

## **MOUSS Review**

July 2002

### **I. Preface**

MOUSS has welcomed this opportunity to look at our organization and structure. It is an especially interesting time to do a review because RUSA is also looking at how it is structured. MOUSS has the most committees and discussion groups of any RUSA section, and those groups present many excellent and well attended programs and discussion forums at conferences. Yet MOUSS has always had somewhat of an identity problem; we constantly hear that people think the section is only for managers, and some have suggested that MOUSS should become a "general reference" section within RUSA. It is too soon to tell what changes may be made in the RUSA organization, but MOUSS is very interested in looking at how we can increase membership and increase ALA members' awareness of the section and its work.

While the section is generally in very good shape, there are some areas that we need to look at, and they will be discussed in Section VI: The Future.

The MOUSS 2002 Section Review Task Force was composed of:

David Null (MOUSS Organization Committee), Chair

Paula Contreras (MOUSS Organization Committee)

Gary Cornwell (MOUSS Member at Large)

Anna Donnelly (MOUSS Member at Large)

John Hepner (MOUSS Organization Committee)

Ellen Safley (MOUSS Representative to the RUSA Organization Committee)

Mary Ellen Tyckoson (MOUSS Member at Large)

Gwen Arthur (ex officio, MOUSS Chair)

Diana Shonrock (ex officio, MOUSS Vice Chair/Chair Elect)

## **II. Section Procedures for Creating and Updating Section Goals**

The current MOUSS Goals and Objectives are posted on the Section's web page (<http://www.ala.org/rusa/mouss/archives/exec/goals.html>). Gwen Arthur, current MOUSS Chair, recently has instituted an orientation meeting for new committee chairs at the Annual Conference, and committee chairs are expected to familiarize themselves with the Section's goals and objectives and develop programming and/or publications that will promote them.

For several years, the MOUSS Vice Chair/Chair Elect was charged with holding planning meetings at the ALA Midwinter Meeting to review and revise the section's goals and objectives. At the 2001 Annual Conference, MOUSS renamed the Organization Committee to the Organization and Planning Committee. This committee will now be chaired by the Section's Past Chair and include the Members-at-Large. The committee will be charged with annually reviewing the Section's goals and objectives. The Executive Committee felt this would provide more continuity and knowledge of the Section's recent goals and objectives than a new, incoming Vice Chair necessarily has. Although we are in a transitional period, we are confident that the Organization and Planning Committee will be able to keep abreast of goals and objectives updates. Changes to the Section's goals and objectives are discussed and approved by the Section's Executive Committee. The Section is intent on making sure that our goals and objectives support and amplify those of RUSA.

The Section is in the process of revising its Bylaws to reflect current operations and procedures. The Bylaws changes will be voted on during the ALA Annual Conference in 2002. [assuming the changes are passed at Annual, I can change this wording in the final document]

## **III. Activities of the Last Five Years that Fulfill the Section's Stated Goals and Objectives**

The MOUSS goals and objectives currently are divided into six major areas. This part of the review will relate some of the activities that MOUSS has sponsored during the last five years that promote those areas. This is by no means an exhaustive list of MOUSS activities, but rather highlights of a great many programs, discussions, and publications. The Section has focused on programming and publications that provide practical help to reference and user services librarians, and the activities listed below show that emphasis.

### **PARTNERSHIPS**

All committees have looked at existing and potential liaisons with other ALA units. Many MOUSS committees have standing relationships with other committees, discussion groups, forums, etc. throughout ALA. The Section's committees regularly co-sponsor programs with other ALA units.

The Section also provides programming that deals with partnerships both within libraries and with libraries and the communities in which they exist. Recent programs illustrative of these partnerships and collaborations include:

### Recent Programs at Annual Conferences:

**2002:** Patron-Focused Services: Models of Collaborative Interlibrary Loan Collection, Development & Acquisition (ILL Committee)

**2000:** A Place for Place: The Non-Virtual Library in a Virtual Age (Services to Adults Committee)

**1999:** Live at the Library: Libraries as Cultural Community Centers (Services to Adults Committee)

### **DIVERSITY**

The Section is committed to increasing diversity in many aspects. In trying to increase diversity within the section, committee chairs and members have personally worked to recruit public librarians, school librarians, etc. to MOUSS through their personal and collegial networks. The Section has added virtual members to several committees in an attempt to attract members who cannot always attend conferences. The Section also addresses diversity issues through the work of its Library Services to the Spanish Speaking Committee. That committee is currently working on updating guidelines for library services to Hispanics, and collecting and servicing multi-lingual materials.

### **ORGANIZATION AND MEMBERSHIP**

#### **Committees:**

The Section is in the process of revamping the Organization Committee to become the Organization and Planning Committee, which will then be responsible for continuous planning for the Section.

The Professional Development Committee was disbanded, and a RUSA level committee was established in 2001. [date to be confirmed]

#### **Awards:**

Two new awards and corresponding committees were created in the last five years. The Bessie Boehm Moore/Thorndike Press Award is presented to a library organization that has developed an outstanding and creative program for library services to the aging. This award was an ALA level award from 1990-1996; the first MOUSS award was given in 2000. The Virginia Boucher-OCLC Distinguished ILL Librarian Award recognizes and honors a librarian for outstanding professional achievement, leadership and contributions to ILL and document delivery. It was first awarded in 2000.

