Guidelines for instruction programs in academic libraries: Draft

Prepared by the ACRL Instruction Section Task Force

Review this draft and give your comments to the committee

Preamble
Libraries work together with other members of the education community to participate in and realize the educational mission of the institution by teaching the identification, structure, intellectual access, and physical access of information, information sources, and information systems through the design and development of instruction programs and services. Planning for the systematic delivery of instruction services should be incorporated throughout the library’s activities, including the library’s comprehensive planning and budgeting process.

In order to best assist academic and research librarians in the preparation and development of effective instructional programs, the following guidelines are recommended.

I. Program Design
a. Statement of Purpose
The library should have a written statement of purpose for its instruction program that:
  a. 1. articulates the purpose of the instruction program with respect to the educational mission of the institution and the needs of the learning community;
  a. 2. involves the academic community in the formulation of these goals;
  a. 3. recognizes the heterogeneous nature of the learning community through identification of varieties of learning styles, attitudes, education levels, and local settings and environment;
  a. 4. recognizes that instruction programs not only prepare learners for immediate curricular activities, but also enable them to be effective lifelong consumers of information in its many forms and contexts;
  a. 5. reflects changes in the institution and learning community through periodic revision.

b. Identification of Content of Instruction
While this decision will be institution-specific and differ depending on the needs of clientele, the library should have a clearly articulated focus with projected outcomes. For guidance in the selection of content of instruction, see the “Model Statement of Objectives for Bibliographic Instruction,” (C&RL News, May 1987).

c. Identification of Modes of Instruction
Instruction takes place in many ways using a variety of teaching methods, including, but not limited to, advising individuals at reference desks, in-depth research consultations, individualized instruction, electronic or print instruction aids, or in traditional or electronic classroom settings. The mode selected should be consistent with the content and goals of instruction and, where appropriate, more than one mode of instruction should be used in recognition of the wide variety of learning styles of individuals.

d. Assessment and Evaluation
Assessment is a systematic ongoing process that should gather data to inform the decision-making process regarding the instruction program. Data gathered should give an indication that the instruction program is supporting the goals set forth in its “Statement of Purpose for
To achieve the goals set forth in the library's instruction statement of purpose, the library should:

**d. 1.** The assessment program should delineate exactly what measures are taken and who is involved in the assessment. An assessment and evaluation program should consider as many measures as are possible, e.g., needs assessment, participant reaction, learning outcomes, teaching effectiveness, and overall instruction effectiveness.

**d. 2.** The criteria for evaluation should be articulated, with the data collected indicating attainment or progress towards achievement of the goals set forth in the “Statement of Purpose for Instruction.”

**d. 3.** The assessment plan should incorporate a variety of methods and instruments.

**d. 4.** Frequency. The data should be gathered at intervals consistent with the revision process so that current information is cycled into the ongoing planning process.

### II. Human Resources

To achieve the goals set forth in the library’s instruction statement of purpose, the library should:

**a. employ or have access to sufficient personnel with appropriate education, experience, and expertise to:**

- **a. 1.** teach individuals and groups in the campus community;
- **a. 2.** design a variety of instruction programs and services;
- **a. 3.** market, manage, and coordinate diverse instruction activities;
- **a. 4.** collect and interpret assessment data to evaluate and update instruction programs and services;
- **a. 5.** integrate and apply instruction technologies into learning activities;
- **a. 6.** produce instruction materials using available media and electronic technologies;
- **a. 7.** serve as representatives on campus to faculty groups, committees, and departments planning and executing education activities;
- **a. 8.** respond to changing technologies, environments, and communities with special skills gained through additional training and continuing education.

### III. Support

Support for a successful instruction program...
has many interdependent facets. The level of support necessary will depend on the scope and size of the program.

The following kinds of support should be present:

**a. Instructional Facilities**

a. 1. The library should have or should have ready access to facilities of sufficient size and number that are equipped to meet the goals of the instruction program and reach the entire learning community, including distant learners, remote users, or individuals in extended campus communities.

a. 2. The instruction setting(s) should duplicate the equipment and technology available to users. The minimum acceptable level is that the instructor can demonstrate information systems available to the library’s users. The desirable level is that those being instructed can have hands-on experience with these systems.

a. 3. The instruction setting should be flexible enough to accommodate a variety of teaching methods and learning styles.

**b. Work Facilities for Librarians and Staff**

b. 1. The library should provide convenient access to the equipment and services necessary to design, produce, reproduce, and update instruction materials in a variety of technological formats.

b. 2. The library should provide sufficient space for the preparation and storage of instruction materials.

**c. Financial Support**

c. 1. The funding for an instruction program should include all personnel costs connected to the program.

c. 2. The instruction program should have identified funds that are realistic and adequate to attain the stated goals of the program.

c. 3. The funding should cover: supplies and materials; student, clerical, and technical assistance; equipment or access to equipment; design, production, and reproduction of materials; revision and updating of materials; and promotion and marketing of the instruction program.

c. 4. The allocation process should recognize that equipment and software replacement and enhancement will be necessary as technologies used for instruction or for information retrieval change.

c. 5. The funding should recognize the need for the training and continuing education of those involved in the instruction program.

**d. Support for Staff Continuing Education, Training, and Development**

Nonmonetary support for continuing staff development helps to establish an atmosphere conducive to innovation and high morale. It is recommended that instruction coordinators:

d. 1. provide every staff member with a written description of the scope of his/her responsibilities;

d. 2. provide a structured program for orientation and training of new instruction personnel;

d. 3. develop a program of continuing education to develop advanced instruction skills;

d. 4. conduct periodic review of staff performance in instructional activities.

(Candidates cont. from page 766)

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**Western European Specialists Section**

Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect: Heleni Pedersoli, Bibliographer for Foreign Languages, University of Maryland; Kurt DeBelder, Assistant Curator, Western European Literature and Languages, New York University.

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Member-at-Large: Theresa Tobin, Humanities and Dewey Librarian, MIT; Mila C. Siu, Senior Assistant Librarian, Pennsylvania State University, Altoona Campus.
CALL FOR Topics

SilverPlatter User Network Group

SilverPlatter is planning the first in a series of User Network Meetings to be held in conjunction with the ALA Conferences.

These meetings, open to all SilverPlatter subscribers, will be ‘table talk’ conversations through which participants can:

- share experiences, problems/solutions;
- gain an understanding of SilverPlatter activities;
- talk directly with SilverPlatter staff and partners;
- provide input to and receive feedback from SilverPlatter

To ensure that these meetings address the interests of our subscribers, we are asking for suggestions for topics. We are also looking for candidates to lead discussions, as appropriate.

Please contact us if you:

- have a topic that you would like us to discuss
- would like to be a group discussion leader
- would like further information about the meetings
- would like to be on the mailing list

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