

# Cornell University Library

## Council of Librarians

March 20, 2002

### 1. Alumni Access Pilot Project.

Oya Rieger provided an update on the pilot project and distributed a handout, "CUL Alumni and Friends Access." The pilot will be launched this summer involving approximately 600 alumni to gain a better understanding of their information needs as well as to determine the resources needed to offer this service. The elements of this prototype service are described at: <http://www.library.cornell.edu/AA/> The goal is to provide alums with a single point of entry, making it easier for users to find the information they want. The pilot project should help determine which information services are of greatest value to alums and what service model best meets their expectations. The pilot will assess user reaction to fee based services. Among the free services to be offered during the pilot include the following:

- o access to over 600 e-reference databases which lead the user directly to information;
- o quick reference/referral service via phone and email [inquiries which can be addressed in a short amount of time];
- o electronic exhibits consisting primarily of those already available from our web sites;
- o library news to report on current developments within CUL;
- o and interactive tutorials to help alums develop greater facility with the web.

Services for a fee as part of the pilot include: access to two or three full text databases (examples cited were Business Source Premiere, ABI/Inform, and Periodicals Abstracts); in-depth reference service via email and phone at the rate of \$135/hour; and possibly a document delivery feature at \$18/item. IRIS will screen incoming inquiries and respond to those involving a quick response within O/K/U subject fields. Inquiries in other subject areas will be referred to other participating units as appropriate. Inquiries which can be addressed in a short amount of time are fielded at no charge to alumni. For more involved questions, the hourly rate fee will apply. Vet, ILR, and Hotel currently offer fee-based services and they will be participants in the pilot. Questions raised during discussion included the following:

- (a) Will alums get passwords? Oya replied they would and that the technical questions were being addressed. The challenge involves some means of authentication which is not tied solely to the user's IP address.
- (b) Have database contracts been reviewed to determine if we can resell the data. Oya said that this is under review and Scott Wicks is producing guidelines regarding which databases may be used for this purpose.
- (c) If the non-Cornell user requires immediate assistance, and the on-campus user is absorbing all available capacity at that moment, who comes first? Sarah Thomas replied that the Cornell user comes first. As we gain more experience from the pilot project, we will learn what constitutes load capacity and how much can be provided from existing resources. Given a maximum of 600 users during the pilot, we should be able to learn more about the demand curve without being completely overwhelmed.

(d) How do we determine if the user is actually an alum? Users will be invited to register online and at that point, we will determine their status. Admittedly, some are not going to take the time to register and we will have to determine what, if any, services they receive.

(e) Are guidelines being developed to sort out services which are "free" versus those for which a fee should be charged. Oya said those guidelines are being developed and recognized that it may not always be a clear distinction. Experience from the pilot will help in this regard.

(f) Is this a for profit venture? Not really. The rate of \$135/hour does not pay for the entire CUL infrastructure upon which such a service for alums relies. However, the fee does help to defray some of the costs encountered in providing this service.

1. **Library Budget.**

Sarah opened the discussion by noting that FY'03 is projected to be a tight budget year, reflecting a recovering economy made even more problematic by the events of 11 September 02. Return on our endowments are down in addition to other strains on the university budget. Lee Cartmill reported that there is a deficit projected for next year which will be funded out of one time revenues. There is no increase for general expenses and no additional payout on endowments for the first time in many years. The materials budget is due for an increase, but only 3%. In addition, the university has asked for a \$300,000 give back on a one time basis. On the bright side, there will be a Pay Improvement Program (PIP). The band minimums will go up between 2% and 3%.

2. **Guidelines for Responding to Requests from Law Enforcement Agencies for Confidential Information and to Destroy/Discard Library Materials.**

Ross Atkinson distributed a copy of the ALA Code of Ethics and called our attention to item II: "We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources." He also highlighted item III: "We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted." He then reviewed the draft LMT policy on Returning or Destroying Materials on Request. Quoting from the policy: "The Library occasionally receives requests from the producers or previous owners of library materials in all formats that the Library return, destroy, or delete particular items that have already been acquired. This is usually done when the item contains information that the producer or previous owner believes to be erroneous or for some reason problematic." Ross summarized the LMT response to such requests as follows: (1) If the Library owns the material, the request to return, destroy, or delete should be denied. (2) If the item came to the Library as a gift and the donor asks that it be returned, each such request should be addressed on a case by case basis. (3) In those instances where the Library stores and makes accessible material which it does not actually own (government documents being an example) ". . . the Library is obliged to return, destroy, or delete items at the direction of the owner or issuing agency." The final decision regarding such requests is to be made by the Associate University Librarian for Collections in consultation with LMT when necessary.

Ross pointed out that a Task Force on Law Enforcement Access to Library Records has been appointed by LMT with Pat Court, Law Library, as chair. Other members are: Surinder Ghangas, Digital Libraries and Information Technology, and Jesse Koennecke, Mann Library. This task force will report back to LMT by 01 June 02 with recommended guidelines for responding to requests from law enforcement authorities for library records involving user data. The task force will also make recommendations to LMT regarding retention of patron records.