

New Brunswick Information Services Group—Annual Report, 2010-11

I. The NBISG annual goals that relate to the Libraries Strategic Plan goals are as follows:

RUL- Goal IC: Address information literacy competency standards for students through information literacy materials, services, and programs in partnership with the teaching faculty

- **NBISG Goal/Activity:** Streamline communication & coordination of librarian support for 302 (Scientific & Technical Writing) and 303 (Writing for Business and the Professions).

- **Outcome:** Kevin Mulcahy, Gene Springs and Eileen Stec were appointed as a task force. They have met with Bill Magrino, the director the business and technical writing within the Writing Program. Eileen Stec has created an effective LibGuides guide for the courses. Eileen created and distributed a brief survey to use in these classes.

- **Indicator:** There is improved communication between the Libraries and the administrators of the business and technical writing courses.

- **Status:** ongoing.

- **NBISG Goal/Activity:** Investigate providing seminars on topics that facilitate research across a range of disciplines, such as R or citation analysis software.

- **Outcome:** Three NBISG faculty have offered workshops. Ryan Womack has conducted several workshops on R at Alexander Library and the Hill Center on Busch Campus. Kayo Denda created a series under the auspices of the Margery Somers Foster Center. Currently the series includes one workshop on multimedia and another on interviewing. Jim Niessen conducted two workshops on the Visual History Archive Database. This was co-sponsored by the Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life.

- **Indicator:** Most of seminars were well attended.

- **Status:** Ongoing.

RUL- Goal VB: Invest in staff development and recognition, and support organizational development, including the areas of managing people and resources

- **NBISG Goal:** Provide training for reference and information assistants across the New Brunswick Libraries.

- **Outcome:** Jim Niessen from Alexander Library and Eileen Stec from Douglass Library collaborated on training for IA/RAs in matters that relate to information services across New Brunswick Libraries and Rutgers University Libraries. Kilmer and LSM were not able to participate because, for reasons beyond their control, they tend to hire their IAs somewhat later. Eileen Stec set up a discussion group for RA/IAs in Sakai.

- **Indicator:** The RA/IAs at Alexander and Kilmer Libraries attended the NBL-wide training.

- **Status:** Ongoing.

II. In addition, NBISG addressed the following goals in the 2010-11 academic year:

Goal: Communicate with the new Web Board regarding the placement of reference services on the new RUL website

Activities: Members of NBISG have discussed this topic formally and informally for some time. We have a number of specific ideas for intuitive and attractive ways of presenting on the new web pages all of the different ways that our users can find help with their research. The NBISG chair met with Tibor Purger, co-chair of the board, to discuss input from NBISG. They also discussed the options that might be opened up with the implementation of Voice-Over IP (VOIP) in New Brunswick. VOIP will allow us more flexibility and the ability to share telephone reference across New Brunswick. However, it will be sometime before it is implemented in every library.

Status: Ongoing.

Goal: Discuss the changing needs for reference and instruction in New Brunswick and ways to meet those needs. Discuss possible the formats for reference services in the future.

Activities relating to reference:

- In December NBISG had a broad ranging discussion of reference services generally. Among other points it was stressed that, as the need for reference at the desks declines, we need to get more librarians involved in other forms of reference, such as email and chat. We also discussed using library schools students more extensively instead of librarians at the desks.
- In January there was demonstration of Adobe's ConnectNow for videoconferenced reference consultation. ConnectNow is very easy to use for both the user and the librarian and does not require the user to download software to get started. It offers a number of distinct advantages over chat reference, especially the ability to share a browser and search a catalog or database with a user. We will offer training and it will be up to individual librarians to decide whether and how to take advantage of it.

Activities relating to instruction:

- In September we discussed e-college and distance learning.
- In September we also had a productive discussion of best practices for instruction. There was a similar discussion in February about the ways to meet the changing needs for instruction in New Brunswick. It was suggested, again, that we make better use of library schools students, especially as "floaters" who circulate among the students and give them hands-on help with their searches.
- In December we explored ways to serve faculty engaged in instruction online. One outcome is that faculty now have the option for including in their Sakai sites links to LibGuides and reserves. In April, Tom Glynn, Mei Ling Lo, Jill Nathanson, and Jane Sloan met with Chris Scherer, SAS Dean of Entrepreneurial Initiatives to discuss online instruction and also streaming video in online courses.

