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LACUNY Instruction Committee Meeting Minutes, April 2005

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Minutes

LACUNY Instruction Committee Meeting
Baruch College, Newman Library, Room 415
April 15, 2005, 2 pm- 4 pm

Members in Attendance:
Alexandra de Luise, Queens
Keith Muchowski, City Tech
Shamiana Pond, CUNY Central
Jacqueline Gill, City College
Clover Steele, Medgar Evers
Jeff Wayne, Borough of Manhattan
Charles Keyes, LaGuardia
Edward Owusu-Ansah, Staten Island

Meeting commenced at 2 pm. Shamiana Pond, Special Assistant to the University Librarian, was introduced. Shamiana mentioned her visit to a WAC (Writing Across the Curriculum) meeting, and noted several similarities in concerns of WAC and LILAC (Library Information Literacy Advisory Committee), and suggested there might be opportunities that LILAC could explore within a WAC-like program.

Alexandra de Luise of Queens College continued with the agenda item of presentations on assessment efforts and experiences at CUNY schools by presenting on Queens College’s efforts.

Alexandra noted 17 librarians teach at Queens College. The Library Department has a curriculum committee, which meets during the semester, and helps with assessment efforts. Most assessment has been done within the framework of two important instructional engagements offered by the library: a credit course, and an English 110/Library initiative. The Coordinator of Library Instruction observes library instructors. It involves observation of a library session followed by a written report, that is reviewed by both the library instructor and the Chief Librarian.

Library 100 is a one-credit eight-week elective course that the library has taught since 1997 (now offering 7-8 sessions per semester). This course offers the most flexibility and opportunities for assessment. One assessment tool is the pretest/post-test, involving 3 questions given to students at the very beginning and repeated verbatim at the end of the course. The questions address basic things course instructors want students to know by the end of the course. Another assessment tool is the questionnaire, also administered by every instructor to solicit information on the academic standing of participants, their majors, why they elected to take the course, their level of comfort with e-mail and the internet, prior library instruction involvement, and familiarity with the library’s resources. Other assessment instruments are the midterm and final exams, and a final project, often involving the creation of an annotated bibliography. There is finally a survey of student impressions of the credit course: its contribution to their knowledge about academic libraries; the usefulness of homework assignments, in-class exercises, and the CUNY tutorials and accompanying quizzes; whether students would recommend the course; and comments on the quality of instruction.

To a question on whether everyone teaches the same way in the 1-credit course, Alexandra conceded the answer would be no, but added that the goals were however the same for each instructor and section. Actual emphasis and selection of specific tools might vary. The syllabus is individualized by each instructor, and often is a work in progress.

Evaluation in the English 110/Library initiative involves mainly the use of questionnaires and informal discussions with coordinators and a “pizza feedback” session with students, a focus group of sorts. The library’s participation has been in the form of two classes to be taught by the library for each section participating in the program. The goal is to incorporate information literacy concepts into the course. The library taught 56 such classes last fall to 28 sections of English 110.

After Alexandra's presentation, it was observed that librarian presence in the classroom in the conventional sense presented by the library credit course seems to enhance the teaching image of librarians and reinforce their legitimacy as bona fide instructors of information literacy content. A suggestion was made that maybe CUNY as an institution could set a minimal level of instructional engagement for its librarians that would apply to all campuses (could be, for
example, expectation within at least one designated course, with an indication of what specifically librarians should do, and articulation of specific scope and objectives).
Existence of mini-sessions and research clinics on many campuses was noted, and brief discussion of how best they could be promoted resulted in the highlighting of use of flyers, e-mail, and faculty involvement. These sessions, it was noted, provide valuable one-on-one opportunities for students, and even faculty.
Clover Steele of Medgar Evers will be presenting on the assessment efforts and experiences of the Medgar Evers library at the May 13 meeting (to be held at the usual venue at Baruch). Charles Keyes of LaGuardia will report on the lessons learned from the evaluation of the new I-credit class at LGCC, and Jeffrey Wayne of the Borough of Manhattan Community College will present on BMCC.
Chair and co-chair for the next academic year will be elected at the May 13 meeting.
Meeting adjourned at 4 pm.
Submitted by:
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Chair
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