#### **Meeting times:**

In 2000, the Section decided to try having an all-committee meeting on Saturday morning. Most committees meet at the same time in the same room, in an attempt to increase communication among committees, allow Section officers to confer with committees more easily, etc. While this has not been an unqualified success, there have been problems with room size in particular, the Section continues to experiment with this arrangement.

## **PRACTICAL HELP**

This is probably the area in which MOUSS most excels. Examples of MOUSS activities in this area are:

### Programs at Recent Annual Conferences:

**2001:** Access for Anything-Anytime-Anyplace: Challenges in Global Resource Sharing (ILL Committee); Is there a Free Lunch? The Impact of Technological Innovations (Fee-Based Reference Services Committee)

**2000:** Is MARC Dead? (Catalog Use Committee); Making Our Place Their Place: Advertising, Marketing, and Programs (Services to Adults Committee).

**1999:** Going the Distance: Interlibrary Loan in the Virtual Information Environment (ILL Committee).

**1998:** One Size Fits All Subject Access Systems (Catalog Use Committee)

The Research and Statistics Committee has presented a research forum for 8 years, highlighting important, current research on reference and user services issues. The committee also compiles the annual Reference Research Review, which is available on the committee's web site ([http://www.ala.org/rusa/mouss/archives/res/res\\_archives.html](http://www.ala.org/rusa/mouss/archives/res/res_archives.html)) and was included in the RUSA Update.

RUSA Institute: the Evaluation of Reference and User Services Committee presented highly successful programs on tools for the evaluation of reference services at the RUSA Institutes in Indianapolis in 1998 and Baltimore in 2000.

RUSA Guidelines: The Section has produced the following guidelines in the past five years: Interlibrary Loan Code for the United States (2001); Guidelines for Library Services to Older Adults (1999); Guidelines for Cooperative Reference Service Policy Manuals (1998). Currently the Section is in the process of creating or updating guidelines on reference statistics, how to evaluate reference services, behavioral standards, telefacsimile and electronic delivery of ILL requests, library services to Hispanics, and collecting and servicing multilingual materials.

## **INFORMATION LITERACY**

### Programs at Annual Conference:

**2001:** CyberSeniors: The New Frontier (Library Services to an Aging Population Committee).

The Services to Adults Committee has recently been directed by MOUSS to identify section and divisional opportunities and programming for supporting Information Literacy and will be working toward the same.

## **COMMUNICATION**

The Section appointed a Webmaster who updated and has maintained the Section's web site. We created a MOUSS listserv. Announcements of MOUSS activities are posted to this list, the RUSA list, and other related lists, such as ILL-L. A MOUSS Handbook was created and posted on the MOUSS web site. The Section is looking at more ways both to communicate within the Section and to communicate who we are and what we do to the library community at large.

## **IV. MOUSS Contributions to RUSA Goals and Objectives**

The RUSA Objectives listed in the Strategic Plan for 2001-2004 are:

1. Provide leadership in professional development for reference and user services professionals.
2. Advocate for the information disenfranchised.
3. Seek ways to improve participation in RUSA by reference and user services professionals.
4. Ensure the effectiveness of RUSA in meeting its and ALA's mission.
5. Increase the visibility of RUSA in the profession and society at large.
6. Take a leadership role in developing the vision for the future of reference and user services.
7. Advocate state and national information policies that maintain open access to information for all.

Many of the MOUSS activities that support RUSA goals and objectives were listed in section III. We have sponsored many programs, discussion forums, publications, and guidelines that provide professional development opportunities for reference and user services professionals. Our programs on library services for senior citizens, on fee-based services, and on finding ways to keep the physical library viable in a virtual world all speak to the goal of advocating for the information disenfranchised and maintaining open access to information. In addition, the MOUSS committees on services to adults, to an aging population, and to the Spanish-speaking all deal directly with those issues. The MOUSS Executive Committee has been looking seriously at more and better ways to increase membership in MOUSS and RUSA and to let information professionals know about the work that MOUSS and RUSA do for all librarians. Many of our committees, such as the ILL Committee, the Evaluation of Reference and User Services Committee, and the Cooperative Reference Service Committee, are taking leadership roles in developing a vision for the future of reference and user services

## **V. Interest Level in MOUSS**

### **MOUSS Membership**

Membership in MOUSS has grown over the last five years with a large increase in 2001 to over 900 members, although MOUSS remains the smallest section within RUSA. This may in part be due to problems with the name of the Section, which has been mentioned other times in this review. The Executive Committee has been looking at ways to increase membership, including more publicity about what MOUSS is and the types work its committees and discussion groups do. MOUSS does, however, have the largest number of committees and discussion groups within RUSA.

### **Attendance at MOUSS Programs**

Attendance at MOUSS programs is regularly quite high. Many programs have attendance over 100 people.

