MOBIUS Collection Development Task Force Charge

The MOBIUS Collection Development Task Force is responsible for exploring cooperative collection development by MOBIUS member institutions. The Task Force will operate in two phases. During Phase I (over six-months with a report to the Executive Committee in February 2003), the Task Force will be charged with investigating the management issues associated with cooperative collection development among 50+ institutions. During Phase II (over six-months with a report to the Executive Committee in August 2003), the Task Force will be charged with developing a cooperative collection development implementation plan for MOBIUS.

MOBIUS Cooperative Collection Development Task Force Report
Part II: Implementation Plan for MOBIUS

I. Introduction

Over the last year, from August 2002 to August 2003, the MOBIUS Collection Development Task Force has produced its preliminary outline of management issues and is now submitting its second product, an implementation plan. The implementation plan necessarily includes some of the information from the preliminary report as well as one recommendation that has already been approved by the MOBIUS Executive Committee, that of establishing a standing committee to address cooperative collection management issues, now the MOBIUS Collection Management Advisory Committee. The membership of the original task force was expanded to include at least one member from each cluster, and many of the original members plan to continue service on the new advisory committee. Implementing any plan or plans will require significant commitment from the MOBIUS members, as the report on management issues indicates. However, the task force members believe that MOBIUS is well-positioned to carry out the plan outlined below, and that the benefits to all members and the citizens they serve will continue to demonstrate the overall excellence and cost efficiency that characterize MOBIUS.

II. Addressing the purpose: A standing committee and a standard process

As part of its preliminary report, the task force wrote a statement of purpose for cooperative collection development. To address that purpose, we recommended the establishment of the MOBIUS standing committee mentioned above, MOBIUS Collection Management Advisory Committee (MCMAC). The specific charge for that group is:

> MCMAC is charged by the MOBIUS Council to survey, monitor, and evaluate the MOBIUS collections in order to strengthen the resource base of the

member institutions, thereby promoting excellence in academic research and instruction.

Following the plan set by the MOBIUS Cooperative Collection Development Task Force, this committee will

- Consult with users and colleagues at their respective institutions and other libraries in clusters, using appropriate channels and mechanisms
- Explore opportunities for consortial collaboration in the areas of collection development and collection management
- Investigate current national practices and innovative efforts by other consortia or purchasing groups
- Develop mechanisms to survey relative collection strengths throughout the consortium
- Develop methods of collaboration in specified areas of shared interest, such as subject areas, new academic programs, offsite collection storage, etc.
- Identify potential sources of funding

Decisions will be subject to the review of the MOBIUS Council. This committee will address the decision-making and communication structure necessary for establishing an ongoing program within MOBIUS. Cooperative collection development and management involves a tension between the autonomy of individual institutions and the potential group benefit of decisions made by a group of institutions. The proposed structure reflects this issue in that no activities are mandatory. The standing committee functions as a clearinghouse of information on potential projects, and as a mechanism to prompt development of projects that arise from committee discussions and other activities such as surveys. As reflected in the charge, MCMAC will collection information on national practices and on the MOBIUS collection as a whole, on available funding, and communicate with members to publicize proposed projects. MCMAC may recommend goals and provide advice, and could be the appropriate forum for recommendations to the MOBIUS Council on allocation of any centralized funds that might become available in the future.

Establishing effective communication channels will be a primary activity of MCMAC. Representatives from each cluster are of course responsible for reporting back to those clusters. Proposals for projects will be accepted at any time, using a standard form as described below. Review by MCMAC will provide pooled expertise to refine the project proposal, and the committee will return the proposal to those initiating it with comments as necessary. In addition, MCMAC will post the proposal on the MCO site and contact any MOBIUS members directly who have previously expressed interest in areas related to the proposal so that all interested parties may cooperate. Proposals MCMAC does not approve after several rounds of proposals and comments because they do not seem well-defined, appropriate or feasible under the established criteria will not be posted on the MCO website.

As also described in the preliminary report, a mosaic of cooperative collection development projects is the best solution in a group as diverse as MOBIUS. The subject areas and media involved in the projects may be as diverse as MOBIUS itself, but the mechanism for setting up and operating each project should be the same. Proposers of each project should submit a standard form to the MCMAC, addressing specific aspects of each project. A sample form is attached (Appendix X). Whatever form is finally used, each proposer must include some concrete objectives to be used in the assessment of the project. Each project should be assessed annually. Some projects of course will require several years of data for any significant assessment.

This form includes:

- Description of the project goals and plan of execution
- Identification of participants and their responsibilities
- Anticipated costs and funding plan
- Anticipated benefits
- Plan for evaluation and for reporting on progress
- Identification of legal issues (copyright, licensing)
- Anticipated duration of the agreement, process for dissolution of any commitments

Proposals could be submitted to MCMAC for review at any time. They would be posted or distributed for review and input from all MOBIUS members. Final revision of plans would take place, considering input from other members.

