Introduction

Access Services staff improved direct services to students and faculty in a number of ways this year. We enhanced the environment in library facilities with two initiatives. First, in an effort to create a more inviting atmosphere for study and research, the Libraries introduced new food and drink guidelines July 1, 2006, and began to allow drinks in spill proof containers in library buildings. Second, we revised the Libraries’ User Conduct and Security Policy and included language about the appropriate use of facilities. After consultation with RUPD and University counsel, we introduced guidelines and library procedures for banning non-students engaged in disruptive or illegal behavior from library facilities.

An Access Services Customer Service Training Team was formed and working with faculty librarians from the Camden, Newark, and New Brunswick campuses, created a program that resulted in improved public service interactions between staff and library users. The team began its work by assessing the results of the Libraries’ LibQual+ survey conducted during the spring 2005. From the survey we learned that users value and expect library staff to exhibit courteous behavior and readily respond to their questions, that users rated employees who are consistently courteous as the most desirable attribute, and that finding information independently was rated highest overall in importance to users. The team decided to focus its efforts on three areas—basic customer service skills, question analysis and referral skills, and core competencies for introducing key online resources to users. Three sessions were designed and delivered to access services staff on all three campuses. Reference librarians conducted the third session on basic reference questions and resources. A set of service standards was developed for each session, revised with participant input, and made available on the Libraries’ staff resources website. These standards were reaffirmed through the performance appraisal program in the spring.

At the beginning of the academic year Access Services carefully assessed core services and resources, and made a number of public service changes in response to the budget shortfall. We reduced library hours, closed or curtailed hours at public service desks, and reduced student staffing at service desks and for support of reserves, delivery, and collection management operations. In addition, we eliminated student staffing of the afternoon shipping run, cancelled the Libraries’ subsidized Ingenta user-initiated document service, stopped purchasing copies of dissertations when unavailable
for borrowing on interlibrary loan, and eliminated four print brochures. Despite the budget shortfall, access services staff successfully closed ranks to meet the public service needs of library users.

Rutgers University Libraries’ access services staff hosted the fifth annual Ivies+ Access Services Symposium at Alexander Library in New Brunswick, March 15-16, 2007. A local planning group with representatives from the three campuses met by videoconference and email to plan programming, local arrangements for food and rooms, entertainment, tours, publicity, registration, and the symposium’s website. Access services colleagues attended from twelve Ivy League and other large research libraries, including Columbia, Princeton, NYU, Harvard, Penn State, Temple, and the University of Chicago. Sessions were offered on designing functional and flexible library spaces, billing, changing roles of access services staff, training and supervision, inventory and Pocketcirc, wikis and blogs for student training, and social bookmarking. It was a stimulating learning experience for everyone involved.

In February 2007 Interlibrary Loan Services conducted an online satisfaction survey to evaluate ILL service to New Jersey Library Network member libraries and to fulfill a requirement of Rutgers 2006-2007 Statewide Services Grant. Results indicated the majority of responding librarians are more rather than less satisfied with turnaround time, obtaining what was asked for, and the readiness of Rutgers staff to respond to questions; and more rather than less likely to recommend Rutgers ILL to a colleague. When asked to share an example of how a customer used a resource obtained on interlibrary loan from Rutgers and how the item made a difference to the customer, respondents made specific reference to items unavailable at public libraries or difficult to find, the reliability and timeliness of the service, and how ILL saved their customers the cost of purchase. As a statewide service, Rutgers ILL provides easy access to hard-to-find materials in a timely and efficient manner and at a cost savings to library customers throughout the state, including business executives, faculty at New Jersey colleges and universities, high school honor students, and independent scholars and researchers.

Access Services staff, in consultation with the University Delinquent Accounts Office, undertook a major revision of the Libraries’ delinquent accounts policy and resumed attempts to recover long overdue and assumed lost items. We identified and prepared 97 patron records with items due prior to July 2004 for the delinquent accounts and collections process. In response to the Libraries’ due diligence letter mailed in January, 603 items were returned and 30 patron records were cleared. The remaining 67 accounts were sent to the University Delinquent Accounts Office and by the end of the fiscal year, 197 additional items were returned or lost fees paid and 37 additional patron records were cleared. These recovery efforts were highly successful and we plan to continue to collaborate with University Delinquent Accounts to process library delinquent accounts on a regular schedule next FY.