## **Discussion Groups**

MOUSS has four discussion groups, and attendance at all of them is quite high. They range from 30-40 people at the regular Reference in Large Academic Libraries Discussion Group to 100 or more at the ILL Discussion Group. When the discussion groups have specific topics they address, such as statistics for reference, attendance can be much higher.

## **Participation in MOUSS Committees**

MOUSS committee membership varies quite a lot. Some committees consistently have more volunteers than spaces, such as ILL. Some committees have had difficulty attracting members, such as Fee-based Reference Services and Library Services to the Spanish Speaking. More discussion on some of these committees follows under Section VI: The Future.

## **VI. The Future**

MOUSS is currently a strong and vibrant section within RUSA. Membership is growing, we are doing a better job of marketing and promoting the Section and its activities, and we are providing timely and important programming for reference and user services librarians.

Following are several areas that the Section has been looking at or will be looking at in the near future.

**Reference Services to Youth.** In 1998, the MOUSS Executive Committee voted to disband the Reference Services to Youth Committee. For years the Section had found it difficult to attract members to the committee because most people interested in services to children were members of YALSA, ALSC, and/or PLA. In the spring of 1999, Jo Bell Whitlach, RUSA President, appointed an Ad Hoc Committee on Reference Services to Children chaired by Veronica L. C. Stevenson-Moudamane, to look at ways to continue supporting reference services to youth in MOUSS and RUSA. Stevenson-Moudamane presented the taskforce's report to the RUSA Board at the Annual Conference in Chicago 2000, recommending that the MOUSS committee continue. The RUSA Board accepted the report and referred the matter back to the MOUSS Executive Committee. The Executive Committee reconsidered the report during the Midwinter Conference 2001, and still felt that a committee was not viable. The Section would, however, be open to sponsoring a Discussion Group on Reference Services to Children, and we will continue to explore that option.

**Fee-based Reference Services Committee.** This committee's activity-level has been erratic for quite a few years. During the heyday of online searching, the committee was active, sponsoring programs and producing several bibliographies on fee-based services. With the decrease in mediated searching, the committee went through a period where it was fairly moribund. Recently the committee revived, along with increased fee-based services in libraries. Many of the issues the committee has been dealing with recently, however, revolve around document delivery, which is covered in several other places in ALA, including the MOUSS ILL Committee. The current committee recommends that the committee be disbanded, and the Section will be considering this soon.

**Services to Adults Committee.** The Services to Adults Committee has been active and usually does not have much trouble attracting members. With the demise of the Reference Services to Youth Committee, however, questions have arisen about what MOUSS does that is not related to adults, and whether this committee's work should be folded into other committees? While it is true that most MOUSS activities are directed at adults, it is also true that Adult Services is a recognized service within most public libraries, and the Section is committed to increasing membership and participation by public librarians. The committee has also been charged by RUSA to look at opportunities and programming dealing with information literacy. We will be discussing the future of the Services to Adults Committee in the coming year.

**Reorganization.** The original name of the Section was MOPPS (Management and Operation of Public Services). In 1997, the Section was renamed MOUSS (Management and Operation of User Services). We have heard for years that many potential MOUSS members think that only managers can join or that the Section is oriented toward managers. While there are certainly management-oriented groups within MOUSS, much of what the Section does is pertinent to all levels of reference and user services librarians. A recent suggestion, both from the Section and from RUSA, is to make MOUSS a "general reference" section. There seems to be quite a lot of support for something of this sort, and the Section will be discussing this much more in the near future. We would want to make sure that MOUSS, or RUSA in some other fashion, continues to support the management committees within MOUSS and the special services committees in MOUSS, e.g. Services to Adults, Services to the Spanish Speaking, Services to an Aging Population.

Another recent proposal is to create a separate Resource Sharing Section within RUSA. This proposal is very new and certainly has possibilities, but MOUSS would want to be sure that what was left in MOUSS would be able to function as a Section, and that the new Resource Sharing Section would be large enough to survive.

MOUSS is open to the possibility of combining somehow with MARS. Perhaps MARS should be the General Reference Section and MOUSS would focus more on management and special services. There does seem to be a lot of overlap with MOUSS and MARS, and perhaps some committees from each section would be better off in the other, e.g. is Catalog Use more closely allied with MARS, and is Management of Electronic Reference Services more closely aligned with MOUSS?

In conclusion: MOUSS wants to develop an organizational structure that represents the interests of reference and user services librarians, and one which is adaptable to change. MOUSS is willing to change, but at this point we are still reviewing and debating the possible organizational options. We expect to continue this work in our section and in conjunction with the RUSA organizational task force discussions, and we hope that decisions can be made in a timely manner to avoid erosion in membership.

## **Appendix**

Following are the Committee Review Checklists for the eleven subject committees in MOUSS and the four discussion groups.

We did not include reviews for the Nominating Committee, the Bessie Boehm Moore/Thorndike Press Award Committee, and Virginia Boucher/OCLC Distinguished ILL Librarian Award since those are small committees with very specific charges.

