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LACUNY Instruction Committee Meeting Minutes, April 2003

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Minutes
LACUNY Instruction Committee Meeting
Baruch College, Newman Library, Room 415
April 25, 2003, 2pm-4pm

Members in Attendance:
Alexandra de Luise, Queens
Jerry Bornstein, Baruch
Jacqueline A. Gill, City College
Kathy Killoran, John Jay
David Koenigstein, Bronx Community
Keith Muchowski, City Tech
Edward Owusu-Ansah, Staten Island

Meeting commenced at 2pm.

Jerry Bornstein offered a detailed description of Baruch’s instructional program, its philosophical underpinnings and concrete manifestations. Jerry also distributed handouts. What follows is an attempt to summarize the indeed exhaustive insights Jerry provided members in attendance.

Baruch College

Baruch’s attempt to develop a viable instructional program resulted in a curriculum review to map out current practices as an antecedent to developing a new approach that would apply all existing instructional elements such as credit courses, workshops and reference. The library, being an academic department, wanted to act like one.

Review of prevailing practices showed a focus on “organization, production, storage, retrieval, and evaluation of information,” dealing with various contexts of information, and the development of practical “information problem solving” skills. These focuses allowed concentration on student information competency skills and involved numerous instructional formats and platforms. They, however, had disadvantages, which Jerry summarized as:
1. Their predominantly single session nature
2. The lack of integration of information competence across the college curriculum
3. The predominantly introductory nature of most sessions
4. Lack of adequate opportunities for advanced instruction
5. The underutilization of technology
6. Inadequate staffing

To address these shortcomings and as a result of the review changes were made to ensure greater integration of information competence into the credit courses offered by the library, the open workshops were restructured to incorporate IC objectives, a Freshman Research Experience program was introduced, and formal guidelines for workshops and online resources were adopted.

The current program consists of credit courses (8 on the books but only 3 taught currently), the Freshman Research experience program in collaboration with English and the Freshman Seminar (20 minute orientation lectures for 75 sections in fall 2002 and 31 BI sessions for freshman English classes at faculty request), open workshops, the use of reference encounters to facilitate improvement of IC skills in a proactive reference environment. Jerry concluded with an outline of the basic principles of Baruch’s Library Instruction program (competitive levels of information competence for all students, integrated and incremental offerings, complimentary nature of all instructional formats, avoidance of teaching to lowest common denominator, optimal use of educational technology). He also noted a need to build on strengths and address weaknesses, develop electronic instructional materials, strengthen the credit program,
increase instructional staff, and advocate campus-wide professional development as a means to facilitate college-wide IC integration.

College of Staten Island

After Jerry’s presentation, Edward Owusu-Ansah outlined practices at the College of Staten Island and expressed hopes for further extension of the library’s instructional activities. Instructional formats at the College of Staten Island are currently limited to bibliographic instruction sessions and weekly thematic workshops. The library is still exploring the opportunity of an information competence element to be mandated into a freshman course taken by all freshmen (English composition being the current target). No clear movement on that yet. Various committees on campus are also considering what form a campus-wide information literacy initiative should take.

Future Meeting Dates:

The following dates were set for the committees meetings in Fall 2003 (all meetings scheduled for (Baruch College, Newman Library, Room 415):

Friday, September 19, 2003
Friday, October 24, 2003
Friday, November 21, 2003

In Conclusion:
It was agreed that those who could not present (Queens College, John Jay) would do so when the committee resumes meeting in Fall 2003. Members wished each other a happy summer as the meeting adjourned

Meeting adjourned at 4pm.

Submitted by:

Edward Owusu-Ansah
Chair