



User Needs Assessment “Next Steps” Workshop: Phase 2

Monday, October 11, 1999, Main Library Conference Room

1:15pm – 3:45pm

DRAFT Text – User Needs Assessment Project Public Website
“Actions Taken” section as of 10/11/99

University Libraries’ User Needs Assessment “Actions Taken” Status Report

The University of Iowa Libraries is committed to using data from needs assessment surveys to help advance its services and programs system-wide. While the needs assessment results indicated a high level of satisfaction with both resources and services they also provide valuable information on unmet or partially met needs of graduates and undergraduates. In July 1998 approximately 50 Libraries’ services staff attended a workshop to develop improvement strategies based on recommendations from the 1998 undergraduate survey. Many ideas for improving services and addressing student concerns were generated. Departments are continuing to implement changes based on survey results as well as other student and faculty feedback. Another follow-up workshop is planned to work on improvement strategies based on both the undergraduate and graduate surveys. Keep checking the website for news of further improvements.

Customer Service and Training – Students seek improved service from all levels of staff including on the phone and in person. The *Customer Services “Tips”* sheet was developed to improve phone and in person interactions with the public and to use with new staff. The Libraries’ has developed a comprehensive staff training program and last year’s offerings included a speaker on intergenerational communication to help staff with incoming students. In 1999-00 sessions on developing excellent training plans and a program on quality customer service are examples of offerings. Each department head in the library system develops a customized training plan for new student and permanent staff. Main Library staff are working on more efficient and friendly ways of getting library users to the right department and staff member. A phone protocol policy is in the works.

Refurbishing/remodeling – Main Library high use study lounges and corridors on 5th, 4th, and 3rd floors are now more functional and comfortable thanks to new furnishings and carpeting provided through funds allocated from the Office of the Provost. Also the conference room and group study located on the 2nd floor has been recarpeted. A comprehensive Main Library space and remodeling plan for the future has been developed. Recent renovations include the new 1st floor south entrance reading area funded in part by a generous donation from the Connie Irwin Fund. Other physical improvements are noted below by department.

Orientation and library instruction for new and continuing students – New programs to orient students have been launched including a number of instructional sessions during Weeks of Welcome (WOW). Drop-in *Personal OASIS Workshop (POW)* sessions were established. The *Learn and Earn* contest, a fun way for new students to learn about departments throughout the library system, personally meet library staff, and

perhaps win a prize donated by a local business, was implemented. Workshops are regularly offered in web searching and creation techniques. The Libraries also initiated the UIII (University of Iowa Information Literacy Initiative) and the Science Information Literacy Initiative in partnership with faculty to help students develop information seeking and research skills within courses.

Improving LWIS (Libraries-Wide Information System), the Libraries' web presence

-- The homepage of LWIS was overhauled during 1998-99 to provide easier access to library services such as the "Ask a Librarian" e-mail reference service, highlight the research consultation service, and make the Gateway to the Internet and electronic databases easier to locate and search by subject. Individual departments throughout the library system also improved their website. The redesign also includes a "power reference shelf" of key items for library users and a list of general indexes. LWIS can now be searched so that library users can locate information within its bounds. A major goal for the coming year is to rename the LWIS to better match its content and purpose.

Access to books in Main Library – The Access Services Department has allocated more student workers to improve shelving of books and journals so they can be found more easily.

Collections – Usability studies of general interest databases were conducted with students and their insights were included in the decision to acquire a new online database.

OASIS - OASIS the Libraries' electronic catalog and automated library system is in the process of being replaced by a much more user-friendly web-based system. Full implementation is scheduled to be complete by August 2000. Accompanying the new library system effort is a major project to convert bibliographic records for about 700,000 titles found only in the paper card catalogs to electronic form. This retrospective conversion project should be completed in approximately three years and will make the Libraries' resources much more accessible on campus and from remote locations.

Signage – Main Library signage on the first floor has been improved by the Information Desk to direct users to Media Services, the Copy Center, and Libraries Administration Offices. A number of confusing old signs were removed. "North" and "South" were added to the outside directory signs to help students identify the entrances.

Marketing of library services – Bookmarks were created for all departments highlighting services, web pages, and important contact information for library users. A "tickertape kiosk" was installed at the North Circulation Desk with messages about services.