After learning that OCLC was ending support of RLG’s ILL Manager system, interlibrary loan services staff attended several workshops and demonstrations on the ILLiad and Relais interlibrary loan management systems. We selected the ILLiad
system to replace ILL Manager at Rutgers. An Atlas trainer conducted an all-day training session with interlibrary loan and access services staff from all three campuses and the law libraries in June. Interlibrary loan lending staff successfully migrated the lending operation from ILL Manager to ILLiad on June 6, 2007. In May, the Access Services Committee recommended the Libraries begin to deliver electronic copies of print journals in our collections to Rutgers student faculty, and staff, regardless of their “home” campus and at no fee. Public Services Council and Cabinet endorsed the committee’s “Free Article Delivery Proposal” and agreed to commit resources needed for a one-year pilot. Interlibrary loan borrowing and a free Rutgers article delivery pilot project are now scheduled to migrate to the ILLiad system in August.

Collection management staff completed an inventory of the reference and folio collections at the Art Library using Pocketcirc last FY. An inventory of the Art Library’s stacks collection is underway. As a result of inventory activities at the Art Library, the Inventory and Stacks Automation Working Group fine-tuned delivered as well as customized Unicorn inventory reports, recommended procedures for dealing with auto-generated barcodes and uncataloged materials, changed the criteria used to identify damaged books giving better information about the condition of materials, began a systematic review of items found with current locations and statuses that need review or additional action, and devised a method to identify items inventoried not at their owning library. Access Services staff’s inventory initiatives at the Art Library are the driving force behind the development of standard, system wide inventory practices that can be applied to other Rutgers libraries’ collections in future.

Collection Development and Management

- The Access Services Committee reviewed and adopted system wide procedures for handling moldy items and revised procedures for items with accompanying materials.

- The LSM weeding project reached its targeted 20% goal with over 35,000 items withdrawn or transferred to the Annex. Staff are planning a comprehensive shift of the collection.

- Staff completely reorganized and shifted the circulating and bound periodicals collections at the Physics Library; established a folio section at Douglass library for 600 oversized items; and are shifting the Chemistry library with space created by a transfer of several large runs of reference titles to the Annex.

- Collection management and Art library staff completed an inventory of the Art library reference and folio collections and have started an inventory of Art’s stacks collection.

- Missing book reports were produced for stacks searching, for selectors review, and for annual batch withdrawal.
Services and Service Enhancements for Users

- In an effort to create a more inviting atmosphere for study and research, the Libraries introduced new food and drink guidelines July 1, 2006, and began to allow drinks in spill proof containers in library buildings.

- Interlibrary Loan Services extended the Rapid article request service to patrons on the Newark and Camden campuses in November 2006. Patrons on all Rutgers campuses now receive articles that we don’t own from Rapid libraries within 24 hours.

- Late-night building hours at Alexander, SERC, Kilmer, and Douglass libraries were partially restored Spring semester based, in part, on feedback the Libraries received from student government leaders at Douglass College, Rutgers College, and the School of Pharmacy.

- We revised the Libraries’ User Conduct and Security Policy and included language about the appropriate use of facilities. We reviewed library banning procedures with RUPD and University counsel.

- Access Services staff provided comments and suggestions to IPAC for a more user-friendly display of “My Account” in IRIS.

- The Access Services Training Group developed and delivered three customer service training sessions on all three campuses. The sessions were organized around customer service, question analysis and referral, and information services standards composed by the Access Services Committee. The standards were integrated into job expectations and the performance appraisal process in the spring.

Support for Instruction

- Reserve staff investigated and tested how to link library eReserves to Sakai. We wrote instructions for faculty explaining how to link their library course reserves in IRIS to a Sakai course management page, and posted the instructions on the Libraries web site.

- Access services staff checked out 579,058 items to library borrowers July 2006 – June 2007. Reserve circulation totaled 20,665. Both general circulation and reserve circulation decreased 1% from last FY.

- Rutgers delivery service staff filled 50,206 book requests and delivered 3,013 articles electronically for patrons at other Rutgers libraries and off-campus sites. 640 books and 319 articles were delivered to off-campus sites; 292 articles were delivered from same-campus libraries for a fee. Overall, books delivered decreased by 8% and articles by 25%.
• During the 2006-2007 FY, staff borrowed 20,457 books and microforms from other institutions for Rutgers patrons; 16,518 (81%) were E-ZBorrow books requested directly by users or interlibrary loan services staff in the PALCI catalog, representing an 11% increase in E-ZBorrow items borrowed.

• Interlibrary loan services staff acquired 7,193 articles for Rutgers patrons and delivered them to user’s desktops via the Web. 65% (4,681) were acquired through the Rapid system within 24 hours. Overall, articles acquired on interlibrary loan for patrons on the 3 campuses decreased by 9%.

• Reserve staff created over 19,500 PDF document for electronic reserves and made them available to students in the IRIS Reserves module. Web access statistics decreased 7% in requests received and increased 7% in GM transmitted to the ‘eres’ directory on the Libraries’ web server.

