning committee for the OCULA Spring Workshop, March 30 and 31, hosted by the University of Toronto Libraries and held at 89 Chestnut, a U of T student residence and conference facility. The workshop was titled "Reference in Academic Libraries-Current Issues" and featured David Lankes and James Elmborg as facilitators.

15. **REFINFO** - This mailing list is extensively used for reference-related information sharing, intercommittee communication; and to request and provide member input on numerous issues in general, and between meetings. Issues include: consultation on the use of specific electronic resources; calling for members to help with product and interface reviews, and comparisons of resources for collection development purposes; improving usability of the catalogue and other electronic resources; and alerting each other to problems with resources.

16. **Library Catalogue Brochure** – The committee would like to thank Patricia Bellamy who undertook the updating of this brochure.

17. **Scholars Portal databases subject analysis** – Three members of the committee, Patricia Bellamy, Heather Cunningham, and Gail Nichol completed a project to provide subject headings for the Scholars Portal databases on the relevant webpage (http://main.library.utoronto.ca/eir/articlesbytopic.cfm).

Respectfully submitted,
Gail Nichol, Chair
The goal of the Web Advisory Group is to improve user access to the services and resources offered at the University of Toronto Libraries’ web site. The group consists of interested reference and Web Services Group (I.T.S.) librarians. Meetings are open to everyone.

Current members:

Patricia Bellamy (Reference, Robarts)  Noel McFerran (St. Michaels)
Chad Crichton (UTSC) Sian Meikle (Information Technology Services)
Heather Cunningham, Chair (Gerstein) Jenny Mendelsohn (Reference, Robarts)
Carla Hagstrom (Information Technology Services) Suzanne Meyers Sawa (Music)
Marc Lalonde (Information Technology Services) Marian Press (OISE/UT)
Heather Cunningham replaced Patricia Bellamy as Chair in September 2005.
Sara McDowell was on the committee until March 2006.

Summary:
Our main focus has been collaborating with the UTL Web Redesign Group with the redesign of the library’s homepage during 2005 – 2006. The committee continues to support the enhancement of subject access to our electronic resources through the subject analysis of new e-resources and the creation of a new category called “e-media”. In addition, we have added new web pages such as the subject access to the UofT Libraries.

Accomplishments:

• **Refined the “Services to the Public” webpage**
  Made several suggestions to improve and clarify this webpage which were implemented in May 2005. This page has since been completely redesigned in 2005.

• **Assisting with the redesign of the Libraries’ Web Pages 2005-2006 and continuing**
  During 2005 – 2006 we assisted with the refinement of the newly designed UT Libraries’ web pages, for example made extensive comments and suggestions regarding the Article section of the main page.

• **Assisting with Usability Testing of Libraries’ Web Pages**
  Many members of WAG participated in administering and inputting data during the 4 rounds of usability testing conducted on the libraries’ web pages. (May 2005, July 2005, October 2005, March 2006). Much valuable insight was gained with regards to how real patrons use the web site to find information. This was invaluable in assisting with the redesign/refinement of the web pages.

• **Subject access to U of T Libraries**
  Developed the organization of broad subject categories listing the UofT Libraries in order to assist patrons in finding the library best suited for their information needs. Accessed under the “General information” menu heading.

• **EIR categories**
  - Created three new categories. “E-media” for resources such as NAXOS Music Library, anatomy.tv, CAMIO Art Museum Images, etc; PDA/Handheld” for resources specific to these devices and “Research Guides” for my.library subject guides. With regards to the category “e-Media” the suggestion was made that if the listed resources grow substantially, this can further be broken down into more specific categories.
  - e-Images category was removed (replaced by e-Media)
- Also, re-ordered the subject categories so that they appear in search results as: Research Guides, Article Databases, Encyclopedias, Dictionaries, e-Journals, e-Books, e-News, e-Media, PDA/Handheld.
- strongly recommended the look of these subject headings look more like “tabs” so patrons know they are tab headings
- have been investigating the ordering of search results in the “Article Databases” and “Encyclopedias, Dictionaries” categories.
- the “music” category in the “Resources & Research” drop-down menu replaced by “Find data, maps, images”

- **EIR Subject Management**
  We have continued on a long-term project of putting the e-indexes and e-reference resources in priority order using a tool that Marc Lalonde has developed. Much progress has been made.

- **my.library**
  Research Guides and Course Guides templates were ready and functional in 2005. Further changes to the functionality and look of my.library put on hold until more work has been done on library web page redesign. This way the my.library will be “in tune” with new look.

- **Modification of the Frequently Used Article Databases drop-down menu**
  Suggested additions of databases to this list as well as clarifying terms beside database names. Example: Compendex (Engineering).

- **EIR Subject Clarification**
  - We suggested changes to the wording and layout of the explanatory text that appears atop various categories such as Article Databases, etc.
  - Sara McDowell and an ad hoc committee on electronic newspaper products updated the explanatory text on the e-Newspapers page

- **Find the best resources for your topic pages**
  We suggested adding a link to the advanced search for those subject headings with a Scholars Portal search box on them. Also supplied the wording and search tips for the “What am I searching?” links.

- **Publications**
  The Chair of the Publications Committee (Cris Sewerin) came to one meeting and we discussed the presentation of library publications via the UTL web page. Publications Committee is attempting to move several long standing library publications to the CMS on the Web page so that they can be easily updated and printed via the webpage rather than commercially and expensively updated and printed. One outstanding issue that remains is the placement of the links to publications on the UTL page.

