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Reference and Interlibrary Loan Departments : Annual Report : 2003 - 2004

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Annual Review
Reference and Interlibrary Loan Departments
July 1, 2003 – June 30, 2004

The 2003/2004 year showed continuing growth of most reference and interlibrary loan services. With business librarian Signe Oberhofer on leave during the fall semester, funding was available to hire a visiting instructor librarian to help out with reference, outcomes assessment, and student outreach. Kaya Townsend, a recent graduate of Simmons College, was hired in August 2003 and has provided invaluable assistance in all of these areas. Like last year, requests for reference assistance and use of the public reference computers continue to increase. Research and instruction type reference requests have increased by 17% over last year.

The reference librarians spent a great deal of time this year working on enhancements to the departmental web page. Resource pages were created for all of the major disciplines offered at USFSP. These pages provide quick links to subject-specific databases, web sites, bibliographies, and other resources.

The Research Assistance Program (RAP) continues to grow in popularity. Requests for RAP sessions increased by 157% this year. Placements of flyers throughout campus and word-of-mouth recommendations appear to be the main reason for the increased activity.

Chat reference coverage expanded during the 2003/2004 year. Two additional Poynter librarians were trained on the chat reference software bringing the total number of Poynter librarians involved in this activity to four. Poynter reference staff are contributing to both the USF Libraries chat service and the Florida statewide chat service. Tina Neville served as a member of the Florida Ask-a-Librarian Quality Assurance Team.

Interlibrary loan activity showed an increase of 17% on the borrowing side but a decrease of 2% in lending. The ILL staff continues to work with great efficiency—with the average time from entry of a request by a patron to the time the request is sent to a borrowing library at just over 20 hours. Considering that the processing time includes hours when the library is not open, this shows an exceptional level of effectiveness by the ILL staff.

Annual activities as they relate to the Poynter Library Goals:

Poynter Library Goal #1: *Provide optimum collections and services to meet the demands of USF St. Petersburg's expanding curriculum and faculty. (USFSP Goals #3-5 and USF Goal #4)*

Although the library book budget was more limited this year, a number of new reference titles were added to the collection in 2003/2004. A total of 207 new reference titles were purchased and processed. These volumes were dispersed throughout all disciplines; however, particular interest was paid to new titles that support the USFSP Programs of

Distinction and the lower-level undergraduate curriculum. The science collection in particular needed updating and 11% of the new titles were added in this area. Approximately 14% of the new reference titles relate in some way to diversity issues.

Poynter Library Goal #3: *Foster campus, community, regional and state relationships that increase awareness of Poynter Library's collections and services and enhance these services and collections through inter-institutional cooperation. (USFSP Goal #7 and USF Goal #9)*

During 2003/2004, Poynter Library participated in the Florida Ask-a-Librarian chat service.

Poynter Library Goal #5: *Support USFSP's efforts to achieve separate SACS accreditation. (USFSP Goal #1)*

During the fall 2003 semester, 125 people participated in an entrance survey of reference services. Although the response size was somewhat small, the populations were reasonably representative of the campus population. Library customers were asked to comment on their preferred methods for getting help with library resources. Although the top method was to "ask a reference librarian," the choice of "figure it out on my own" followed close behind as the preferred method for obtaining help in the library. "Asking a friend," "using the Internet," and "using a library guide," were also common methods for learning to use library materials.

Progress on suggested Departmental Goals for 2003 / 2004

Continue outcomes assessment activities for reference and interlibrary loan:
Reference entrance survey conducted fall 2003.

Discuss reference desk relocation and structural changes with the physical plant department to make the reference desk more approachable for users and to make it more ergonomic for reference staff.

The head of facilities planning was contacted about this project and, in December 2003, they requested a bid from a contractor for the desk remodeling. In June 2004, Deborah Henry and Tina Neville talked to library furniture suppliers at the American Library Association conference. As of July 2004, the project is still in the planning stages.

Enhance marketing services and outreach to students.

Kaya Townsend had some wonderful successes in this area. Thanks to her creative efforts, the library display at Campus Showcase was at its most popular. Her marketing efforts for the RAP program also increased the use of this service by 157%. Deborah Henry and Tina Neville also made some "hospitality" suggestions that, we hope, will make the library a more inviting place for our customers. Along with Mika Slaughter, these librarians are in the process of implementing many of those suggestions.

Marketing and outreach continues to be an area that will need attention in the coming years.

Monitor interlibrary loan activity and staffing to ensure a continuation of quality service in that department.

In spite of the ongoing increases in this area, the ILL staff has continued to provide excellent and timely service. Virginia Champion and Cynthia Brown are exceptionally efficient at ILL processing. Should either of these staff members leave the department, it would be difficult to expect similar service from a newer employee. This and the continued expansion of requests make the staffing of this area a continuing concern.

If the opportunity presents itself, try using co-browsing chat software to provide library instruction to remote sites.

Did not have the opportunity to try out this process.

Suggested Departmental Goals for 2004 / 2005

- Incorporate informational literacy into the reference department. As requested, provide assistance to the new head of Access Services regarding interlibrary loan to help ease the reorganization activities.
- Continue to pursue the implementation of a more user-friendly and ergonomic reference desk.
- Enhance marketing services and outreach to students. Continue plans to make the library more user-friendly.
- Work with the systems team on a long-range plan for technology in the reference area.
- Conduct additional assessment activities regarding perceived approachability of reference librarians.

Reference and Interlibrary Loan statistics: July 1, 2003 – June 30, 2004

	FY 2003/2004 (new)	2002/2003 (previous)	Change
Reference:			
Instruction:	8540	7272	up 17%
Information:	14981	10809	up 39%
Telephone:	2203	2014	up 9%
ILL Borrowing:	2003/04	2002/03	Change
Items requested from outside USF	2131	1865	
Items requested from within USF:	3004	2407	
Requests cancelled or filled locally:	1181	1109	
Total borrowing requests handled:	6316	5381	up 17%
Fill rate for USFSP patrons:	81%	79%	
Number of Marine Sci. requests:	2254 (36%)	1710 (32%)	
Number of USGS requests:	355 (6%)	584 (11%)	

ILL Lending:	2003/04	2002/03	Change
Requests received from outside USF:	3832	3943	
Requests received from within USF:	2540	2589	
Total requests received for USFSP items:	6372	6532	down 2%
Fill rate for USF St. Pete items:	77%	75%	