Click on to the following Libraries' departments to see what improvements they've made based on the surveys:

Art Library -- Plans are underway in conjunction with the School of Art and Art History for a new Art Library to be located in the proposed new Art Building. The new library will provide more effective study space and additional room for library collections relating to the study of Art and Art History.

Biological Sciences Library -- The University of Iowa Biological Sciences Library is a focal point for the University's Biological Sciences Renovation Project. The newly configured information technology-oriented branch library, completed in January 1999, is housed in a completely renovated historical 1902 building, formerly known as the Biology Annex. The project preserves the external appearance of academic architecture from the early twentieth century while having the functionality of a modern structure. The University received a generous grant of \$700,000 from the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust to partially fund the library.

The new Biological Sciences Library has data/telecommunications connections throughout and brings together Botany and Biology information resources in a more networked environment. The new library houses a joint instructional space used by librarians to train library users on effective information seeking and research skills and by Biological Sciences faculty for courses. Networked access available in the classroom and throughout the library facility enables students, faculty, and staff to use multiple databases found on the Libraries' online catalog, OASIS, as well as the Libraries-Wide Information System (the Libraries' web presence). The LWIS links researchers and students to *BIOWEB*, *Biotech Biblionet*, *BioChemnet*, *Biology Index*, as well as numerous chemistry, computer science, math, and other relevant resources related to the biological sciences.

The new library occupies three floors with a total area of 6500 square feet. The classroom is on the first floor along with space for electronic and selected print reference materials and staff activities including one-to-one research consultations. The second and third floor houses separate space for the general collection, an area for current periodicals, and two small group study areas.

Chemistry Library -- The most popular change for undergraduates has been the addition of course reserves to the Chemistry Library webpage. Staff now scans all uncopyrighted material on course reserve into PDF files and load them onto the web page. The reserves are available from any location, 24 hours per day. Students no longer have to wait for reserves to come back from another patron, nor wait in lines to use the copiers.

The Chemistry Library has five new tables and four new chairs to provide study space and seating. Two new microcomputers will provide additional and faster access points for compact disk information resources and the web. A hard drive tower was purchased to hold the Chemical Abstracts database. The tower will allow the library to provide access to Chemical Abstracts from every desktop on campus and at Oakdale. It provides much higher access speeds and greater reliability than the previous tower.

The web page was revised to provide better floor plans and directions. A news section was added along with improved links to user education sections.

Stacks were rearranged in the main reading room (400 CB) and in the adjacent room (403 CB) since the Botany materials were transferred to the new Biological Sciences Library. The Chemistry Library gained more shelf space, more daylight, and the ability to continuously shelf the journals around the periphery of the room in alphabetical order. All of the circulating collection is now in the mezzanine and reference collections are in 403 CB. New signs will go up soon.

The Chemistry Library will be recarpeting during 1999-00

Engineering Library -- Work is underway on new physical facilities for the Engineering Library to be completed by May 2001 in the Seamans Engineering Building. Undergraduate access has been expanded to periodicals indexed in *Applied Science and Technology Index*. Staff are increasing their efforts to make sure students are aware of basic engineering library resources by alerting faculty to new resources such as *Web of Science*, *Current Contents*, and *Compendex Web*. Staff have worked to further improve customer relations.

Government Publications -- Librarians in the Government Publications Department have incorporated customer service guidelines into the Government Publications student staff orientation plans and reviewed guidelines with all full-time staff. Professional librarians staff the department during the heaviest usage times. Use of electronic scheduling makes referring users to available professional staff more effective. The departmental webpage has been improved including annotated guides to major collections in all formats, with hotlinks where appropriate. Library staff are experimenting with marketing via poster displays and flyers highlighting collection strengths. The department held an open house to ensure that other library staff understand its collection strengths and services in order to make proper referrals for library users. The print and microform reader areas have been improved and are more spacious and well lighted. The northwest corner of the reading room is more conducive to study.

Mathematical Sciences Library -- A new librarian was hired as head of both the Mathematical Sciences and Physics Libraries. Work continued on moving lesser-used materials to compact storage facilities in the Main Library. Books can be shelved in their proper place rather than on hard-to-find book trucks or be so tightly shelved that they cannot be removed.

