Reference Service NSM Team
Minutes April 13, 2010
Meeting Leaders: Kathleen Kern and Paula Carns
Minute Taker: Paula Carns

Attending: Paula Carns, Kathleen Kern, Lynne Rudasill, Sue Searing, Ellen Swain, David Ward, Greg Youngen

Agenda:

I. Recap of Focus Group. The team presented the discussion of the focus group (FG) that it ran the previous week for team members who did not attend. The FG included current NSM Team leaders and arts and humanities librarians from units in the Main Library. The FG was split in its reaction to the proposed three models. Librarians in the physical and life sciences were fine with all models, as they fit well with their current or proposed configurations. Librarians in the Main Library preferred Model B or the Cluster model, which maintains the current system but without a central reference point. Their reasoning was: the need for proximity to collections, limited staffing in unit libraries (thus best not to assign individuals from these units to a central reference desk), and that the expertise of subject specialists is not needed on a general reference desk. They were keen to acquire any librarians, graduate assistants or staff from a disbanded RRGIS.

II. The team very briefly discussed the possibility of a phased implementation of a single reference desk in the Main Library, moving from a clustered model to a single-point model but came to no conclusions.

III. Virtual reference model. Kathleen and David discussed their ideas for the future of virtual reference. More research questions are coming in online and thus a separate virtual desk with reference librarians, subject specialists (participating from their units) and graduate assistants would optimal. The graduates could be first year students working under librarians. Once trained, these students could in their second year serve on the Undergraduate Library reference desk.

1. Administration of reference. The team briefly touched on this topic. The advantages of having someone or a team assigned to these duties would be the sharing of best practice. The need for reference standards and cross-training was mentioned.