

SUNY IDS Pilot Project
Minutes of August 11, 2004 Meeting at SUNY Geneseo

Welcome/Logistics for the Day/Review of IDS Pilot Project Background, Goals and Accomplishments to Date

Ed Rivenburgh opened the meeting with an introduction of guest, Lynn King, who is the new Director at Schenectady Community College.

As we quickly move into the second semester of the project, plans have been set to wipe data from the first eight months off the calendar, as of Monday, August 23rd. This data will remain available for those who might want to access it, but we will all have a clean slate, as we move into September, to begin posting transactions for a new semester. Turnaround times from spring/summer will have no impact on fall data collected.

Ed will be delivering reports on the project, in coming months, to SAC, NYLINK membership and the Arts & Sciences Library Directors (at their fall meeting in October).

Participants were assured that only those with passwords have access to the databank of information that has been collected.

Ed recommended the following two readings as supportive of the work in which the project is engaged:

- 1.) 2003 OCLC Environmental Scan
- 2.) June 04 ARL Bimonthly Report #234; article entitled "Libraries Dealing with the Future Now" (available FREE at www.arl.org)

Attendees were referred to a packet of information regarding library trends. The data supporting this presentation was gathered from the IPEDS reports of 10 of the SUNY A & S libraries, going back through 1999-2000. Trends highlighted by the data include rising operating expenses, rising FTE counts, decreasing resources for materials and rising demand for ILL services. Ultimately, with budgets diminishing and costs increasing, our collections are being depleted of the materials students and faculty seek. Hence, an ever going reliance on an "access", rather than "ownership", model.

Ed reviewed the major premises upon which the project was based (a copy of these included in packets). He highlighted the following:

- Premise #5: The foundation of this pilot project is based upon each participating library meeting the performance standards outlined in the project proposal.
- Premise #6: Participating SUNY 4-year libraries own and mutually share one common collection.

- Premise #7: (CRITICAL): Interlending NOT Interlibrary Loan!! since we are lending materials from within a common collection.
- Premise #10: We will strive to reduce as many operational variables as possible – by relying on standardization of equipment, processes, policies and the performance standards. This is definitely not a project designed to see how much variation can be placed on the IDS system and still succeed.
- Premise #11: This pilot project may prove not to be just an add-on to your regular library operations – potentially it could lead to a significant change in how SUNY 4-year libraries will conduct business on a daily basis.
- Premise #12: You may need to set new priorities and reallocate funds to develop an effective access versus purchase program.
- Premise #13: The time required by each local library staff to collect, share and analyze statistics from the pilot project will be kept to a minimum. Each library will concentrate on providing improved information delivery services; the pilot project support staff will provide the statistical feedback necessary to each campus.

Ed then reviewed the Project Goals, which are attached to these minutes.

Participants reviewed a document which shows what percentage of all ILL activity, during the project's timeline, each library was able to accomplish by dealing with other participant libraries. The chart also revealed that, during this period, all 12 participating campuses were able to collectively handle about 28-29% of total loans. In other terms, we have been able to meet almost a third of the total demand we face simply by relying on each other.

Project Website Modifications & Transaction Analysis

Ed introduced Geneseo's web-master, Kate Merrill, who is to be credited with much of the design of the project web site. Those who have not looked at the site in recent days should do so, as it has been greatly enhanced.

Kate demonstrated how to read the IDS web-site charts.

Kate noted that most of the tools you will need to chart your progress are listed on the web site under "Performance Data". You can easily track turnover of articles, books or both between any two pilot participant libraries, and you can define the dates of coverage you would like to review. You can also track transaction times for all participants if desired.

The web site is set up to allow you to either include or exclude unusual or “extreme” transactions as you determine average turnaround times. For the purposes of the project, project staff have set “extreme” to include anything over 150 hours.

The site has also been set up to allow participants to look at data in a variety of different types of charts. You can, for instance, trace times allotted to the various pieces of each transaction by requesting a bar chart or a pie chart. Each transaction is broken into six parts and the timing for each part is illustrated.

With Kate’s help, and with audience participation, the group tracked several example transactions from beginning to end. Discussion centered on where there appeared to be slowdowns in the process, and what the cause(s) of the slowdowns might be. Concerns were expressed about the definition of terms such as “shipped”. For example, some libraries ship materials and then update their records. Others update, and then ship. These kind of variances could certainly have a serious impact on the times illustrated on the IDS charts, and harm the accuracy of the stats.