Marvin A. Pomerantz Business Library -- New equipment was installed by the Henry B. Tippie College of Business in the ARTIC room (Advanced Realtime Information Center) and librarians can now provide improved instruction on important business information resources. Wireless laptop checkout was implemented.

Media Services -- Two new reader printers have been installed over the past year. A new Microdax reader will be available during Fall 1999 semester. The Microdax can read and print information found on microcards and also enhance and digitize images found on other microformats. Media Services staff have undergone customer services training and have joined forces with the Information Desk/Reference staff to cover the department and answer phones during busy times.

Physics Library -- A new librarian was hired as head of both the Physics Libraries and Mathematical Sciences Libraries.

Psychology Library -- A librarian has been assigned full-time as of July 1, 1999 to the Psychology Library. A pilot project in electronic reserves was implemented making it easier for students to have 24-hour access to course materials on reserve.

Rita Benton Music Library -- An additional CD-ROM station was installed for the use of non-licensed software. A large part of the music scores backlog was cataloged. Shelving was added that will accommodate at least part of the new materials. A

consultant from the Eastman School of Music Sibley Library visited and made recommendations for future improvements. Databases of gift scores and of audiotapes of School of Music performances were created and mounted on the web. Library hours have been restored to Fall 1998 levels.

Reference/Information Desk -- Librarians are now on call for reference service at lighter periods of the day (particularly in the morning. When more than one staff member is on duty one periodically "roves" the area to assist library users beyond the information desk. Desk staff also accompany users to the stacks to assist in locating books when necessary and when staffing permits. Electronic reference services have been improved through implementation of web-based e-mail and consultation forms. The electronic reference service has been renamed "Ask a Librarian" and placed in a more visible location on the libraries' web presence. Additional customer service training has been implemented.

Hardin Library for the Health Sciences -- A large expansion to the Information Commons was completed doubling its size. A new user education coordinator was hired.

Information Arcade -- New computers have been installed in partnership with ITS in the Information Arcade classroom. Student assistants have undergone rigorous customer service training and permanent staff are concentrating on giving immediate feedback to student assistants assigned to the public service desk to improve service. A new Information Arcade brochure has been developed and new flyers to further market Arcade services in other library departments and in ITCs around the campus. An electronic Information Arcade newsletter was revived.

Louise Noun- Mary Louise Smith Iowa Women's Archives (IWA) -- The Iowa Women's Archives developed a handout with a step-by-step tips for first-time IWA users.

Special Collections -- Records for a significant proportion of the Libraries' holdings of early printed and other rare books are only in card catalog format and will remain so until retrospective conversion is complete. To compensate for this, Special Collections has been moving general information about the book collections to its website (<http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/spec-coll>), and it is now possible to gain an overview of the collections' strengths. Information about manuscript and University Archive collections has been available traditionally in typed inventories found only in the Department. This information too is being moved to increasingly robust webpages. Also in an electronic vein, the Department's e-mail box is being used more and more frequently by both local and remote readers, allowing the staff to respond more quickly and accurately. Some requests can now be met with scans returned electronically rather than with photocopies sent by mail.

For many years, materials which were not rare but difficult to handle had been sent to the "W" collection maintained by the Department. This unwieldy collection had come to include a great many frequently sought books and short-run periodicals about film and television; access to them was limited by Special Collections 9-5 Monday to Friday service hours. The "W" collection has now been entirely disbanded: nearly all of the film material has been recataloged with some dispersed to appropriate Main library shelves or to Permanent Reserve while the small number of genuinely rare titles has been merged with the principal rare book sequence.

Special Collections has a long history of encouraging use of its materials with "show and tell" sessions with instructors and students. This outreach activity has been vigorously pursued, and the number of instructors requesting class meetings continues to grow each year.

The Libraries' very fine collection of artist's books, mostly housed in Special Collections, is difficult to access because there are few standard descriptive terms to describe what are often complex, imaginative and unique creations. Consequently, Special Collections now maintains an open "browsing" collection in its reading room. Students and staff in the Center for the Book and other programs can simply come by from time to time and be assured they will see a range of newly acquired books of particular interest as well as key examples of older work.

Special Collections also receives a great many booksellers' catalogs which it does not keep. These are now available to the public, can be browsed at any time, and can, after a couple of weeks, be taken away by anyone wanting to do so.