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NELIG Meeting - December 5, 2008

New England Library Instruction Group

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NELIG Meeting
December 5, 2008
Separate meetings will be held simultaneously at Franklin Pierce University, Wentworth Institute of Technology, and Yale University.

Strategic Collaborations to Promote Information Literacy Across Your Campus
Franklin Pierce University
Ted Chodock & Elizabeth Dolinger, Research Services Librarians, Landmark College, discussed collaborations with Landmark’s Technology Learning Services department which helps students access assistive technologies, and with faculty to provide effective instruction for students with different learning profiles.

- Landmark students all have Learning disabilities, they talked about the importance of Universal Design in the web sites and course guides (see them at http://www.landmark.edu/Library/Ldresources/Ldresources.cfm)
- Librarians work with IT to provide Kurzwell machines as well as software such as Inspiration (mind mapping) – see their digital text services here http://www.landmark.edu/Library/digital_text/digital_text.cfm
- Ted and Elizabeth suggested all libraries work with their office on campus that provides these services to find out how we can help students on our campuses with LD or autism (they are getting more and more students with autism at Landmark as well)

“Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.” –Ron Mace

Principles of Universal Design (from the Center for Universal Design)

- Equitable use
- Flexibility in use
- Simple and intuitive
- Perceptible information
- Tolerance for error
- Low physical effort
- Size and space for approach and use

Emily Alling, Coordinator, Learning Commons & Undergraduate Library Services W.E.B. Du Bois Library, University of Massachusetts, Amherst discussed how her library collaborates with U Mass Amherst’s College Writing courses through an innovative Teach the Teachers approach. I learned a lot from Emily on how they train their instructors to provide information literacy to first year students. She cannot teach all the incoming UMASS students with a small department, so this approach allows her to prepare materials for the instructors, special privileges to use the library labs for the sessions.

Also, I talked about our collaborations with WPI’s Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division, the department that coordinates WPI’s Study Away Project-Based Learning Programs, and people later commented on our unique and interesting project program.
Ben Treat was the host of the meeting and discussed their use of the interactive lab space we were using. They have a nifty setup in their laptop lab which has about 6 circular tables set up w/4 laptops on each. With the students facing each other it allows for more interactivity.

- Notes submitted by Christine Drew, WPI

WIT
There is a video recording of the session at WIT.

Yale University
Laura Robinson Hanlan opened the meeting, thanked Barbara Rockenbach and her colleagues at Yale for the meeting arrangements, and announced the next NELIG meeting which will be an NELIG/ITIG collaboration to be held in March. She also announced the Annual Program to be held on June 5, 2009, which will be co-chaired by Cecelia Dalzell of Quinnipiac and Peter Cohn of MIT. Other announcements included a logo contest and a call for session proposals for the ACRL/NEC Annual Program.

The panel presenters for the meeting were Barbara Rockenbach, Director of Undergraduate & Library Research Education at Yale University, and Erin Valentino, Reference Librarian at Trinity College. Erin Valentino discussed the library’s relationship with Trinity’s First Year Program. She began by mentioning systemic (like rubrics, committees, and funding) and relational (like informal dialogue and good will) structures that support collaboration and information literacy. She noted that the systemic structures and relational structures have to go together. Trinity College’s First Year Program was originally funded by a Mellon Grant that lasted from 2002-2005. During this time the First Year seminar groups were each supported by one librarian, one academic-computer support person, and a peer mentor, and there would be three information literacy sessions conducted for each seminar group. When the Mellon grant money was no longer available, the support was cut back: the computer support person was no longer available for the seminar, and each seminar was only able to have one information literacy session, as well as participate in a library fair. Erin described the Library Fair, and noted that it has worked out well.

Another method for librarian-faculty collaboration used at Trinity is a Library Connections Web site, which is in the process of development. The goal is to give faculty an idea of the range of possibility of library instruction, and how it can integrate with the faculty’s goals.

Barbara Rockenbach described strategic collaborations at Yale University Library. One project is the Library Research Education Program, which exists to “advance the information and technology fluency of Yale students, faculty, and staff” and conducts a number of activities towards that goal. Barbara also talked of a “Personal Librarian Program”, based on the Medical Library’s program, designed to introduce students entering Yale College to the Yale University Library. All 1320 Yale College freshmen were matched with one of 32 librarians or other staff. This program is a collaboration between the library, Yale College dean’s office, the residential college deans, and Directed Studies, and allows students to seen librarians as part of a constellation of advisors designed to serve them.

Another collaboration at Yale is the Collaborative Learning Center, which brings together the expertise and services of the Library, the ITS Instructional Technology Group and Media Services, the Graduate Teaching Center, and other units across campus. The center offers consultation services, and has conducted sessions such as the Teaching w/ Technology Tuesdays which highlight different technologies such as Facebook, podcasting, RSS feeds, etc.
After the presentations by Erin and Barbara, the attendees at the quarterly meeting participated in a brainstorming activity on “Developing New Collaborations for Information Literacy on Your Campus”. Participants divided into groups and discussed collaborations they have been involved with at their institutions as well as ideas for enhancing current collaborations and developing new ones. The groups then shared ideas, which included collaborations with Writing Centers, Centers for Teaching, collaboration with distance learning programs, and research instruction geared for international students in collaborations with centers or coordinators for international students.

Ruth Alcabes
NELIG Secretary, 2008/2009