Reference Services Committee Meeting
Wednesday, April 13, 2005
9:30-11:30 am
Alice Moulton Room, Gerstein Science Information Centre

Present: Nalini Singh (FIS, Chair), Sam-Chin Li (DMGIS), Stephanie Swift (OISE/UT), Patricia Serafini (OISE/UT), Margaret English (Fine Art), Lorna Young (Regis), Sara McDowell (Robarts), Elsie Del Bianco (Trinity), Margaret Fulford (Dentistry), Richard Carter (St. Michael's), Sophia Kaszuba (Laidlaw UC), Mary-jo Stevenson (Robarts CDD), Sian Meikle (ITS), Patricia Bellamy (Robarts Ref), Alastair Boyd (Robarts Cataloguing), Elaine Tamura (UTSC), Shauna Dorskind (Media Commons), Heather Cunningham (Gerstein), Ian Whyte (UTM), Noel McFerran (St. Michael's), Irene Puchalski (Architecture), Gabbi Zaldin (Victoria), Sandra Langlands (Gerstein), Robert Tomaszewski (Chemistry), Lee Robbins (Astronomy), Suzanne Meyers-Sawa (Music), Gail Nichol (Engineering, Minutes)

Regrets: Hana Kim (East Asian), Vicki Skelton (Industrial Relations)

Minutes from previous meeting:
Minutes were changed under section 3 to read "Nalini will ask Sian what the banner box is searching as a title was pulled up in the banner search that did not come up with a regular catalogue search."

Business Arising:
Terms of Reference revisions have been completed and have been approved by Library Council.
Two appointed members have been added to the membership list, one from Circulation Services Committee and one to represent the Cataloguing Authorities Group. A clause was added to section 4 to say that the Reference Services Committee can add subcommittees. No subcommittees were named as this is always changing. Nalini will send the membership list and terms of reference to refinfo as a PDF file. Alastair Boyd will be the member representing the Cataloguing Authorities Group.

Presentation by Ken Lavin on Integrated Search Portals
Ken's research and presentation highlighted the following points:

- Students are using the Internet for research much more than the library.
- Ontario Public Library Market Survey: "Libraries will become less important in the future."
- Undergrads: see themselves as consumers of education, are visual learners and multi-taskers, need everything immediately, grew up with computers at home, are overconfident equating technological savvy with information literacy, 45% use Google as a starting point for research.
- Students tend to find information in a chaotic fashion, use the most familiar resources, and focus on speed and convenience.
- Professors note that while students bibliographies have become longer, they are also less scholarly, 2000 compared with 1996.
- 90% of students don't understand terms like: Boolean logic, controlled vocabulary, truncation, descriptor.
- Only 21% of students turn to librarians for information.
- There is a disconnect between culture of library organizations and that of the Net Gen students.
- Ken referred to GM's survey of the market, which prompted them to create a range of products to the public.
- If we give the customers what they want, we give them Google because that's what they want.
- If users find the library's website, they find library terminology they don't understand, long lists of databases that they must choose, and a profusion of different database interfaces.
- What is the solution? Integrated Search Portals that simulate the Google one search experience by offering a single user interface. This benefits the user by simplifying the search with one interface,
saving time, guiding them to appropriate resources, and allowing personalization of the interface.

Ken referred to the U of T website survey, which Sian says is on the Provost's webpage.

There was a brief discussion following Ken's presentation with acknowledgement that further discussion will be needed.

Ken defined an Integrated Search Engine as one that would search all U of T resources and a Federated Search Engine as one that goes out and searches other databases.

Reports

- Sara McDowell
  A couple of indexes have been added complements of OISE: GLBT Life Database, which is starting to add full text and Education Index Retrospective from Wilson.
  Faculty and Grad workshops for spring have been scheduled and are listed on the website.

- Sian Meikle
  As of May 1st, OISE will no longer be a pick up location for ILL and document delivery.
  OPAC Display Subcommittee has recommended that for journals there be one record for local holdings whether they are print, micro text, CD, etc. and one record for online holdings. Clicking Online takes the user to the EIR list of multiple online sources and clicking on Details would show the multiple sources under the holdings. There was some discussion on how journal holdings will be listed. The information needs to be the same regardless of the user's point of entry.
  Theses- There will be a catalogue record created by U of T and a record created by Proquest. There will be two records in the catalogue. When searching for theses, a title search is best because the author's name may vary. There is no perfect solution yet.

- Scholars' Portal Working Group
  Sandra Langlands explained the group's terms of reference and steps taken so far. They will be conducting user testing of CSA Illumina and looking at the interface to make suggestions to CSA for improvements. The U of T Reference Services Committee has submitted comments to the Working Group, which created a list of issues that were repeated by a number of universities. Some parts of the CSA interface can be changed locally. The Scholars' Portal group at U of T will respond with what can be done at U of T. The Working Group will be looking for feedback from undergraduates, graduates, and faculty. They are hoping to do this in May. They will probably be testing about five users at each university. The feedback may be useful in teaching the interface as well as requesting changes. The group expects that results will be compiled by July. They are planning to send the list of major problems and themes back to the universities.

Election of Chair for 2005/2006

Nalini Singh nominated Gail Nichol. There being no further nominations, Gail was acclaimed as Chair.

Library Website Redesign - Sian Meikle

The UTL website redesign is planned to address a number of issues:
- There are many more resources now than what the original site was designed to handle.
- There are more tools available now to create content so a content management system will be used allowing many people to add content.
- The U of T website is also under review and choices made there will impact the libraries' design.

Schedule of Events
April - usability surveys
May - prototyping
June - focus groups and select final graphical interface
July - test again
August - release site for preview by staff in first two weeks and release to public in second two weeks
September - old website will be taken down

The main URL is likely to stay the same but URLs within the website will change.

During the last week of April, the team will be running a card sort exercise usability test. Sian said that they will need 10 libraries to recruit five volunteers and run the card sort. She will be sending more information through refinfo. They would like a variety of users (undergrad, grad and faculty). There will be some kind of reward for those who participate in the study. The team is also planning usability testing with high school students. It was suggested that since the Toronto Public Library uses the U of T Libraries' website extensively, testing of their patrons might be helpful.

The UTL website will be using U of T colours and fonts in order to brand it as a U of T website.

Other Business
The TechKnowFile conference will be on the same day as the next scheduled meeting. Nalini asked for a show of hands of people who might be attending the conference. No one indicated that they would be going so the meeting date was left as May 11.

Nalini is working on the annual report for the Reference Services Committee and will circulate it on refinfo before submitting it to Library Council.