- In February there was a demonstration of “clickers” for use in face-to-face instruction. A clicker is an “audience response devise”; it allows students to answer a series of questions anonymously in a class and summarizes the answers. We have a purchased a total of sixty clickers for use in New Brunswick.

Status: Ongoing.

III. Issues not relating to NBISG goals:

PC Reservation and Guest-User Accounts

We continue to receive complaints from alumni, community borrowers, and visiting researchers regarding the limit of two hours of computer time per day on the guest accounts. At present, we can only create a special class of guest user by dedicating specific computers for their use. Before renewing the PC Reservation contract for another year, colleagues in PCWG and IIS examined products available from other vendors. None of them were able to provide the flexible options we need. In addition, a number of guest users have found ways to use students’ netids, work around the PC Reservation time limits, or create multiple accounts. On the whole, however, we have somewhat fewer problems and complaints regarding the guest accounts.

Reference Statistics

NBISG discussed ways that we can save time and effort by collecting reference statistics online. We considered a number of free and commercial products and also the option creating our own “homegrown” version. We chose Gimlet (gimlet.com). Gimlet is easy to use and flexible; individual libraries can configure it to their individual needs. The biggest drawback is the fact that Gimlet will not automatically generate statistical reports for more than two variables. Three or more variables have to be downloaded into a spreadsheet in order to create reports. The use of Gimlet is just a semester pilot and will help us decide what we need in an online statistical product. One additional benefit of the pilot is that it may help us reach a consensus about how we define reference transactions.

IV. Statistics for New Brunswick Libraries, 2010-11

New Brunswick Libraries, Reference Desk Service Requests

		Reference		Directional		Total
		In-Person	Phone	In-Person	Phone	
FY2010	Count	11789	2490	9916	1388	25583
	% of Total	46.1%	9.7%	38.8%	5.4%	—
FY2011	Count	9453	2087	10277	1463	23280
	% of Total	40.6%	9.0%	44.1%	6.3%	—
Change	Count	-2336	-403	+361	+75	-2303
	% Change of Count	-19.8%	-16.2%	+3.6%	+5.4%	-9.0%

Does not include missing statistics from Alcohol Studies (Dec 2010 - Jun 2011) and Art (Jun 2011)

New Brunswick Libraries, Off-Desk Service Requests

		Reference			Directional			AAL & Meebo	Total
		In-Person	Phone	Email	In-Person	Phone	Email		
FY2010	Count	861	355	2269	336	147	73	3396	7437
	% of Total	11.6%	4.8%	30.5%	4.5%	2.0%	1.0%	45.7%	—
FY2011	Count	915	324	2239	363	35	93	4298	8267
	% of Total	11.1%	3.9%	27.1%	4.4%	0.4%	1.1%	52.0%	—
Change	Count	+54	-31	-30	+27	-112	+20	+902	+830
	% Change of Count	+6.3%	-8.7%	-1.3%	+8.0%	-76.2%	+27.4%	+26.6%	+11.2%

Does not include missing statistics from Alcohol Studies (Dec 2010 - Jun 2011), Art (Jun 2011), and Music (Feb-Apr & Jun 2011)

New Brunswick Libraries Instruction

		RU Undergrad		RU All Others		Non-RU		Total	
		Classes	Students	Classes	Students	Classes	Students	Classes	Students
FY2010	Count	525	10221	68	1671	18	1146	611	13038
	% of Total	85.9%	78.4%	11.1%	12.8%	2.9%	8.8%	—	—
FY2011	Count	491	9891	122	2773	24	571	637	13235
	% of Total	77.1%	74.7%	19.2%	21.0%	3.8%	4.3%	—	—
Change	Count	-34	-330	+54	+1102	+6	-575	+26	+197
	% Change of Count	-6.5%	-3.2%	+79.4%	+65.9%	+33.3%	-50.2%	+4.3%	+1.5%

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Glynn, NBISG Chair
August 1, 2011