There was discussion of whether it might help for libraries to share “notes” on problematic transactions, so that we would get a better sense of why some transactions took more than normal amounts of time to fill. Members of the Geneseo project staff indicated that they would need access to campus SQL servers, where the “notes” info. resides, in order to be able to include this data. More on this option later in the minutes.

Issues with the LAND delivery service were discussed. While the service provider has guaranteed a one-day turnaround to all project participants, this hasn’t always been happening. Mary Alice Lynch, Director of Nylink, will look into these concerns. A desire for more frequent daily deliveries was expressed, but the financial impact of that expansion would be significant.

Intro. to SUNYConnect Union Catalog

During lunch, Maureen Zajkowski, from SUNY OLIS (Office of Library & Information Services), provided a demo of the soon to be released SUNY Union Catalog, temporarily being called “SUNCat”. SUNCat is running on version 16 of ALEPH and provides a real-time link to the item availability status of our collections. Currently, you can check the shelf status for 8 SUNY IDS Pilot Project library collections .

Maureen provided a url to access the Union Cat. The catalog will be available to the public in late fall 04, but is searchable now by project participants. It is anticipated that universal borrowing functionality will be available, in some form, by March 2005.

The Union Catalog is set up so that libraries can limit their search to a wide variety of subsets of libraries within SUNY, as per their preference. For example, IDS pilot project participants can limit their searches to the holdings of the Arts & Sciences libraries. This

will turn up any title owned by at least one of the A&S Colleges. An item will also show any other SUNY libraries that might own it, but it **must** be in the collection of at least one A&S Library to be included in a search that has been limited to this particular group.

Maureen noted that every campus will still be able to access their own catalog independently and will maintain their own circ policies. The Union Catalog and unmediated lending, however, will necessitate a set of borrowing rules & regulations that will be shared by all of our libraries. When a user of a campus catalog is unable to find a title they need on their home campus, they will be able to scope out to the Union Catalog, and identify libraries that own their item. Once they place a request for it, the Catalog will automatically initiate a randomized string of owning libraries and the request will be sent to the 1st potential lender in the string.

Items will generally be sent to the patron's home library. If a patron has more than one home library, the item will go to the library from which the request was generated.

If project users are accessing info in the Union Catalog and identify errors or problems, there is a feedback form to report them back to Laura Murray at OLIS. Maureen also suggested that participants use the IDS listserv to discuss how they are utilizing the Union Cat. It is still in the prototype stage so folks should not be surprised to find strange things. You will continue to see regular changes being made if you use it.

OCLC's Direct ILL Module: Potential for IDS Project?

Jon Penn, of Nylink, followed Maureen's presentation with a demo of the OCLC Direct Request system, which has recently undergone some updates and improvements. Direct Request is OCLC's end-user ILL system. Requests that go through this system can be automatically routed from the patron, using either First Search databases or other external sources, to ILLIAD, without ILL staff intervention. Direct Request supports the goals of the IDS pilot project in that it promotes rapid transmission of requests, and it can be adapted fairly easily for small group use. Libraries would create an online profile which would either send requests to ILL staff for review before routing them to another library to fill, or would skip the staff review, and route directly on to the prospective lending library, via a custom holdings path.

Interactive Discussion of Issues

Following lunch, the group divided, with director's meeting in one area and ILL staff in another. The major goal of this split was to give ILL staff a chance to talk independently about the practical issues they face on a daily basis, and to report these back to the director's for attention. We adjourned to separate quarters just a little after 1:00 p.m. and re-convened the full group for report backs at about 2:00 p.m.

