Reference Services Committee
Minutes of the meeting of November 10 2004, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
Alice Moulton Room, Gerstein Science Information Centre

Present: Shauna Dorskind (Media Commons AV), Ian Whyte (UTM), Jenny Mendelsohn (Robarts), Sara McDowell (Robarts), Barbara Geiger (Regis), Patricia Bellamy (Robarts), Susanne Tabur (Gerstein), Mary-jo Stevenson (Robarts), Gail Nichol (Engineering & Comp Sci), Sandra Langlands (Gerstein), Heather Cunningham (Gerstein), Robert Tomaszewski (Chemistry), Elsie Del Bianco (Trinity), Sam-chin Li (DMGIS), Suzanne Meyers Sawa (Music), Vicki Skelton (Industrial Relations), Gabbi Zaldin (Victoria), Hana Kim (East Asian), Elaine Tamura (UTSC), Margaret Fulford (Dentistry), Irene Puchalski (Architecture), Nalini Singh (FIS), Fran Sardone (guest, UTSC).

Regrets: Jennifer Toews (Fisher), until further notice; Laura Anderson (Rotman)

1. CSA Illumina Demonstration – Hana Alston

Hana Alston demonstrated the new CSA Illumina interface. Members of the committee raised numerous issues and made suggestions for improvements. Hana will pass these on to her CSA contacts.

MORE ON CSA ILLUMINA AFTER THE DEMONSTRATION

After the demonstration, we discussed how best to track the suggestions. Nalini will send a list of what was discussed today to refinfo, with copies to Peter Clinton and Alan Darnell.

[For convenience, here is the list of what was compiled, with additions from Jenny Mendelsohn]

LIST OF SUGGESTIONS FOR CSA ILLUMINA

- provide a 'clear search' button from the quick search page

-- Provide examples on the quick search page -- e.g. showing that you need to put in 'and' to combine terms, truncation, etc.

- provide an example on the command search page -- giving examples of field searching, boolean searches and truncation. E.g. su=canada and (immigra* or ethnic*)

- provide a quick link to the list of field names from the command search screen

- prefer more functionality on the quick search page: e.g. it was great to be able to do a quick title keyword search, or a quick author keyword search from the basic search in the old CSA/IDS interface

- allow the searcher to pick which database record shows first in the duplicates. Some databases provide better subject analysis than others.

- More clarity is needed on the tabs to explain the 'journals' option -- journals may be thought to
mean 'all journals' or only 'non-peer-reviewed journals'? Also, invert the tab options starting with peer-reviewed journals then secondly other journals.

- some of the citations that come up under the non-peer reviewed 'journals' tab are in fact from peer-reviewed journals. Some cleanup of the database may be needed.

- the display of the search statement at the top of the hitlist only allows for one line of information. Prefer to put up the whole search statement - which allows for cut and paste when the search needs to be changed & redone.

- In the list of thesauri, not all available thesauri are listed. For example, Medline's thesaurus is not listed. A note to alert users to the fact that particular thesauri exist, but are not available would be good.

- allow users to select and save a subset of databases to search again later. This is especially useful for interdisciplinary topics where you may want to search databases drawn from across the 4 subject areas.

-- Right now, there is no distinction between what is a major descriptor and what is a minor descriptor in the record display. It would be very useful to indicate to the user which was which. Right now, in an ERIC record, some descriptors appear with an *, but there is no indication whether the * means major descriptor. In Medline, no distinction is made at all.

- when using the search history, the box is at the bottom of the page, under the list of searches. this makes it awkward to use if your search history is a long one.

- For indexes with full-text content, let the default search be searching citation data not full-text data.

Sara McDowell mentioned that within OCUL, there is an implementation committee which Peter Clinton attends. Jenny Mendelsohn will look into how we could obtain representation on whatever group is set up through OCUL to deal with Illumina interface and searchability matters, and make inquiries as to what is the best route to getting our suggestions and questions about Illumina to CSA.

2. Minutes of the meeting of October 13, 2004:
Additions to those present: Suzanne Meyers Sawa (Music).
Corrections: In Reports: Section C, 4th bullet: delete the sentence beginning with: "Other resources being considered." and the sentence beginning with: "Those databases with loader software…"

3. Business arising
- Point 6c from June 9, 2004 - Jenny Mendelsohn indicated that she was interested in participating in the group planning a professional development event.
- Sara McDowell sent information arising from the meeting of the Database Selection and Review Subcommittee to Peter Clinton.
- From Sian Meikle’s report: Nalini will follow up with Sian about how libraries which are not in the central system can access the new icon for reporting problems with e-resource links.
- Nalini has not yet sent around citations to articles on metasearching in academic libraries, and will do so.

4. Report from Sara McDowell:
Sara reported that MLA will no longer be offered via SilverPlatter after Nov. 30. Our options: Proquest (a demo is not ready yet, but will be ready by the end of November) or CSA (a trial version will be available in a few days - Sara will send out the information).

One of the outstanding issues for subscribing to MLA from CSA is that searching from the Journal Name Index (or any of the available indexes) is not an exact title search. Patricia Bellamy gave an example of this CSA problem: if you want to limit your search to citations only from the journal Brain, and you go the Journal Name Index and check off Brain; when you run the search you also get citations from any other journal with contains the word 'Brain' in its title. CSA reps have said that this problem will be fixed by January, but Hana Alston says that this is not sure. With MLA from Proquest, you can get MLA alone with unlimited users, or you can get a combination of MLA, LION, and ABELL, plus links to some full-text. However this latter offer is only available for 4 user seats – you need to pay for additional users.

Discussion: some people are OK with either vendor; others are more interested in Proquest because of the full-text component.

Vicki Skelton asked how Ebsco is paid for. Sara said that Rotman pays for all, or some of this resource. Vicki, who has been doing a comparison between Ebsco and CSA, reported that so far, you get very different results between the two. Jenny said that there is seemingly little overlap between political science databases, and wondered if de-duplication was the problem.

5: Announcements
There was a reminder that all were welcome to register for the upcoming ILU Committee Professional Development event from 9-1 on Friday December 3 – this is a workshop called Teaching as Performance, led by Carla List Handley. Registration is online via the Staff Development website.

Nalini announced that Jennifer Toews from Fisher would not be attending the meetings for some time as she will be recovering from surgery. People expressed their best wishes to Jennifer for a speedy recovery.

Next meeting: Wednesday, December 8, 2004