## **CATALOG USE COMMITTEE**

Committee Review Checklist – Cindy Levine, Chair

Reviewer: John C. Hepner

*Committee Purpose:* (1) To focus on the use of catalogs in reference service, including such aspects as communicating, evaluating, improving, studying, and teaching the use of catalogs in all forms; (2) to monitor and communicate significant continuities and changes in the use of catalogs; (3) to identify and examine critical issues and problems in catalog use; (4) to provide opportunities for librarians to propose and discuss innovative solutions to catalog use problems; (5) to join with librarians in other specialties to produce improvements in library service.

Committee membership: 6

*1) Is the committee aware of its stated purpose?*

Yes. The committee maintains a clear focus on its purpose and committee activities directly relate to the purpose. The committee is particularly conscious of its focus on the *use* of catalogs: how catalogs are actually used and how they could be made more useful in the future.

*2) What are the current activities of the committee?*

At the 2002 midwinter meeting, the committee sponsored a vendor discussion forum on Sunday, January 20, from 4:30-6:30 p.m., in the Hilton Grand Salon B-9 to explore some of the most advanced approaches to one-stop search tools that allow users to extend information searches beyond the basic library catalog. Ex Libris, Innovative Interfaces, Sirsi, and Endeavor responded to questions about their products and interfaces.

*3) Do these activities reflect the stated purpose of the committee?*

Yes. The vendor discussion highlighted the evolving nature of library catalogs for which search interfaces now provide access to resources beyond those found in the traditional library catalog.

*4) In what ways does the work of the committee contribute to the objectives of MOUSS?*

The committee is active in providing continuing education opportunities for librarians through its sponsorship of well-attended programs and discussion sessions at both midwinter meetings and annual conferences. It regularly communicates its activities to the RUSA membership through reports and announcements appearing in MOUSS Tales and on the committee website.

*5) Is the committee aware of other MOUSS, RUSA, and/or ALA units which have similar concerns?*

While acknowledging that the focus of the committee on the *use* of library catalogs is unique, it nevertheless is aware of other units within ALA that share a focus relating to library catalogs. The units with which the committee has the closest relationship include the LITA Online Catalogs Interest Group, the ALCTS Cataloging and Classification Section (CCS), the LITA/ALCTS CCS interdivisional Authority Control in the Online Environment Interest Group,

and the ALCTS/LITA/RUSA interdivisional unit MARBI (Machine-Readable Bibliographic Information).

*Does the committee work with such units?*

The committee actively seeks to develop working relationships with other units. It co-sponsored the LITA Authority Control Interest Group program at the 2001 annual conference, and its own 2000 annual conference program "Is MARC Dead?" was co-sponsored by ALCTS/ LITA/RUSA MARBI.

*6) What recent programs/products have been generated by the committee?*

The committee has had a program accepted for Toronto, 2003, "One-stop Metasearch Tools: Friendly Time Saver or Confusing Quagmire?" The committee originated the 2002 midwinter meeting vendor discussion and the 2000 annual conference program "Is MARC Dead?". The committee expects to build further on the vendor forum concept in future conferences. Other considerations for future programs include examining mechanisms for generating user statistics for online catalogs, retrospective conversion efforts, and how the use of catalogs varies among different types of users.

**Evaluator:**

*7) What is the interest level in the committee as evidenced by attendance and participation by members and observers?*

The committee members actively participate in the work of the committee, developing programs and evaluating projects. The committee usually has a limited number of observers at meetings but programs are very well attended. Observers are encouraged to participate in deliberations of the committee. Feedback from programs is used to generate ideas for future programs.

*8) General comments / observations / suggestions:*

The committee regularly submits reports at the MOUSS Executive Committee meetings and to *MOUSS Tales*. It needs to use its website more effectively by including copies of reports and minutes of its meetings online. Also of value on the website would be resources (handouts, presentation texts, program summaries) and publicity for programs. It is suggested the committee expand publicity of its activities to the LIBREF-L, RUSA-L and PUBLIB-L mailing lists.

## **Cooperative Reference Service Committee**

Committee Review Checklist – Susan Curtis, Chair

1. *Is the committee aware of its stated purpose?*

The purpose of the committee is to study, promote and support cooperative reference service at all levels.

2. *What are the current activities of the committee?*

Committee members are looking for instances where digital reference initiatives are marketed effectively. The committee is specifically looking for groups of libraries that offer digital reference cooperatively, such as the South Jersey Regional Library Cooperative and the Bay Area Libraries Q and A Cafe. Members are inquiring about their publicity campaigns.

3. *Do these activities reflect the stated purpose of the committee?*

Committee members believe that publicity is imperative if public and academic libraries are to compete with commercial "Ask A" services. Cooperative endeavors not only pool the manpower for this service, but also bring together the financial resources required for marketing.

