Present: Mary Beth Allen, Kathleen Kern, Nancy O’Brien, Lisa Romero, Lynne Rudasill, Sue Searing, Beth Sheehan, Tom Teper

Guest: David Ward

1. Lynne Rudasill volunteered to take notes for the meeting.

2. Meeting summary notes from the January 30 meeting were approved.

3. Nancy O’Brien reviewed the Team charge and indicated that we appear to be on target, but the spreadsheet on the shared drive needs to be filled out, and an assessment rubric needs to be developed.

4. David Ward attended the meeting to discuss possible relationships between Virtual Reference and other services in SSHEL. The Reference Services NSM envisions three hubs for reference services – Grainger Library, Funk/ACES Library, and the UGL/Main Library. There is a desire to integrate staffing between the three hubs, but a centralized Virtual Reference Desk is planned for the UGL/Main hub. VR is the fastest growing service in the library and could use additional hours on the part of librarians, staff, and graduate assistants. The Reference NSM group is currently setting up the model for the delivery of these services. Part of the process they are employing includes using the results of the READ Scale as a guide for staffing.

The discussion concerning SSHEL participation and support for this service included the possibility of stationing the service in the new unit and how that might work. The model might complement the services already available in SSHEL and ways by which the two groups might cooperate was explored. Questions included how the desk would be staffed and how expertise will be made available to the users. It is possible there might be some coordination between librarian office hours or designation of specific subject areas to be staffed on particular days. What are the limiting factors for the joining of the reference services between SSHEL and VR? These were thought to be space issues and an answer to the question of how referrals will be made.

If the services of the other units in the Main Library are pulled into the staffing of the VR desk, David indicated there would be more than adequate staffing of the service. This is based upon the statistics gathered from the various units’ reference events. The VR would generally require two people to staff the desk and the suggested hours for staffing would be 9:00 a.m. – midnight on most days. The UGL remains open for many more hours than the Main Library so accommodations would have to be made for services to shift to UGL when the Main Library closes. Training in a wide variety of subject areas would be a big issue, although BEL and LLL have been partnering with the Information Desk quite effectively this year. One of the major benefits to the users should VR be situated in SSHEL would be that the subject expertise for about one-half of the questions currently received through this service relate to the social
sciences. These are also the areas in which most of the graduate students are quite comfortable answering questions. It is also seen as a good opportunity for mentoring.

The Budget Group came up with an allocation of graduate assistant time for the VR. It was suggested that all units in the UGL/Main hub should contribute a certain number of hours to staff the VR desk. The staffing could consist of librarians, staff members, or graduate assistants. A call for hours could be sent out to the units in question.

5. Nancy indicated that we will need to request an extension on the timetable for the report. We have not yet been able to discern the impact that the BIS NSM will have on the unit. It was agreed that we would request an extension until March 16 from Paula Kaufman and the Executive Committee.

6. There was a brief discussion of space and floor plans. Part of the discussion included concern over the number of journals that might need to be absorbed by SSHEL from BEL.

7. A question regarding the policy on moving items from Main Stacks to Oak Street was asked which related primarily to serials. The standard for shifting materials generally is that monographs with 2005 copyright or circulation dates through the present would remain in the unit. Stacks should have items with copyright dates from 1990-2004 if there is evidence of some use and anything older than 1990 that has not circulated will be in Oak Street. There was some confusion concerning the movement of serials to Oak Street. Lynne had a question about a particular run of serials that she will share with Tom.

The next scheduled meeting of the group is February 13 from 9-10 in Room 428.