The final project proposal would be reviewed by MCMAC, using the following criteria:

1. Benefit: Who will benefit from the project? How many persons? How will they benefit?
2. Cost and Funding Plan: What is the cost of the project, divided into one-time and continuing costs? Costs should be as exact as possible. How do the libraries propose to meet the costs? How much, if anything, is being requested in external funding? How much is proposed as cost-sharing, both on the part of the proposing libraries and all libraries in the Consortium? Is there a plan for reverting to local funding after a start-up period?
3. Quality of Plan of Operation: Is the plan likely to succeed? Are there sufficient guarantees that commitments will be maintained--for example, via a formal written agreement? In particular, is the plan for providing service for the entire Consortium likely to be effective?
4. Expandability, Adaptability: Might the project, if successful, be expanded to a wider area or adapted by others? What is its value as a pilot project?
5. Quality of Plan for Evaluation: How will project effectiveness be evaluated? What is the plan for review and evaluation?
6. Plan for Reporting on Progress: This must have specific dates, as realistic as possible.

(These are adapted from those used in Illinois, as described at http://www.niulib.niu.edu/ccm/statepri.html)

III. Initial assessment of combined collections

The Task Force spent much time discussing this and considering how to best address both quantitative and qualitative concerns. Obviously, any meaningful effort needs to address both. Quantitative information is available from the MOBIUS central data base and cluster catalogs through many functions, including various "create list" tools and the Statistical Categories Tables (SCAT). The report on the percentage of unique titles held by cluster and institution presently provided is generally interesting but does not provide any subject area data.

To be able to make system-wide comparisons, however, a system-wide SCAT table would need to be established for agreed upon categories, and then that table created for each cluster. Another option would be to use a commercially available collection analysis service such as OCLC's ACAS. The grant inquiry mentioned above with the State Library is a possible source of funds for an analysis project using SCAT or ACAS or both.

Ongoing planning, goal-setting and evaluation of projects will require both the initial analysis of collections and periodic environmental scans of the situation of the consortium. An environmental scan involves a survey of pressures and opportunities confronting members, with the goal of conceiving a strategic plan to address these. This would involve a survey, formal or informal, of participants. The Task Force has identified the crisis in scholarly communication (serials subscription costs), space issues and preservation issues as urgent materials on which MCMAC could survey members and develop state-wide communication mechanisms to address concerns.

Other analysis projects might include a comparison of serial holdings, identification and listing of uniquely held active subscriptions and comparison of backfiles that might benefit from joint storage or archiving. Meetings among bibliographers and other selectors in specific subject areas would generate more qualitative information, perhaps most efficiently done after more quantitative data is available.

IV. Financial Support

Examination of projects in other states and consortia yielded different funding models, as described in the preliminary report. At this time, the Task Force recommends seeking outside funding to support the overall cooperative collection development effort, and has a grant proposal out to the Missouri State Library to fund collection assessment efforts, part of the charge of MCMAC being to develop mechanisms for collection assesement. Central funding from the state would be extremely valuable to enable large centralized purchases of, for example, e-book or microform collections, but is unlikely to be forthcoming in the next few years. Building a central fund at MCO through MOBIUS

dues would likely require a vote of the Council membership, again something unlikely in the next few years given the funding situation at state institutions. Perhaps the Council should be polled at its meetings for additional ideas. The most likely scenario for projects in the near future is cooperative purchasing among institutions with each using its own individual budget. This approach will of course increase the overall strength of the MOBIUS central data base.

The MCMAC should seek and disseminate information about grant possibilities, and pursue additional options for cooperative grant applications from institutions. Specifically, digitization grants from the IMLS would enable preservation and wider use of some collections. Close contact with the grants personnel at the Missouri State Library and monitoring of national grant announcements should be an assignment for members of the committee.

V. Education

Presentations at state and regional meetings, articles in library newsletters and wide distribution of information on the creation of MCMAC and its charge will begin this effort. Development of informational materials for staff in participating libraries and possibly training sessions for those who become involved in the projects will fall under the charge of MCMAC. The well-known benefits of cooperation and MOBIUS's record of success make the educational portion of implementation perhaps the easiest as far as library staff members are concerned.

Education of non-library faculty and administration is more challenging but still essential to the success of projects. Again, most administrators know MOBIUS now and are likely to support the cost efficiency (not reduction) of projects under its auspices. However, MCMAC will need to work with MCO to develop educational pieces for all the stakeholders at MOBIUS institutions to tout the value of cooperative collection development efforts. Advocacy of these efforts will be needed to address concerns about local collection needs for accreditation and status that very likely will be voiced by departmental faculty and administration. Important points to communicate include the intention to respect and honor local needs in all projects and the overall improvement in the resources that will be available to students, faculty and staff without increased cost.