4. *In what ways does the work of the committee contribute to the objectives of MOUSS?*

MOUSS represents the needs and interests of library users. Its objectives focus on (1) fostering partnerships, (2) providing practical help, (3) teaching information literacy, and (4) insuring communication with users. The committee's current focus includes academic and public library partnerships (1). We hope to sponsor a program that will provide tips on marketing digital reference services effectively (2). The one-on-one nature of digital reference interviews enables librarians to escort users to reputable web sites and explain why the site is valuable. It also gives them the opportunity to co-browse with the user and demonstrate how to locate authoritative sites in the future. These opportunities give the librarian a chance to teach information literacy skills to the user (3). The committee's survey documented how little cooperative reference was taking place in 1999. Now that cooperative reference is becoming more common, the committee hopes to publicize how to attract more users to digital reference services. Hence it is contributing to the dialog about reference services in the 21st century

5. *Is the committee aware of other MOUSS, RUSA and/or ALA units which have similar concerns? Does the committee work with such units?*

The committee spoke with the public library section about cosponsoring a program, but the proposal did not suit their 2001 annual program plans.

6. *What recent products have been generated by the committee?*

The committee had a program proposal accepted for ALA Annual Conference in Toronto, entitled "Marketing Virtual Reference: Consortium Models." The committee conducted a survey and wrote an article summarizing its findings. The committee's article on cooperative reference activities within consortiums will be published in the Reference and User Services Quarterly, Summer 2002.

**Evaluator:**

7. *What is the interest level in the committee as evidenced by attendance and participation?*

Attendance by committee members has always been high at annual and midwinter meetings. Several members rotated off the committee in June, but new members are ready to step in.

8. *General comments / observations / suggestions:*

## **Evaluation of Reference and User Services Committee**

Committee Review Checklist – Lisa Horowitz, Chair

1) *Is the committee aware of its stated purpose?*

Yes. As stated on the MOUSS web site, the committee's purpose is "To collect, analyze, and disseminate information to the RUSA membership and profession on qualitative evaluation and quantitative measurements of service which will be used to assist in responsible managerial planning and decision making in reference and adult services; to support research in this area."

2) *What are the current activities of the committee?*

- Creating guidelines for reference statistics and how to evaluate reference services.
- Considering recreating our popular session from the past two RUSA Institutes on tools to use to evaluate reference services for a preconference at ALA Toronto. Or to reproduce in another venue.
- Evaluating what might be done with the Reference Assessment Manual produced in 1995.
- Possibly creating a clearinghouse of instruments used for reference statistics. (Possibly overlaps with what Matt Saxton has presented to the committee.)

3) *Do these activities reflect the stated purpose of the committee?*

Yes.

4) *In what ways does the work of the committee contribute to the objectives of MOUSS?*

Practical Help -- Our RUSA Institute program, produced two times in the past few years, got very high ratings for its value to librarians' practical work. Our goal to develop guidelines for reference statistics will also be valuable to librarians' daily work.

Communication -- We advertised the Reference Statistics forum mentioned above through a variety of listservs and in flyers, and we attracted a large audience for the session. Our web site has been kept up-to-date, and includes many links of interest to lots of librarians. We don't have data on how it's used, however. We might benefit from advertising on listservs or to our forum audiences what is available from our web site.

5) *Is the committee aware of other MOUSS, RUSA, and/or ALA units which have similar concerns?*

- Yes. - LAMA Library Organization and Management Section has a committee on evaluating library services -- Planning and Evaluation of Library Services.
- LAMA Measurement, Assessment and Evaluation Section has a committee on how to use data -- Using Measurement Data for Library Planning, Evaluation and Communication. (This may be two committees. It's unclear.)
  - RUSA MARS sometimes has programs related to electronic reference that touch on evaluation.
  - The MOUSS committee on performance issues sometimes has concerns that overlap.

*Does the committee work with such units?*

We have had several committee members who are also involved in the MOUSS

committee on performance issues. At ALA Annual 2001, we did offer a volunteer to work with a MARS committee on an issue that overlapped, although I don't know if it is happening or not (I'm waiting to find out). We have not worked together with LAMA committees.

6) *What recent programs/products have been generated by the committee?*

The committee will hold a preconference in Toronto on "Reference Assessment Programs: Evaluating Current and Future Reference Services." The committee sponsored programs at the past two RUSA Institutes, a forum on reference statistics co-sponsored with the Reference Services in Large Research Libraries DG, and an update to the Reference Assessment Manual with some annotated bibliography information handed out at the Institute.

**Evaluator:**

7. *What is the interest level in the committee as evidenced by attendance and participation by members and observers?*

The committee seems able to attract and keep good, dedicated members.

8. *General comments / observations / suggestions:*

The committee has been functioning well and providing very useful workshops and programs.

## **Fee-based Reference Services Committee**

Committee Review Checklist – Lori Morse, Chair

The committee had been moribund for some time, and MOUSS had considered disbanding it several years ago. Anna Donnelly revived the committee for a while, but it is the general feeling of all involved that the committee has outlived its usefulness and should be disbanded. Diana Shonrock, the current MOUSS Vice Chair, has not appointed any new members to the committee, and MOUSS anticipates officially disbanding the committee in the very near future.

## **Interlibrary Loan Committee**

Committee Review Checklist – Lynn Wiley, Chair

ILL Committee members were sent the review questions via email in November. Responses were collected; the chair supplemented that information with more specifics and then summarized as follows.

*1) Is the committee aware of its stated purpose?*

This was a resounding and unanimous yes. The charge is on the web site. New members are referred to the charge. The charge has been the header for the ILL Committee meeting written agenda for the past few meetings as well.