**Technical Services/Technical Infrastructure**

• Access services staff tested the GL3.1 release of the Unicorn software in preparation for its implementation over winter break.

• Interlibrary Loan Services staff attended several workshops and demonstrations on ILLiad and Relais. We selected the ILLiad system to replace RLG’s ILL Manager system. Interlibrary loan lending staff successfully migrated its operation from ILL Manager to ILLiad on June 6, 2007. Borrowing and delivery of Rutgers articles are scheduled to migrate to the ILLiad system in August.

• The JClient Training Team was formed to design training and prepare documentation for the new WorkFlows J Client, which will be introduced in summer 2007. The team conducted sessions for access services staff on all campuses in May.

• Access services supervisors and staff attended Director’s Station conducted by Systems staff. We are beginning to use Director’s Station for operating statistics and trend analysis.

• The Borrower’s Charts were converted from Word documents to an online file, the Eligible Borrower’s file, which is easily accessible to staff on the Staff Resources web pages.

• Group coordinators have started to redesign the Access Services Staff Resources web pages. Content will be organized around the activities and resources of the working groups, and information presented in ways that are meaningful to staff working in the area.
• A notice schedule and billing policy was developed for media (videos) and implemented in Unicorn.

• A new delivery van was purchased for the Shipping & Receiving department in accordance with our 4-year replacement cycled based on vehicle mileage and reliability.

• The Shipping & Receiving department metered 30,880 items for USPS delivery for a total postage expenditure of $22,135.39 during 2006-2007.

Outreach and Statewide Collaboration

• An online satisfaction survey was conducted in February 2007, to evaluate Rutgers ILL service to New Jersey Library Network member libraries and to fulfill a requirement of Rutgers statewide services contract. The majority of responding librarians ranked Rutgers interlibrary loan customer service high, and indicated they were likely to recommend the service to a colleague. Respondents shared examples of how a customer used a resource obtained on ILL from Rutgers.

• Rutgers loaned 26,468 books and microforms to other libraries and institutions July 2006 – June 2007; 15,617 or 59% were E-ZBorrow loans to individuals at PALCI libraries, representing an 11% increase in E-ZBorrow lending. RUL filled requests for 14,749 articles during the same period. 8,396 (57%) were delivered from the Alexander Library collection to RAPID partner libraries within 24 hours.

Communications/Exhibits/Programs

• In March 2007 the RUL Access Services Department Hosted the 2007 Ivies+ Access Services Symposium. This two day event began on Thursday 3/15 with a reception at the Art Library and unit tours, and concluded on Friday 3/16 with a full day of speakers and breakout discussions. This was a highly successful event, attended by representatives of 12 institutions. Minutes and presentations are available on the program website.

• ILS Staff attended a workshop on the effect and implications of the merger of RLG and OCLC on SHARES.

• Access services contributed two displays at the State of the Libraries program: the Collection Management Group presented the inventory process and use of laptops and PocketCirc, and members of the training team highlighted the customer service programs delivered in the fall.
External Support

- The Libraries received a $64,000 grant from the New Jersey State Library to provide interlibrary loan services to New Jersey Library Network member libraries July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007

Personnel

- Management of the Physics and Chemistry Libraries was combined into a single position. Use statistics show that Chemistry and Physics libraries are now on par with Math, Chang or Art in key areas of exit counts and circulation transactions. The new Physic-Chemistry Branch Manager position was created when a staff vacancy occurred, and with no disruption of public service. The open line that resulted was transferred to the ILS department to provide public service and on-site supervision of increased interlibrary loan and PALCI activity at LSM.

Departures
Megan Ingegno, Library Associate III, Physics Library
Dave Warner, Library Specialist, LSM [UMDNJ Liaison]
Peter Anderson, Library Associate II, Alexander Library

New Hires
Christine Duffy, Library Specialist, LSM [UMDNJ Liaison]
David Travis, Library Associate II, Alexander ILS
Karen Alberque, Library Associate II, Alexander ILS

Promotions
Eddie Suarez, Library Associate II, LSM
Krista Dandurand, Library Associate II, ILS, LSM
Mike Mansouri, Library Associate II, Chemistry and Physics Library

Budget

The voucher budget for Access Services in New Brunswick was cut by 35%, a reduction of $100,000 leaving a budget of $185,676 for FY 2007. Access Services responded by cutting building hours, consolidating and eliminating public service desks, and reducing student staffing.

System wide access services responded to the budget shortfall by eliminating student staffing of the afternoon shipping run, canceling the Libraries’ Ingenta user-initiated subsidized document service, stopping purchase of copies of dissertations when unavailable for borrowing on interlibrary loan, and eliminating four print brochures.