

May 26, 2005
Arthur Public Services Committee Meeting Minutes

The Public Services Committee met at Columbia College. Attending this meeting were: Lois Marshall -- Lincoln University, Lucia D'Agostino -- Columbia College, Cindy Bassett -- Missouri State Library, and Nina Stawski -- Stephens College.

Cindy Bassett has contacted Nason Throgmorton, the Arthur representative to the MCDAC committee, about possible enhancements for Innovative Interfaces. The deadline for current enhancements has come and gone; therefore Nason will submit those suggested by the Committee when the next opportunity arises.

The topic of the "Return to Browse" button in the Arthur catalog was reconsidered. Although this is also how the button reads in the MOBIUS catalog, and uniformity would be ideal, some committee members feel that this wording may be hard for the users of the catalog to interpret, as it seems to be jargon. The committee members felt that "Results List" or "Return to Results" would be clearer. The committee members preferred the wording, "Results List." The next step will be to see if the Directors wish to consider this change. If this change is supported and the wording found to be preferred, then perhaps it might be considered by MOBIUS committee members in the future as a possible change to the MOBIUS catalog.

The Directors Committee has decided that individual libraries may wish to post policies on their own library web pages about visitor access to certain materials or formats, printing, copying, viewing materials, computer use and access to subscription databases. Cindy Bassett has also devised a form called a Visiting Patron Policy Template. The template has seven questions regarding access for non-institution member patrons. Each library could fill out their unique policies on the template. The six Arthur library templates would all 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. This would provide an additional and alternative way for patrons to access library policy information when they are directly in the catalog and it would provide uniformity in answering the basic questions non-institutional patrons might have. This information could benefit patrons whether they are trying to access materials online, from an in-person visit, or also for patrons from your own institution. Reference librarians would have quick and easy access to information about the policies of the other Arthur cluster libraries. Cindy Bassett will provide an electronic version of the template which could then be offered for the Directors to review when it is available.

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. This information could benefit patrons whether they are trying to access materials online, from an in-person visit, or also for patrons from your own institution. The Committee members in Public Services have

decided that we do not know enough about the loan rules, or other catalog features that could be utilized, to generate a note or message field or other types of information, which might be helpful for patrons regarding these materials. Therefore we would like to contact and seek out the assistance of the Arthur Coordinators Committee to see if they can devise any solutions regarding information about “requestability” and whether they would be willing to work with Public Services on this matter. One suggestion, mentioned by Pat Seavey, has been to explore the use of the OPAC message field as one possibility. We are hopeful that collectively other options might also occur to the Coordinators as they discuss the problem.

Cindy Bassett informed the committee members that the Missouri State Library was in the process of purchasing two computer packages for the entire Arthur cluster. Both products would be implemented on the Arthur server. The one program is Web Bridge and the other package is an XML server.

Web Bridge will allow easier access to information about periodical holdings and improve access to journal articles. Each library might wish to purchase its own A-Z list software for periodicals if they have not already done so. Web Bridge provides an Open URL resolver to link resources such as citations, articles journals, catalog records, and other online services. The Arthur cluster would need to work together to implement this program.

The XML server would also be provided to the entire cluster. The XML server enables the output of all record types in XML format. It allows searches in the catalog to be returned in XML format. In other words, the searches would be reformatted into XML language, a web mark-up language. This would allow the search results to be formatted, manipulated, or graphically changed more readily. Results of searches might produce hits in a page that looks more like the web page. The XML language makes it easier to create displays for hand-held devices (PDAs, etc), and to transform catalog data for other purposes such as Dublin Core, HTML, EAD, email, or external databases. For individual libraries to make use of the XML output it may be necessary for your IT departments to build a processor and format XSLT.

FUTURE PROJECTS

The Arthur Public Services group would like to have a link to a general purpose tutorial about how to use the online catalog on the Arthur web pac for purposes of self-guided instruction, bibliographic training, and possibly for faculty members who might choose to make the tutorial a required assignment for their classes. The results from each student’s assignment could be sent back to that faculty member for review. The general tutorial would be linked on the Arthur Catalog. Each Arthur library, though, could choose whether to include the link on their own Arthur catalog pages, to modify the tutorial to suit their own specific needs, or to consider whether they wish to link to other tutorials/programs as well.

After reviewing the tutorial that the University of Missouri, St. Louis Library has for basic searching at <http://www.umsl.edu/services/libteach/> designed by Chris Niemeyer, the Committee felt that it was a good, well-designed general program allowing students to walk through the catalog functions in a reasonable and orderly pace. Cindy Bassett has asked Chris Niemeyer if he would object to sharing his programming code and he assured her that he is glad to share his program as long as both he and his institution are credited for it. The next step is to ask him what is the best way to get a copy of his code and would he object if it were tweaked to conform to the needs of the Arthur cluster.

Those Arthur Public Services members who may be attending the vendor fair at the annual MOBIUS conference will search out any additional tutorials or other interesting programs that may be out there for possible consideration as added links to the Arthur catalog.

Starting in June, the Chair for the Committee will be Nina Stawski and the Secretary will be Waheedah Bilal.

The next meeting of this Committee is scheduled for Thursday, August 11, 2005, 2-4 pm. at Lincoln University.

Respectfully submitted,
Nina Stawski
Hugh Stephens Library, Stephens College