

URSUS Ref Heads Meeting Notes

Weds Jan 11, 2012 10AM – 12:20PM (polycom)

Present: Laurie MacWhinnie (UMF), Sofia Birden (UMFK), Ginny Fischer (UMPI), Bill Grubb (USM), Nancy Lewis (UM), Ben Treat (UBC), Christy Coombs (BPL), Ana Noriega (UMA), Elaine Apostola (Law & Leg), Pam Goucher (Me Dept of Ed), Angelynn King (UMM)

URSUS Reference Best Practices update to the directors: Sofia reported the library directors liked what we sent them for an update on the Best Practices report. They were excited about the idea of a reference heads retreat and want a proposal that includes a proposed budget and agenda. They will support a day or day and half long event that will give librarians time for travel and still have plenty of group time to meet. Bill will look into possible locations and prices for a retreat and share that information with the group. Laurie will do a draft agenda to share with the group and will include the K-12 workshop idea, Worldcat Local, and sharing instruction or outreach initiatives at the different libraries. Laurie will also email the group to start discussion on possible dates.

They like the K-12 symposium idea and the group's new subcommittee will start work on planning that (see below). Nancy and Pam mentioned a big combined Maine Lib Assoc/Me School Library Assoc library conference scheduled for May 19-22 at Orono. It might be possible to identify needs that our libraries could help address and ways to work with K-12 schools through that conference.

OneSearch – use and marketing: Many of the libraries report not really using it or marketing it. UMA finds searching the local catalog is a lot more effective. UM is not really using it. It is designed more for users who are not coming to the library/librarians for assistance and they rarely use it in instruction. USM is not really using, marketing or teaching it. They have not seen a lot enthusiasm from staff or students for it. Most UMF librarians are not teaching it because many faculty are requesting specific resources and want students directed to the URSUS catalog or specific databases relevant to their subject. They also find the high number of irrelevant search results and the shared interface problematic as results are not always accessible or appropriate. UMPI and UMFK also are not using or teaching it and find the non-accessible results are an issue for them too. UBC find the results aren't really intuitive if users are not familiar with doing research which makes finding a way to marketing it difficult.

The directors want the reference group to look at WorldCat Local in advance of a retreat so the group can assess its possible advantages and value over OneSearch. They are not competing products. We have a commitment for OneSearch for another year and half. If the system gets WorldCat Local, they will be dropping OneSearch. There aren't enough funds for both. WorldCat Local would be a replacement for URSUS for some libraries, but not all. UMFK and others that are not OCLC libraries would not be using it. It was reported the directors have decided not to renew with III and within 5 years we have to have something as a replacement. Evergreen is one of the possible replacements being considered. Regardless of which product is chosen, we have to change to something new to replace III.

Ways to use Mariner and/or the data within to your advantage: Sofia mentioned the genre option in Mariner that will allow libraries to pull subsets (like newspapers) into their database lists. Not all libraries are aware of this feature to select subsets of databases. It could be possible to create subset lists that could be pulled to use in a LibGuide or other online resources guide. Sofia also reported the subcommittee of the Cataloging Heads is

working on cleaning up Mariner and improving the matching of databases to the subject headings categories based on relevance. There are databases currently listed under subjects that are not really appropriate so the subcommittee is working on weeding those out. That group is also working on changing the front end look of Mariner for users and will be continuing discussions on that in the future. Also, the Indexes & Databases list has some individual titles (e.g., some of the newspapers) which some libraries want, others do not. Because the list also includes Web resources, the subcommittee is considering changing the title of the "Indexes & Databases" to something that indicates the list is broader than just subscription database/indexing sources, possibly "Electronic Resources."

Sofia has send out an email to the Ref Heads Group on this and would like to get feedback on how the reference librarians use the Indexes and Databases lists or want to use it to get more out of it.

Anyone on the Ref Head group who wants to be involved with the subcommittee should let Sofia know. The subcommittee only has one Reference librarian and could use more.

Info Lit workshop planning: A new subcommittee will to work on planning the K-12 workshop. Members are: Nancy, Laurie, Bill and Pam.

Next meeting: The group will exchange emails to plan the next meeting.

Meeting alternatives to polycom: Elluminate, Skype: Due to the difficulty of trying to schedule meetings using polycom, the group is considering other options that might provide greater flexibility in scheduling. Bill has used Elluminate for teaching and Laurie has used it for a virtual conference. Although seeing the other participants is not an option, Elluminate does have document/presentation sharing, live chat (audio) and text chat options. Skype is another possibility. Bill will check with the tech people at his campus and see if Elluminate is free or there is a cost and email the group.

Other: There was some discussion of the status of Off Campus Library Services. There is currently a review of University College underway that includes what University College should be for the future and how it will be organized and operate. OCLS will be a part of that discussion. No decision will be made on filling the vacant position until those discussions are complete. For now, libraries should continue to do what they are doing to fill the gap.

Ana has been answering a lot of copyright questions, particularly issues regarding streaming video of documentaries. She offered to work with other librarians if they have copyright related questions.

Bill mentioned Learning Express Library, a resource provided by the Maine State Library. It includes practice PRAXIS and other tests, tutorials and job skills resources. It is available through the Maine State Library's online Information Commons (<http://www.maine.gov/msl/commons/>). This would be a good resource for libraries who want to provide information for standard tests relating to education (PRAXIS, LSAT, GRE, etc.). A user account is required for access, but we could link to and direct our users to the resource from our own library Website.