Reference Services Committee

Minutes of the meeting of October 13, 2004, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Gerstein Instructional Lab/Alice Moulton Moulton Room, Gerstein Science Information Centre

Present: Jenny Mendelsohn (Robarts), Nalini Singh (FIS), Vicki Skelton (Industrial Relations), Shauna Dorskind (Media Commons), Warren Holder (ITS), Susanne Tabur (Gerstein), Sam-Chin Li (DMGIS), Gail Nichol (Engineering), Margaret Fulford (Dentistry), Barbara Geiger (Regis), Hana Kim (East Asian), Robert Tomaszewski (Chemistry), Heather Cunningham (Gerstein), Elaine Tamura (UTSC), Irene Puchalski (Architecture), Marian Press (OISE/UT), Gabbi Zaldin (Victoria)

Regrets: Sandra Langlands (Gerstein), Jennifer Toews (Fisher)

Guests: Anita Seth, Amy Fenton, Melissa Severn (Gerstein)

1. Web of Knowledge demo Gerstein Instruction Lab – Joelle Masciulli, trainer – 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Joelle announced that backfiles for 1900-1944 in the sciences are in development. Currently, science backfiles go back to 1945. The records will be from a select group of about 300 journals. The target date for release is Spring 2005.

She reviewed improvements made to the new interface. Some highlights:

- The Easy Search feature was rarely used, so has been replaced by a Quick Search. All types of searches available at the basic search interface.
- There is a new field that is indexed, the “Group Author” field, (things like consortia) using an alphabetical list.
- There is a “Cited Author” index, as well as an index for “Journal Abbreviations”.
- The “Cited Reference” search is more user friendly and the “Search History” is easier to use (just a click to combine searches).
- Open URL links are right on the summary screen now.
- The hitlist display limit has changed from 500 to 100,000. However, in the search history, all results exceeding 100,000 are kept, so a large search can be fully combined with another.
- On the results page there is an “Analyze” button which permits the user to analyze the results by author, publication type, subject category, publication year (i.e., is a particular author writing more/less in a each year, in what subject mostly, in what journals, etc.). One can analyze by institution, e.g., what has been published at UofT in the field of Parkinson’s. Bar charts illustrate the analysis.
- A “Related Article” button allows the user to see how many common cited references (in its bibliography) a particular article has with other articles.
- The user may create a “Citation Alert” which will send an email every time a particular article is cited in the future.

2. Minutes of the meeting of September 8, 2004 -- approved.
**Business Arising:**  
**Updating of the Library Council Memorandum for the Reference Services Committee:**

- Nalini checked with Debbie Green, chair of EIRC, about the provision in our terms to recommend 2 central library people to EIRC (point 5). There is a corresponding point in the EIRC terms that says 'other central library representatives--2'. Debbie agreed that it would be good to keep this point, and will raise it at the next EIRC meeting.
- Sandra Langlands had suggested that the Gerstein Coordinator of Reference and Research be added as an Ex-officio member, noting that the EIRC memorandum lists this position as an Ex-Officio member along with the Head of Reference for Robarts. We agreed that this was a good idea.
- Mary-jo Stevenson had pointed out that while she attended for Collection Development, this department was not in the “Appointed” list. Nalini consulted with Graham Bradshaw, who thought this was a good idea. We agreed to add Collection Development.
- Jenny Mendelsohn said she would like to see a point about maintaining contact with the Staff Development Committee added to the Terms of Reference. Nalini will write up an eleventh point under Terms of Reference about this, and send it out to refinfo. With these changes, the updated memorandum is ready to be brought to Library Council.

**Reports:**

**A. Warren Holder**

Further to Web of Science, Warren reminded us that it will be loaded onto Scholar’s Portal, but without the citation searching function. It will continue to be available on its usual ISI platform as it is now, with all the searching functionality, including citation searching. Web of Science is not on the SFX server. Warren announced that Lara Okihiro will not be replaced. Tracy De Souza will take over EIR record management. Sian Meikle and Marc Lalonde will deal with all other matters that Lara handled. To report e-resources problems, we should continue to use e-problems@library.utoronto.ca

**B. Sian Meikle**

Sian Meikle reported on a new service to be available on the Central Library’s staff machines which would report any problem e-resource links to library staff, tell the staff what the problem is and what other problems have been reported. The e-resource with a problem will have a special icon (a yellow road sign containing an exclamation mark) next to it to indicate a problem. Libraries not in the central system must send their staffs’ IP addresses to Marc Lalonde in order to receive this service. This will all be sent out on Refinfo by Sian.

**C. Database Selection and Review Subcommittee**

Sara McDowell reported on the Sept. 29 meeting of the Scholars Portal/Database Selection Review subcommittee, which was struck at the September meeting of this committee. Some issues discussed:
People are generally OK with the CSA interface. However, there are some features of some databases that don't translate well to the CSA interface. For example, the PsycINFO thesaurus is not used to its best in CSA.

One thing we can do is lobby CSA for improvements. For example, an improvement would be to have a search from the Journal Name index be an exact title search rather than a title keyword search, as it is now.

Sian is working to see what custom changes can be made to CSA. For example, it would be good to have more browsable indexes, instead of just the current few indexes (Author Name, Journal Title, sometimes Publication Type).

As has been mentioned before, Web of Science, and the CSA databases will be loaded onto to Scholar's Portal. Other resources being considered include Proquest, Gale, Wilson and Ebsco. Those databases with loader software will be given priority, e.g., Expanded Academic Index and RLG. Ultimately, the final decisions will be made by OCUL, which has its own Scholar’s Portal Committee. The subcommittee identified some other databases for consideration to be added to Scholar's Portal - a "wish list".

Sara’s primary interest within the Database Selection Review Committee is issues with indexes and abstracts. Vicki Skelton has been comparing Business Source Premier coverage (which includes Harvard Business Review), coverage with Proquest coverage. Barbara Geiger is interested in a similar comparison for religious studies periodicals.

Sian pointed out that for those databases that will be loaded into Scholar’s Portal, the search will be through the new CSA interface. Thesaurus mapping has been requested of the CSA people.

Jenny asked about the name of the subcommittee, which we were originally calling the Scholar's Portal subcommittee. Database Selection Review is more descriptive of the work that the committee is currently doing. The other part of the picture is issues relating to: 1) searching this kind of resource; 2) teaching users how to use it effectively. The subcommittee did spend some time diss on this. Nalini said that it was difficult to know exactly what the issues without having a chance to use it yet, and suggested that we wait to see what comes up as we begin to use it. We would have a better idea of what work may be needed. Nalini mentioned that there are a few articles appearing on metasearching in academic libraries and will send info to refinfo.

Other business:
CSA Illumina demo: Nalini said that a request had been made by Elaine Tamura for a CSA new interface demo at a reference services meeting. People expressed interest. Nalini will arrange for this to happen at our next meeting. She asked if people liked to have demos like this scheduled during reference services meetings. The answer is yes.
Nalini announced that U of T librarians were sent invitations to the launch of History of the Book in Canada, vol. 1, and reiterated that all were welcome to attend the wine and cheese reception at FIS - Oct 21, 5-7pm, 4th floor.

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, November 10th, 2004, 9:30-11:30, Alice Moulton Room, Gerstein Science Information Centre. [At the time of distribution of the minutes, the meeting has been changed to the Gerstein Lab.]

--submitted by Gabbi Zaldin, with additions by N. Singh