*2) What are the current activities of the committee?*

The committee is engaged in several efforts at the moment. A new program committee has been formed to develop a program for 2003. A taskforce to promote and maintain the new National Interlibrary Loan Code (recently revised by the committee and approved in 2001) has been set up to begin that work. A group has been working on the Guidelines & Procedures for Telefacsimile and Electronic Delivery of Interlibrary Loan Requests and Materials and will be presenting a draft to the ILL Committee soon. Last year, a number of new working groups were formed to address concerns and needs of the ILL community. These groups include one to investigate UCITA and the impact on ILL, one to develop a Web Available ALA Request Form, another to work on Union List of Serials (with ALCTS Serials Section, Union List of Serials Committee), a Virtual Membership group, and the Liaison to Licensing Entities Working Group. More liaisons with other groups are being actively pursued with great success this year in the work completed with both the union list and the licensing committees. The committee has been successful in establishing a liaison with the American Association of Law Libraries and is working to do the same with PLA, MLA and others. The committee put together a successful program entitled on Access for Anything - Anytime Anyplace that was held at ALA Annual 2001.

The committee also developed a new ILL award (Virginia Boucher Distinguished ILL Librarian Award) and formed a new ILL committee to handle the awards process. The first award was granted in 2000.

*3) Do these activities reflect the stated purpose of the committee?*

Yes, these activities are all directly related to the purpose, which is to consider current aspects of interlibrary loan service and to recommend solutions to interlibrary loan problems.

*4) In what ways does the work of the committee contribute to the objectives of MOUSS?*

The MOUSS Goals are listed below followed by the ILL Committee contributions towards these efforts.

(1) PARTNERSHIPS

The ILL Committee has had a long history of partnering with other ALA divisions and sections by co-sponsoring or seeking co-sponsorship for programs and in establishing ongoing liaisons with other groups. One such long-standing liaison is that with the ACRL Copyright Committee. Other new ones have been described above. In addition, the ILL Committee meetings include liaisons for a number of critical associations and research libraries to best establish the communication necessary for successful ILL growth and development. These contacts are with ARL, RLG, OCLC, the Library of Congress, CISTI, the British Library, the Center for Research Libraries, and the National Library of Medicine.

## (2) DIVERSITY

Diversity has long been a goal for the ILL Committee. Members are active in recruiting new members from all areas of librarianship (again see above for a description of the liaison activities). Geographic representation has also been sought when considering new members. This goal is difficult to reach as academic libraries dominate in the interlibrary loan sphere but the virtual membership and recent efforts to better connect with for example the public and law libraries, may help change that.

## (3) ORGANIZATION AND MEMBERSHIP

The ILL committee recruited a virtual member and completed a report on this new membership category last year. New members are encouraged and care is taken to have both veterans and newcomers in the group. Appointments last year included three new members with diverse backgrounds in interlibrary loan.

The chair and often vice chair attend MOUSS organization meetings. The new orientation meetings are very helpful to ensure continuity of purpose.

## (4) PRACTICAL HELP

The ILL Discussion group routinely brings up practical points for follow up with the ILL committee. Publications of the committee such as the National ILL Code provide real information for practitioners. The committee also works to develop programs that will not only offer good tips but will also give the ILL practitioner the best perspective to enhance ILL.

The working groups established last year are focused on better tools for the trade and communication on issues that impact the delivery of ILL service. The regular updates provided by the liaisons sitting on the committee also offer excellent information and tips on how to use the services they offer.

## (5) INFORMATION LITERACY

Education of the ILL practitioner has always been a goal of the committee. The services provided by the ILL practitioner directly and indirectly impact general information literacy in delivering on the information requirements for the fulfillment of that goal.

## (6) COMMUNICATION

The ILL committee has posted meeting minutes to the MOUSS web site, and uses a number of RUSA and MOUSS listservs to announce programs and meetings. The ILL-L Listserv is an important vehicle for ILL practitioners and members also regularly post to that group in their role as a member of the ILL committee.

5) *Is the committee aware of other MOUSS, RUSA, and/or ALA units that have similar concerns? Does the committee work with such units?*

The Ill Committee works to develop collaborative relationships and liaisons with groups inside (ALCTS Serials Section, ACRL Copyright, LAMA Access) and outside ALA which include state legislators, ALA Washington Office, ARL, BLDSCLC, CISTI, CRL, NLM, OCLC, RLG, N The ILL Committee works to develop collaborative relationships and FRLA, and licensing entities. The Committee should work to develop a better link with ASCLA ICAN as they can overlap somewhat.

6) *What recent programs/products have been generated by the committee?*

ALA Annual Programs:

2002 – Patron-focused Services: Models of Collaborative Interlibrary Loan Collection Development and Acquisitions

2001 - Access for Anything – Anytime- Anyplace: Challenges in Global Resource Sharing

1999 - Going the Distance: Interlibrary Loan in the Virtual Information Environment

1997 - Patrons are Free

A preconference was approved for Toronto in 2003

### **Evaluator:**

7) *What is the interest level in the committee as evidenced by attendance? and participation by members and observers?*

The ILL Committee is very well attended. Member turnout is close to 100%. Observers number 30-40 at the annual meeting with slightly less at midwinter. The Ill Committee receives many applications for membership every year. There are never enough slots to match the interest.

