

August 10, 2005
Arthur Public Services Committee Meeting Minutes

The Public Services Committee met at Lincoln University. Attending this meeting were: Lois Marshall -- Lincoln University, Tena Barrett – William Woods University, Lucia D’Agostino – Columbia College, Waheedah Bilal – Westminster College, Cindy Bassett -- Missouri State Library, and Nina Stawski – Stephens College.

The Directors have each filled out a form that Cindy Bassett has devised called a Visiting Patron Policy Template. The template has seven questions regarding access for non-institution patrons. Each library has filled out the template and they have all been returned to Cindy. After reviewing the responses it was decided that there should be two methods of access to the information. Patrons should be able to access the answers based on the question (to be able to see all six institutions responses to one question), or access the answers based on each institution’s responses. Cindy will then compile the material in two ways. When the committee is satisfied with the appearance and function we will submit them to Lynne Edgar for a trial web page to show to our library staff members and Directors. Hopefully the information would be made available as a link in the Arthur catalog, so that patrons in the Arthur catalog could view the policies of any of the six libraries if they so desired.

Cindy let us know that Innovative has put the XML server on hold for an indefinite period of time. The original plan was that the Missouri State Library would provide the software to the entire cluster.

Cindy also gave us an update about the status of WebBridge. There are learning sessions involving the implementation of WebBridge. The Arthur Site Coordinators and others must organize and iron out many issues before the Public Services Committee will become involved with this project. The Public Services group will be involved with the web page design from the end user’s perspective--designing the icons and buttons for usability. Cindy provided a flow-chart and answered some questions about how WebBridge functions to display resources other than journal articles.

The Directors have asked that the Public Services Committee work on ways to find out if information about non-requestable items can be generated from the loan rules. Non-requestable items are materials or formats that patrons are unable to borrow through online requests (such as DVDs, videos, or CDs), however, patrons from your own library can check them out and take them off-site. The committee members in Public Services decided that we do not know enough about the loan rules, or other catalog features that could be utilized, to select a note or message field. Pat Seavey did rather extensive research on this question and has verified that the loan rules will not work for this purpose. Also, using the existing field for Status should be avoided due to the pop-up messages that would be generated at the time of check in or check out of the materials. These messages would be very confusing to student workers at the Circulation desk who would probably respond inappropriately to the pop-up messages. Pat’s suggestion was to use the OPAC message field. This field appears in the OPAC in the middle of a record,

after the location and call number fields but before the status field. It does not generate pop-up messages and the coding can be rapidly updated. The major drawback to the use of this field is that the maximum length of code is 14 characters. This would work for all of the libraries except the Missouri State Library. For example, the field could say, "SC USERS ONLY" or "LU USERS ONLY." Unfortunately, "MOSL USERS ONLY" would be too many characters. It was felt that a "work around" could be found for this issue though. The Arthur Public Services group decided that the use of the OPAC message field is acceptable for further investigation. We are then suggesting that the Arthur Directors committee review the use of the OPAC message field to see if they feel that it might work in situations where "non-requestable" items are "available" in the status field, however, the OPAC message field will allow further clarification. A special thank you goes to Pat Seavey for researching this issue so thoroughly.

Cindy Bassett will be asking Chris Niemeyer for a copy of his programming code for a basic tutorial on using and searching the OPAC at the University of Missouri, St. Louis Library. <http://www.umsl.edu/services/libteach/> The Public Services committee felt that it was a good, well-designed general program. There are two advantages to using his program. First, copyright will not be an issue, as we will have the copyright owners permission to use, modify, and post the program as long as both he and his institution are credited for it. Second, the tutorial offers instructors, whether library staff or professors, the opportunity to give online assignments or quizzes about using the online catalog, and then the students submit their completed results for grades. Cindy will be asking Chris about the best way to get a copy of his code and whether he would object if it were tweaked to conform to the needs of the Arthur cluster.

The next meeting of this Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, November 2, 2-4 pm. at The Missouri State Library.

Respectfully submitted,
Nina Stawski
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