Reference Services Committee Meeting Minutes

September 14, 2016, 9:30 – 11:00 a.m., Alice Moulton Room, Gerstein SIC

Present

Carey Toane (Gerstein, chair); Agatha Barc (Victoria); Kathryn Barrett (Scholars Portal); Alison Bell (Gerstein, ex officio); Heather Buchansky (Student Engagement); Mona Elayyan (New College); Kyla Everall (Robarts Reference); C. Hansen (UTSC reference); Marc Lalonde (ITS); Judith Logan (Robarts); Alexia Loumankis (Law); Greg Luciani (St Augustine’s); Courtney Lundrigan (Trinity College); Klara Maidenberg (Assessment); Tim Neufeldt (Music); Natalya Rattan (Fisher); Mary Reynolds (Regis); Patricia Serafini (OISE); Meaghan Valant (UTM); Rita Vine (Faculty & Student Engagement, ex officio); Ben Walsh (Engineering); Desmond Wong (OISE)

Regrets

Richard Carter (St. Mikes); Holly Inglis (Rotman); Nalini Singh (Inforum)

Agenda

1. Selection of a minutes-taker
   Mary Reynolds accepted
2. Minutes of the last meeting
   Accepted without changes
3. Business arising from the minutes
   Are faculty and students who are registered in non-conjoint masters programs at TST affiliated colleges eligible for the new Scan and Deliver service? It was suggested that either Susan Stone or Elena Springall be contacted for further clarification.
4. ITS Update – Marc Lalonde

   ITS’ summer focus was on website development for the new Drupal platform. Media Commons is now live, and features a ‘Netflix’ look that enables them to promote new acquisitions. The Registry of Canadian Government Information Digitization Projects is a new Drupal site in development. This site is a searchable index/registry of digitized Canadian government documents and publications. The site is not restricted to U of T, but will be open to any institution that wishes to register.

   As part of the site development, ITS explored the use of a Solr search configuration, which enables a more in-depth, faceted search than the current Drupal search. The solr search configuration will be incorporated into the new Map and Data Library website, and may also be applied to onesearch at some point in the future.
ITS is also working on improving searching capability from UTL sub-sites—e.g. Dentistry, UTM—since the present configuration is slow and often results in a ‘No Results Found’ message.

Other ITS updates

1. Printing from a Marked List
   The brief record print option from an e-mailed marked list is still very long. It would be useful to have the option of just printing author/title/call number information instead of having to cut and paste. Marc will explore the possibility of adding this to the queue.

2. Journal Search
   Choosing the Journal Search option in the Catalogue and also choosing the Journal Title option in the drop down menu results in a blank search box and the search needs to be re-keyed. There is no need to use the drop down menu since Journal Search has already been chosen. Some explanatory text is needed.

3. Shelf List Browse
   Newly added titles that are accessible in the online catalogue are not showing up in the shelf browse. The same is true for the item status. Books that are checked out in the online catalogue are showing as being available in the Browse. This is a script update problem that Marc will investigate further.

5. Public Services Policy @ Victoria – Agatha Barc

The Pratt Library at Victoria College is in the process of developing a set of guidelines surrounding the use of library services by members of the general public. When finalized, the guidelines will be posted on the Library web site so that non-UTL affiliated users will have a clear understanding the extent of the services they can expect to receive. The Special Collections area of the Pratt Library website includes service guidelines that have proved to be very useful. Other campus libraries that have service guidelines include the Bora Laskin Law Library.

There has been good response to the information-gathering e-mail request that was sent out on Sept. 13. Feedback from the meeting included experiences with the general public wanting access to library computers/scanners in addition to reference services. It was recommended that consideration be given to including e-mail and telephone requests in the new guidelines.

It was commented that the public may see the UTL libraries as one library as opposed to several individual libraries and so it would be useful to have a common understanding across the libraries.

Additional feedback, policies/documentation would be most welcome. Please contact Agatha at agatha.barc@vicu.utoronto.ca
6. Joint Assessment Committee update – Kyla Everall and Judith Logan

The Committee was established as a result of the identification that libraries were having problems matching internal statistics reporting to the annual library-wide statistical reporting required by ARL. The mandate of the Committee was two-fold – to conduct an environmental scan of reference interaction statistics-gathering at UTL, and to make recommendations for a tool/best practice for more consistent collection/tracking of reference interactions throughout the UTL library system.

Two environmental scans were conducted – one internal and one external – with the primary focus being on the tools used. The external scan also included a LISA literature review from 2000 to date, with the focus being on the last five years in light of rapidly changing technology. There were 70 respondents to the external scan questionnaire that was distributed via assessment and public service listservs. Of the 70 respondents, 60 used electronic methods. Survey participants were asked to:

- Describe their method of gathering statistics, and, if electronic, what tools/platform did they use
- Give a satisfaction rating to their top software
- Comment on any challenges/benefits

With respect to the internal environmental scan, there were 50 respondents, 92% of whom collected statistics. A total of 46 statistics-gathering tools were reviewed by the Committee. Survey respondents were asked to:

- Describe their method of gathering statistics, and, if electronic, what tools/platform did they use
- Describe the frequency of their statistics-gathering – e.g. yearly, weekly, monthly, daily, interaction (majority)
- Describe the content included in their tools – e.g. question type, channel, user affiliation, details

For their next steps, the Committee envisions developing a common statistics-gathering tool that would include both set of required questions as well as a set of optional questions. Data would ultimately feed into a commonly shared database.

The remainder of the meeting involved group discussion informed by two questions

- How could this project benefit your work?
- What barriers could deter you from using a common tool?

Comments from within the group included:

- Numerous reference interactions – e.g. with faculty – happen ‘off-desk’. Some mechanism whereby this information could be incorporated into the tool would need to be developed.
- Western University Library has developed a tool that enables the tracking of statistics at the personal, desk, and unit levels. Contact information for the person at Western will be given to Kyla.
• Some libraries do not have a dedicated reference desk, but, rather, a combined desk for reference and circulation services which would need to be taken into consideration when developing the new tool.
• Consistency in statistics gathering is important, but some flexibility that would enable libraries to have local options is also important.
• Kyla noted that
  o the common thread in reporting forms required the following standard information – Questions asked/answered using collections and expertise
  o ARL has long indicated that it plans to re-vamp its statistics gathering mechanism. Whatever tool that is developed at UTL will need to be ‘nimble’ and flexible enough to accommodate future changes

7. Other business

Carey will be away for the October meeting. Kyla Everall has agreed to chair the meeting in her absence.

Next meeting

October 12, 2016, 9:30-11:00 a.m., Alice Moulton Room, Gerstein Science Info Centre

Note: October 2016 meeting was cancelled. Next meeting is Nov. 9, 2016, 9:30-11:00 a.m. Alice Moulton Room, Gerstein Science Info Centre.