8) *General comments / observations / suggestions:*

This is a hard working group whose work has contributed to a better understanding of ILL while leading the way for improvements in the service. The only concern mentioned was possible time conflicts should the meeting time of the committee or discussion group be changed.

## **Library Services to an Aging Population Committee**

Committee Review Checklist –Emilie Smart, Chair

1. *Is the committee aware of its stated purpose?*

1. Yes. The charge is on the MOUSS website.
2. Certainly those of us who have been involved for quite a while are.

2. *What are the current activities of the committee?*

1. Program accepted for Toronto, 2003: The Boomers are Coming, The Boomers are Coming: Are Our Aging Services Ready?
2. Coordination with the Library Service to the Impaired Elderly Forum of ASCLA; continued coordination with efforts to promote public libraries as a major resource for Medicare information; looking at ways to make service to older adults a higher priority, especially utilizing new technologies; reviewing guidelines for Service to an Aging Population for needed revisions
3. Links to selected websites for seniors from the committee's homepage  
<http://www.ala.org/rusa/mouss/committees/aging/aging.html>

3. *Do these activities reflect the stated purpose of the committee?*

Yes, the committee's purpose is: To explore ways of providing information and education on the subject and its problems for the profession and for the layperson who works with this group facilitating the use of library service by the aged, continually exploring ways of making library service to the aged more effective

4. *In what ways does the work of the committee contribute to the objectives of MOUSS?*

The committee works to promote outreach to seniors and librarians who serve seniors and to provide practical help to those groups.

5. *Is the committee aware of other MOUSS, RUSA, and/or ALA units which have similar concerns? Does the committee work with such units?*

1. EBSS Committee on gerontology. Attempted a joint meeting at mid-winter.
2. Definitely. As stated above, works with ASCLA forum, which is the only other group in ALA that focuses on services for older adults. Also worked with PLA's Sandwich Generation group -- not sure if it is still active. Have tried for years to get PLA to be more active in this area.

6. *What recent programs/products have been generated by the committee?*

1. 2001 program CyberSeniors: The New Frontier
2. Guidelines for Library Services to Older Adults (1999)

### **Evaluator:**

7. *What is the interest level in the committee as evidenced by attendance and participation by members and observers?*

Almost all committee members try to attend & there are several "interested parties" that come regularly (often past or future members of the committee since terms are limited.)

8. *General comments / observations / suggestions:*

A new chair, Emilie Smart, has been appointed recently to help revitalize this committee.

## **Library Services to the Spanish-Speaking Committee**

Committee Review Checklist – Brett Lear, Chair

*1) Is the committee aware of its stated purpose?*

Yes: To improve library services to the Spanish-speaking and Hispanic culture groups at the local and national levels.

*2) What are the current activities of the committee?*

Currently, I have been working on boosting the membership and ensuring attendance at Midwinter.

The previous chair had started work on a core reference list of Spanish language materials. But it looks as if the committee will not complete that project.

The committee is working on revising the Guidelines for Library Services to Hispanics ([http://www.ala.org/rusa/std\\_hispanic.html](http://www.ala.org/rusa/std_hispanic.html)) and the Guidelines for Multilingual Materials Collection and Development and Library Services.

*3) Do these activities reflect the stated purpose of the committee?*

Yes. The committee's purpose is listed in #1.

*4) In what ways does the work of the committee contribute to the objectives of MOUSS?*

The abovementioned document provides guidelines for libraries and other institutions that offer services to Spanish speakers.

The work of the committee has been fairly stagnant over the past couple of years. Ina Rimpau, past chair, and I have been the only attendees at the last few Annual and Midwinter meetings. I will devote part of Midwinter's meeting to working with the committee members in choosing a future activity. I will ensure that this activity ties into the objectives of MOUSS.

*5) Is the committee aware of other MOUSS, RUSA, and/or ALA units which have similar concerns? Does the committee work with such units?*

I am the incoming chair. I am not familiar with other committees or sections that have similar concerns. I will explore this at Midwinter.

At least recently, the committee has not worked with other committees, sections, or divisions.

*6) What recent programs/products have been generated by the committee?*

The document Guidelines for Library Services to Hispanics is the only completed (or nearly completed) project I know of.

**Evaluator:**

*7) What is the interest level in the committee as evidenced by attendance and participation by members and observers?*

The committee has had trouble attracting members in recent years but currently does have a workable number of members.

*8. General comments / observations / suggestions*

The committee had some problems with membership in recent years, but now appears to have an active membership, and they are completing work on several projects. Attracting members to this committee when so many people just join Reforma is an issue, but no other group focuses specifically on the issues this committee works on.

## **Management of Reference Committee**

### Committee Review Checklist – Betty Gard, Chair

1. *Is the committee aware of its stated purpose?*

Yes, as stated on the MOUSS web site, the purpose is “to identify and study issues relating to the management of reference services and to disseminate information on reference management in all types of libraries.”