VI. Possible initial projects

1. Coordinated approach to maintaining serials subscriptions across research institutions in the state in selected subject areas

2. Cooperative approval plan profiling in selected areas through a state-selected approval plan vendor

3. Shared storage facilities

4. Joint digitization grants for specialized subject collections

5. Last copy retention agreements for little used monographs and serial backfiles

VII. Conclusion

The MOBIUS Executive Committee has already taken the first and most important step toward implementation in its establishment of the MCMAC. The Task Force has also taken a step toward the initial analysis of collections state-wide through its grant inquiry to fund other analysis.

Implementation report

6. Forgoing consideration of management issues may be summarized in following statement of values/principles

7. Purpose of cooperative collection development

8. In order to accomplish this purpose the following are required:

9. To this end, we recommend the following actions:
    a. Establishment of a standing committee on ccd with the following charge
    b. Establishment of standard procedure for recommending, deciding on projects, with schedule for assessment of effectiveness
    c. Initial base-line assessment of the combined collections, programs, needs in order to set strategic goals
    d. Efforts to identify sources of funding to support these activities
    e. Provision of materials/resources to support the education of staff and administration on ccd

10. Potential projects
11. Conclusion: ongoing development
12. Appendix: Bibliography of resources

---

1. Statement of values

The following are taken from the Illinois statement of core values), which I think just about say it all.

- Universal benefit
- Selective participation and universal input

- Local sufficiency
- Ease of access to shared resources
- Enduring commitment to the goal of shared collection building
- Recognition of the contribution of all member libraries
- Dependence on the commitment and participation of individual librarians.

Here's another statement of the Illinois values from http://www.niulib.niu.edu/ccm/callprop.html

- Universal Benefit: demonstrable benefit to a broad constituency.
- Open Physical Access: resources acquired or created with grant funds must be reasonably available to the primary constituents of all libraries in the consortium.
- Local Sufficiency: grant projects are not meant to replace the need for locally sufficient collections.
- Selective Participation, Universal Input: although not all members are expected to participate actively in all projects, each member library will have an opportunity to respond to project ideas.
- Multiple Funding Modes: including consortial, external, and local funding.
- Creative Pilots: the consortium encourages the development of creative pilot projects that directly address the needs of library users.

One further statement we might add would be: commitment to cost-effectiveness (as opposed to cost-reduction).

2. Purpose of cooperative collection development

   The primary purpose of cooperative collection development by MOBIUS member libraries is to maximize the strength, currency and diversity of their combined collections to better serve the learners of Missouri. As part of this effort, individual collections must continue to reflect and support their institutions' programs and missions. Enhancement of collections and increased cost effectiveness become possible through strategic diversification and cooperative collection management activities.

3. In order to accomplish this purpose the following are required:

   a. Decision-making and communication structure
   b. On-going assessment/goal-setting
   c. Development of financial support
   d. Development of library staff and systems
   e. Political advocacy, education of users

4. To this end, we recommend the following actions:

   f. Establishment of a standing committee on ccd with the following charge

      The name of the committee will be the MOBIUS Collection Management Advisory Committee (MCMAC).

      The committee includes a representative and an alternate from each of the MOBIUS clusters and a liaison from MCO as a non-voting member.

[Note on this point: I think we may need to make an argument for setting up an additional committee instead of revising the charge of MERAC. I don't have enough experience of the committees to have a

strong opinion on whether we need two committees, but do think it complicates matters if we split things by format. There's plenty of work to be done, but I suppose that if a committee is overtaxed, they can call in help in the form of an ad hoc task force?]

This committee structure exploits the strength of the existing MOBIUS infrastructure for communication and decision-making: the website, listserv, etc.

g. Establishment of standard procedure for recommending, deciding on projects, with schedule for assessment of effectiveness

We recommend the use of a standard form for proposing cooperative projects. If central funds are available, this would facilitate the comparison and prioritizing of projects. In the absence of such funds, this central review facilitates awareness and communication. The form contributes to the thoughtful planning of any project.

(These are taken from Illinois again. See: http://www.niulib.niu.edu/ccm/proproc.html. More details of their proposal review process, including a point system they use, can be seen at http://www.niulib.niu.edu/ccm/process.html.) MCMAC's recommendation would be to proceed or not, depending on the evaluation in light of the strategic value to the consortium. If central funds were available, MCMAC would use these criteria to prioritize the allocation of funds. [Note: if there are no central funds to distribute, would MCMAC have the authority to tell interested libraries not to proceed with a project?]

.

h. Initial base-line assessment of the combined collections, programs, needs in order to set strategic goals
i. Efforts to identify sources of funding to support these activities
j. Provision of materials/resources to support the education of staff and administration on ccd

5. Potential projects
6. Conclusion: ongoing development
7. Appendix: Bibliography of resources