

MERLIN ILL Committee Meeting, July 23, 1997
Held at Library Systems Office, UM-Columbia
Chaired by Mary Ann Samson
Minutes taken by David Shocklee

Attendees:

Gary Harris, LSO
Janet Jackson, LSO
Georgia Hall, UMR
Mary Ann Samson, SLU Law
Alice Edwards, UMC- HSC
Elizabeth R. Ader, UMKC
Needra L. Jackson, UMC Law
Janet McKinney, UMKC Law
Doris Beeson, SLU Pius
Marilyn Voegelé, UMC
June DeWeese, UMC
Mary Anti McFarland, SLU HSC
David Shocklee, SLU Pius
Mary Zettwoch, UMSL

The meeting began about 10 a.m. with the attendees introducing themselves around the table.

Mary Ann Samson volunteered to Chair the committee, and I volunteered to take the minutes.

Discussion began with the III ILL Module. Release 11 is expected soon. (Release date is Summer, 1997.) As in previous releases, only one ILL staff person at the same library can use it at the same time. June and Marilyn read sonic comments from beta test sites about Release 10 of ILL module from III List-Serv. The usefulness of the ILL Module was questioned in these comments. There was much concern among committee members that Release 11 may not be acceptable as it exists,

The discussion then shifted to the proposal from UM Library Directors to institute a study of ILL turnaround time within the MERLIN system. Twenty-four hour turnaround time was thought by attendees to be a myth, and probably unattainable under present delivery options. George Rickerson then gave background information about why the Library Directors wanted to study this. Mary Ann Samson and June DeWeese questioned what the Directors meant by ILL turnaround since the G-function (patron-initiated) requests seemed to be the main reason for the proposed study. June mentioned that the Library Directors may not be aware of the book bands used for G-function routing, and the collection of data from the book bands for tabulating turnaround time. Mary Ann Samson asked about the delivery from Columbia to UMSL, where it is sorted and routed to SLU. Mary Ann received a package from Columbia that was routed to the Regional Library Network delivery,

Mary Zettwoch of UMSL spoke about the confusion in her mail room and sorting area about all the different totes and ILL and G-function materials in the same totes. She said her staff were unsure whether to send a small amount in a tote or hold back for more to fill, or to send in a small box if not enough to fill a tote. There was discussion among several members about the totes not coming back very quickly, about the accumulation of totes and whether to send them back empty rather than hold on to them.

The discussion then returned to the turnaround time study. Mary Ann Samson will prepare a proposal for the Library Directors outlining the proposed surveys on the turnaround time of the G-function and ILL requests (books and articles) within the MERLIN consortium members. The MERLIN Circulation Committee had already established the basis for a survey on Patron-Initiated Loans. The question of what information to collect was discussed. For ILL borrowing, the date the request is received from the patron, the date the request is set up on OCLC or other means of transmission, the date the material is received, the date the patron is notified, and the date the patron picks up the material. (Material that is mailed would be counted as received on the date it is sent.) For ILL lending, the date the OCLC request is printed, or received by other means, and the date the request is sent to the requesting library. G-function requests would use their routing slips for pertinent information with the addition of patron notification and pickup dates to be recorded,

The proposed dates for this study, if the information to be collected was in line with the Library Directors' wishes, were for the weeks of September 15-19, October 13-17, November 10-14, February 16-20, March 23-27, and April 13-17. It was suggested that it be made clear that this turnaround time study would not account for an ILL request that was filled by the second or third library in the lender string, or for a G-function request that could not be filled by the first library to which it is sent. Only requests that are submitted on Monday-Friday of the study week and are filled by a MERLIN library are to be counted. A tentative date for the next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, September 1.

There followed some discussion about duplicate patron records and the need for standards in creating them. SUNY, or, State University of New York, Libraries were mentioned.

June asked the LSO staff about additional Review Files. None were open when she recently needed them. Janet and Gary spoke about the need to justify the purchase of more files, which are sold in blocks of forty. Elizabeth Ader spoke about G-function book bands received with no patron's name listed and the need to remember to record this, and also to cross out the "to" designation when returning a G-function book to its home library.

June spoke about her use of the U.S. Mail to send UMC books to distance learner patrons. She asked whether she could also mail the other consortium members' books to these people for G-function

requests. All members gave tentative approval, but some thought they should check further with their Circulation Departments. The G-function patron would be held responsible for any loss in the mail.

The meeting adjourned about 2:30 p.m.

MaryAnn Samson
Circulation/ILL Manager
Saint Louis University Law Library