Report Back from ILL Staff Meeting

Michelle Parry served as the moderator for the staff group. Staff would like Director's to be particularly aware of the following:

- Need for up-to-date equipment (scanners, photocopiers, etc.)
- Technology needs of ILL staff in today's world; some ILL staffers are struggling as they work with IT staff on their campuses, who may not understand the issues or the importance of taking action quickly as needs arise; those campuses that have a knowledgeable systems person within the library – who can deal with most issues and works directly with ILL staff on a regular basis – are finding life a good deal easier than those who do not have this ready access to help
- Need to open up lending to more kinds of materials. There are a few libraries that are not currently lending parts of their collections, such as various AV formats. It would be helpful if these libraries would reconsider their positions on this issue and lend wherever possible
- Need for potential re-allocation of staff to ILL as demand increases
- Need for solid ILLIAD and Odyssey training. Many staff, who had already been to training cited a need for further help
- Need to recognize that ILL staff are sometimes being asked to wear too many hats – particularly the librarians – and are finding this situation stressful

Michelle also indicated that people have found that setting up custom holdings for the project participants works extremely well. Without custom holdings, the process slows down significantly

- Finally, ILL staff would like to devise a means of getting together, as a group, more frequently. Their feeling is that this closer communication has become an essential element of the service they provide.

Report Back from Director's Meeting

Janet Potter, Director for SUNY Oneonta's Library, gave a report-back from the Director's meeting.

Janet noted that the Director's had first discussed how helpful it was to be able to analyze transaction data in such depth. The Director's also talked about the following:

- Importance of adequate training; concerns about the quality of ATLAS training
- Transformational idea of SUNY libraries working with a single, shared collection

- Problems with LAND delivery schedules. Mary Alice Lynch, Director of Nylink, had joined the Director's group and will look into these concerns.
- Growing need for interfacing between ILL and Circulation areas and the need to explore expanding staffing into evening hours to take better advantage of the LAND delivery
- Will we add more libraries (from either SUNY or the private sector) after the Pilot ends in December, 2004??
- What kind of materials were we not able to access by depending solely on each other? Can we identify these?
- Need of some libraries to work toward a more consistent workflow in daily ILL operations
- Would an online list of helpful hints, shared by ILL staffers, be helpful?

Janet went on to list the parameters participants will need to sign off on for continuing participation this fall, 2004. They include the following:

- Participants must use custom holdings
- Everyone must use both borrowing & lending
- Use of the notes field is suggested to identify problems that are unusual and/or that tend to slow down the processing of transactions. Mark Sullivan, SUNY Geneseo, can set these note fields up so that bracketed comments will not appear to the rest of the group
- All ILL Coordinators and Directors will be expected to participate in a November conference call meeting
- Geneseo and Oswego have agreed to borrow and lend, through the project, to Empire State faculty and students. If there are a couple of additional libraries ready to do this, it would be helpful
- There will be a mini pilot, with perhaps four members of the full pilot group, who will try out the OCLC Direct Request ILL system this fall. Cortland has already been using the system
- By spring 05 all members should be up and running on Odyssey?? It was recommended that those who are currently using Odyssey might select to all list each other as "trusted senders", and thereby take full advantage of the speed of delivery direct to the patron, without the ILL intermediary
- Library Director's from each participating library will be responsible for sending in their decision to continue in the project for spring 05 by December 1, 2004

Mary Alice Lynch mentioned that she has heard concerns expressed by those outside of our pilot, that the formation of cliques within the LAND Delivery service, could have a negative impact on those outside the clique, and thereby, damage the possibility of increasing membership in LAND.

Mary Alice also mentioned that in early 05, OCLC will be introducing a new collection analysis tool that looks promising.

The Director's talked about what the introduction of the SUNY Union Catalog and patron initiated ILL will mean for all of us.

Ed R. indicated that his staff has pulled about 800 randomly selected records, from the full list of fall transactions, to analyze record-by-record what types of problems were causing libraries to be unable to reach the 48-hour fill-time standard

Concluding Remarks –

Mary Alice offered her congratulations to all pilot participants for their hard work and collaborative efforts this past spring. She noted that “collaboration” is often both the hardest part of any project and yet, it is often also the most rewarding piece of what we do.

Ed closed by asking that people take a close look at the new project web site, which includes several improved support services. He also promoted use of the IDS listserv as a mode of quick communication when you are encountering a problem.

He asked that those who use the SUNY Union Catalog in the fall provide feedback through the IDS listserv; those that wish to incorporate “notes” into their transaction data should contact Mark Sullivan at SUNY Geneseo; and he asked that we all consider the question of whether we will be able to require use of Odyssey by spring. Those who are already using it were enthusiastic about the prospect.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Beth Bell
Library Director, SUNY Oswego