New Service Model Planning Team for the Illinois History and Lincoln Collections

PURPOSE

This proposal seeks to examine the best mechanisms for sustaining the Illinois History and Lincoln Collections (IHLC) and supporting the ongoing management of its materials and services within the context of the University Library.

RATIONALE

As the University Library looks forward to delivering services in the coming years, the need to examine many of the operational models currently employed throughout the Library has become apparent. The Illinois History and Lincoln Collections (IHLC) represent a unique strength at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, both in terms of its collections and the expertise provided by its resident scholar. The IHLC holds rich resources related to the study of state and local history, rare book and manuscript materials related to the history of the State of Illinois, and unique artifacts from Abraham Lincoln.

Currently, IHLC collection of print materials is non-circulating. And, the unit is unable to dedicate appropriate human resources to consistently manage the unit’s extensive manuscript collections, maps and other resources. Although extensive work had been completed by the IHLC personnel in enhancing and developing electronic versions of its finding aids, the IHLC’s ability to deliver these finding aids online was realized with an initial financial commitment from the University Library’s Office of Collections and commitments of additional professional expertise from other units within the Special Collections Division. As this initial commitment of resources was wrapping up, the IHLC continued the work begun under this arrangement with the support of funds under its own management. This need for the unit to rely upon contributions of time and effort from other units extends to the curatorial care of its map collections, with the Map Library currently planning to incorporate the processing of the IHLC map backlog into its workflow.

The circumstances that required these commitments of time and effort from other units stem largely from a lack of human resources in the IHLC, not from a lack of desire to deliver service. It is our belief that the IHLC is a unique resource scholars and students both on this campus and afield. It is also our belief that this resource could become a more significant entity within the University Library. However, it is not going to achieve that goal without an objective exploration of its services and administrative operation within the broader context of the University Library.

The objectives for this NSM working group are two-fold. First, the University Library seeks to identify and detail how to best deliver the services offered by the IHLC in the coming years. Second, the University Library seeks input on the most effective administrative models for managing and overseeing the IHLC’s operations. To that end, this charge seeks
recommendations on how the services and collections currently in the IHLC can be best delivered to our patrons and most effectively managed to meet the needs of our users.

CHARGE

1. Articulate a service profile that:
   a. Describes the scope of services offered currently and envisioned for the future.
   b. Reviews the rationale for housing a non-circulating collection of secondary sources within the IHLC and recommends guidelines for the location of secondary materials in IHLC.
   c. Considers the present and future role of the IHLC in undergraduate and graduate learning, including course-integrated instruction in the discovery and use of materials for the study of Illinois history (with attention to “Information Literacy Considerations for New Service Model Teams,” http://www.library.illinois.edu/export/nsm/Information_Literacy_Considerations_for_New_Service_Model_Teams.doc);
   d. Evaluates the role of the IHLC website in advancing the mission of the IHLC.
2. Explore possible synergies with other service and processing points in the Main Library, including the Information Desk, RBML, HPNL, University Archives, etc.
3. Explore possible synergies with other collections and services beyond the University.
4. Consult with users of IHLC and stakeholders within the Library, as needed, to complete the review of service programs and solicit ideas.
5. Develop a staffing model that balances the demands of service with the need for materials processing, including assessing the potential for sharing personnel with other units.
6. Recommend a plan for the ongoing assessment of the needs and effectiveness of IHLC services and collections.
7. Submit a report with its recommendations to the University Librarian by May 31, 2013.

MEMBERSHIP

Lisa Romero, chair
John Hoffman
Karen Hogenboom
Jenny Johnson
Betsy Kruger
Bob Morrissey, History Dept.
Anke Voss, Champaign County Historical Archives
Beth Sandore Namachchivaya, administrative liaison

Approved by the Library Executive Committee, March 4, 2013