Information Literacy Council

Wednesday, Nov. 4, 2009

Members in attendance included Dave Champlin, Maureen Perry, Tim Lynch, and Bill Grubb.

Grubb briefly summarized the process of weeding the Reference collections at Portland and Gorham, emphasizing the goal of a dramatically smaller, more user-friendly collection that is ultimately online except for a comparatively small number of print titles. He also explained the emerging concept of “seven campuses / one library” that is influencing the development of library collections. Under that model little duplication is allowed between system libraries and Orono will continue to gain the lion’s share of quality titles. Grubb recommends careful and early selection of titles that focus primarily on undergraduate use.

Grubb reported on the progress of the new teaching model for FRS 197, which has 15 students this semester. Every Reference librarian teaches at least one of the ten classes and is responsible for all assignments and grading for that week. Grubb continues as the lead instructor/coordinator. Student feedback has been strongly positive. Students report that the class is very helpful in their other classes.

It was hoped that the council would receive instructor feedback on use of the EYE online tutorial, but there was none. Susan McWilliams had reported limited effectiveness to Grubb. Grubb reported that Eastern Wyoming College requested permission to duplicate our tutorial at their institution.

Those present were satisfied with the information literacy plan provided earlier for review. McWilliams had recommended to Grubb earlier that only the parts that are relevant to the average user be posted online. It is agreed that the document is designed primarily for NEASC accreditation purposes.

Champlin reported that his new 1-credit class focused on helping students build upon their existing area of interest is going well with an enrollment of 15 taught by 4 instructors.

Champlin suggested that, just as his course is designed to build upon existing interests of students, information literacy instruction should seek out niches of student and faculty interest and seek to collaborate with others within and outside USM. For instance, whereas it might not work well to build library instruction into every EYE class, such instruction might be seen as a welcome enhancement to a class in gender studies, since it already uses library more than some other classes do. By developing a quality collaborative teaching experience in one EYE
class, the concept might spread. Quality teaching/learning experiences can help distinguish USM from its competitors. By working within a specific field to help students explore resources in related fields, student’s can see previously unseen opportunities.

Champlin recommends seeking out other stakeholders. GPACU members might have services and/or perspectives that could enhance our program as could entities within USM. He recommends a healthy “real world” orientation of any instructional program and collaborative efforts.

Champlin suggests robust marketing as well. He emails all incoming freshmen a carefully casual-yet-targeted promotion of his class. This could work for FRS 197 if it’s focused on student needs.

Grubb mentioned the Provost’s lack of support for a required information literacy class, saying the EYE classes are the proper place for such instruction. Grubb intends to begin construction of an Instructor’s Toolbox which will centralize access to a number of both new and old online tools to enable instructors. This move in based on minimal library staffing and the continuing desire of many faculty members to provide at least some library instruction themselves. The library’s Tutorials Team needs to know what kinds of tools and issues faculty would like to be addressed with these “tools.” Faculty involvement is very important.

In closing, Grubb mentioned the new Advising Network website. http://usm.maine.edu/advising/network/ It appears to bring together many previously scattered resources for much easier student and faculty use.

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