**Looking to the Future:**
There are a number of ongoing projects WAG is continuing to work on such as a Course Readings Online subject guide for faculty. The Web Advisory Group is looking forward to continuing to help in the redesign of the University of Toronto Libraries web site and would like to thank the Web Redesign 2005 Team for all their hard and excellent work during 2005-2006.

**A Word of Thanks:**
None of this work could be accomplished without the full participation of all the committee members. I thank each of you for your contributions, but especially Marc Lalonde, who had the unenviable task of transforming our lively discussions into functional and attractive web pages.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Cunningham, Chair
May 31, 2006

The goal of the OPAC Display Advisory Subcommittee is to discuss with Information Technology Services and advise the Reference Services committee about issues relating to the display of catalogue records in the public catalogue. Meetings are open to everyone though not advertised extensively.

Current members:

Elizabeth Black (Campus Database Coordinator)  Noel McFerran (St. Michael's)
Patricia Bellamy (Robarts Reference)  Sian Meikle (Information Technology Services)
Joe Cox (Faculty of Information Studies)  Carmen Socknat (Victoria University)
Susan Cozzi (Information Technology Services)  Helen Zhou (East Asian Library)
Marc Lalonde (Information Technology Services)  Susanne Tabur Chair (Gerstein)

Summary:
Reference Services Committee as a whole at its March meeting agreed that the new design of the OPAC resolved the issue of the large and prominent display of book jackets in the OPAC. In the previous OPAC design, the jacket photo was too large; the new OPAC uses a smaller image in a more suitable position.

The issue of the hitlist display of items with 130 field (uniform title as main entry) is still under discussion.

Submitted by,
Susanne Tabur, Chair
May 31, 2006

The goal of the SPS Group, a sub-committee of the Reference Services Committee, is to improve user access to the services and resources offered through SPS at the University of Toronto. The SPS Group will look at the local implementation of Scholars Portal Search, including but not limited to local customization, marketing, instruction, etc. The group consists of interested reference and Web Services (ITS) librarians. Meetings are open to everyone.

Current members:

Patricia Bellamy (Robarts Reference)
Barbara Chu (Physics)
Heather Cunningham (Gerstein)
Julie Hannaford (OISE/UT)
Dana Kuszelewski (Gerstein)
Marc Lalonde (Information Technology Services)

Sandra Langlands (Gerstein)
Ken Lavin (Information Technology Services)
Jenny Mendelsohn (Robarts Reference)
Sara McDowell (Robarts Reference)
Gail Nichol (Engineering & Computer Science)
Marian Press (OISE/UT)
Elena Prigoda (Gerstein, Chair)

Summary:
After discussions, the Scholars Portal Group requested some changes to how Scholars Portal Search is accessed from the UTL webpage. When choosing Scholars Portal Search from the homepage or from EIR you now go to the advanced search page. On the advanced search page all three options now default to a keyword search. In April 2006 members of the group attended a webcast, ‘Making Federated Searching More Usable’ with instructor, Frank Cervone, Assistant University Librarian for Information Technology at the Northwestern University Library. Marian Press and Julie Hannaford set up a blog for the group to post minutes and discussions (http://leo.oise.utoronto.ca/sps/). Most recently the group has begun discussions regarding the Scholars Portal Search maintenance schedule and possible issues with the implementation of Multisearch.

Submitted by,
Elena Prigoda, Chair
Reference Services Committee – Current Membership, May 2006

Ex-officio members

Mendelsohn, Jenny  Head, Reference Department, Robarts
Langlands, Sandra  Coordinator, Reference and Research, Gerstein
McDowell, Sara  Coordinator, Digital Acquisitions; Coordinator, Faculty & Graduate Instruction
Holder, Warren  Coordinator, Electronic Resources
Newman, Jeff  Coordinator, Undergraduate Instruction in Library Use
Lalonde, Marc  Coordinator, Web Services
Meikle, Sian  Digital Services Librarian

Appointed members

Boyd, Alastair  Cataloguing & User Authorities Group
Holder, Renata  Circulation Services
Stevenson, Mary-jo  Collection Development
Kim, Hana  Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library
Li, Sam-chin  Data, Map and Government Information Services
Nichol, Gail  Engineering & Computer Science Library
Tabur, Susanne  Gerstein Science Information Centre
Dorskind, Shauna  Media Commons
[no-one avail. right now]  Noranda Earth Sciences Library
Press, Marian  OISE/UT Library
Bellamy, Patricia  Reference Department, Robarts Library
Stone, Susan  Resource Sharing
Toews, Jennifer  Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library
Whyte, Ian  University of Toronto at Mississauga Library
Crichton, Chad  University of Toronto at Scarborough Library/ shared position
Tamura, Elaine  University of Toronto at Scarborough Library/ shared position

Appointed members – Campus Libraries

Puchalski, Irene  Architecture, Landscape & Design Library
Robbins, Lee  Astronomy & Astrophysics Library
Anderson, Laura  Business Information Centre, Rotman
Meindl, Patricia  Chemistry Library
Shier, Andrea  Criminology Library
Fulford, Margaret  Dentistry Library
English, Margaret  Fine Art Library
Skelton, Vicki  Industrial Relations Library
Singh, Nalini  Information Studies Inforum
Ferstman, Len  Innis College Library
Papadopoulous, John  Law Library (Bora Laskin)
Meyers Sawa, Suzanne  Music Library
Geiger, Barbara  Regis College Library
Howard, Jack  Royal Ontario Museum Libraries
McFerran, Noel  St. Michael's College Library
Del Bianco, Elsie  Trinity College Library
Kaszuba, Sophia  University College Library (Laidlaw)
Zaldin, Gabbi  Victoria University, E. J. Pratt Library