Communication with Forum Facilitators for the 2009 MOBIUS Conference

Donna Russell (Truman State University) and Mary Batterson (Columbia College) were the 2008 – 2009 MACPAC members who handled the communication with the forum facilitators. It was the first time for both of them to do this.

All proposals submitted for forums were accepted this year.

In addition to the "MCO Feedback" forum facilitated by Beth Fisher of MCO, the 2009 MOBIUS Conference had three forums:

1. "Planning for Policies and Procedures Documentation" (Forum Facilitator: Amy R. Pennington, Pius XII Memorial Library, Saint Louis University)
2. "Problem and/or High Maintenance Patrons: Strategies for Successful Outcomes" (Forum Facilitator: John Baken, Fontbonne University Library)
3. "What's in a Name – Renaming and Reorganization of the Department Formerly Known as 'Reference'" (Forum Facilitator: Martha Allen, Pius XII Memorial Library, Saint Louis University)

Timeline of the Communication with the Facilitators

December 11, 2008: Personalized emails were sent to the three individuals for whom MACPAC had approved their forum proposals. This acceptance letter included the following points:

- Indicated whether they had been assigned a 45 or 60-minute time slot.
- Gave the deadline of 5:00 p.m. on Friday, December 19, 2008, for them to confirm they were still interested in facilitating the forum.
- Included the information they had provided in their forum proposal and asked them to submit any changes as to how the information should appear in the conference program by 5:00 p.m., Friday, January 30, 2009.
- Listed forum guidelines.
- Listed dates of note: deadlines for the forum facilitators and dates when they would hear more from us about various matters related to the conference and their forums.

March 12, 2009: Emails were sent to inform/remind the forum facilitators (except for Beth Fisher) that the MOBIUS website now contained the conference program as well as information on how to register for the conference and for a room at Tan-Tar-A. Asked the forum facilitators to register for the conference soon if they had not already done so. Told the forum facilitators that information about the technology available in each of the Tan-Tar-A meeting rooms would be emailed to them in April.

April 9, 2009: Emails were sent to all the forum facilitators, including Beth Fisher, with information about posting of forum questions to the conference website and about technology provisions at the conference.

- Attached a copy of the Forum Guidelines we had provided them in the December 11, 2008, email. (One of these guidelines highly recommended that the facilitators prepare a list of questions in advance of the conference to keep the discussion focused and moving at the forums.)
- Told them that if they would like their list of questions posted to the conference website prior to the conference so that attendees could start thinking about their forum's topic, the facilitators needed to submit the questions to mcoconf@umsystem.edu by May 5, 2009. The list of questions did not need to be the final version.
- Told the facilitators that we would email them closer to the conference with the number of registrants for their forum so that they would know how many printed copies of their questions to bring with them if that is what they so chose to do.
- Provided information about the technology available at the conference for the facilitators.
- Reminded them to register for the conference itself and for lodging at Tan-Tar-A if they had not already done so.

May 21, 2009: Personalized emails were sent to the forum facilitators, except for Beth Fisher, with the information below. (We emailed Beth a copy of the email on May 27, 2009, so that she would see what had been sent to the other facilitators.)

- Number of registrants for their session as of the closing of Early Bird Registration on May 15, 2009.
- If the facilitators were planning on bringing handouts, told them to allow for extra copies for attendees who registered after May 15th.
- Name and institution of the person who would be the forum recorder for their session.
- Told them that the forum recorder would submit a written report to Donna Russell and Mary Batterson after the conference and that the report would be posted later to the MOBIUS Conference website.
- Name and institution of the room host for their session.
- Listed the duties of the room host.
- Reiterated the Forum Guidelines.

June 8, 2009: Personalized emails were sent to all four forum facilitators thanking them for having facilitated a forum. This email also told them that their session evaluations would be emailed to them later by MCO and that if there were any documents related to their forum that they wanted posted to the conference website, they should send them to mcoconf@umsystem.edu by June 15, 2009.

June 8, 2009: A separate email was sent to all four forum facilitators asking them for feedback about the pre-conference communication with them, the room setup, and the support received while facilitating the forum. Specific questions were listed to elicit this feedback. Also reminded them to send any forum documents they wanted posted to the conference website to mcoconf@umsystem.edu by June 15, 2009.