2. *What are the current activities of the committee?*

Working on a revision to the RUSA Guidelines for Behavioral Performance of Reference and Information Services Professionals. We hope to have a draft by Midwinter 2003. We will be emphasizing guidelines for various types of remote reference.

3. *Do these activities reflect the stated purpose of the committee?*

Yes. The committee has a commitment to identifying major issues related to the management of reference, and all of the past and near future projects directly addressed that commitment. Disseminating information of all types of libraries has also been a major goal, most recently illustrated by the Occasional Paper and plans to widely publicize a draft and final revision of the Behavioral Guidelines

4. *In what ways does the work of the committee contribute to the objectives of MOUSS?*

a. Partnerships: The Committee has co-sponsored activities in the past and will attempt to do so in the future. For instance, we are communicating closely with the Evaluation of Reference and User Services about the Behavioral Guidelines. b. Diversity: our Committee has a good mix of academic and public librarians. c. Practical help. This is understandably one of the most relevant areas of the work of the Committee. The recent publication, program, and table talk forums were attempts to “develop and deliver products that members can apply in daily work,” as will be the revised Behavioral Guidelines. d. Information Literacy. In the broad sense, helping improve the management of reference services also serves to find ways of better educating library users. e. Communication. It is a major goal of the Committee to communicate their activities as broadly as possible to the ALA and RUSA membership, and we will be exploring the best ways to do so in the future.

5. *Is the committee aware of other MOUSS, RUSA, and/or ALA units which have similar concerns? Does the committee work with such units?*

We recently reviewed a list of nine committees and discussion groups that we considered to have related goals and charges.

6. *What recent programs/products have been generated by the committee?*

Annual Conference 2001 co-sponsored with ALCTS Serials Section “The Serials Pig in the Aggregators Poke.” Annual Conference 2000 program “Reaching Users and Adding Value: Reference Services in the Online Environment.

**Evaluator:**

7. *What is the interest level in the committee as evidenced by attendance and participation by members and observers?*

Very high with a core of members. We did lose a few members this past year either because they changed to jobs not related to reference or because they could not manage to attend conferences.

8. *General comments / observations / suggestions:*

The Committee seems to have moved out of a “slow” period that resulted mainly from two successive chairs in a row resigning after one meeting and not managing to put concrete plans in place. I believe we are now back on track, and we look forward to working with a group of new members at Midwinter.

## **Organization and Planning Committee**

Committee Review Checklist – David Null, Chair

1. *Is the committee aware of its stated purpose?*

Yes, to serve the Executive Committee in an advisory capacity by reviewing the section organization and activities.

2. *What are the current activities of the committee?*

The committee has been focusing the past year on the MOUSS Section Review.

3. *Do these activities reflect the stated purpose of the committee?*

Yes.

4. *In what ways does the work of the committee contribute to the objectives of MOUSS?*

The committee contributes to the objectives of MOUSS by making sure that MOUSS goals and objectives are up-to-date and being carried out by the Section's committees.

5. *Is the committee aware of other MOUSS, RUSA, and/or ALA units which have similar concerns? Does the committee work with such units?*

There are similar committees in other MOUSS Sections.

6. *What recent programs/products have been generated by the committee?*

The MOUSS Section Review, which will be finished in July 2002. At Midwinter 2003, the committee will start looking at the MOUSS Goals and Objectives.

### **Evaluator:**

7. *What is the interest level in the committee as evidenced by attendance and participation by members and observers?*

Although traditionally this has not been a committee that lots of people want to serve on, several people recently expressed interest in serving on the committee. This may be due to the whole question of RUSA and MOUSS reorganization that is going on now.

8. *General comments / observations / suggestions:*

MOUSS recently reorganized the Organization Committee and renamed it the Organization and Planning Committee. The committee will be chaired by the Past Chair of the Section and will include the members at large along with other people. The committee will also take on the main planning role for the section, a task that had been done by the Vice Chair, who was often brand new and has a lot of other duties. The section felt that this structure allows for better continuity and strategic planning.

## **Research & Statistics Committee**

Committee Review Checklist – Eric Novotny, Chair

1) *Is the committee aware of its stated purpose?*

To focus on current research needs and statistical procedures in the fields of reference and adult services.

2) *What are the current activities of the committee?*

The committee sponsors the annual Reference Research Forum, and compiles and distributes the Reference Research Review, an annotated bibliography of significant new research articles pertaining to reference services.

3) *Do these activities reflect the stated purpose of the committee?*

The forum and the bibliography serve the committee charge of focusing on current research and statistics. Both activities highlight current trends and activities in the areas of interest.

4) *In what ways does the work of the committee contribute to the objectives of MOUSS?*

The committee contributes to the MOUSS objective of communicating useful information to MOUSS members and the profession at large. We provide a means for individuals from various library settings share information, opinions, and experiences. The committee widely distributes information of use to reference and public service librarians.

5) *Is the committee aware of other MOUSS, RUSA, and/or ALA units which have similar concerns? Does the committee work with such units?*

The chair regularly attends the ALA Research and Statistics forum, sponsored by the ALA Office for Research and Statistics. Our committee is consulting with the MOUSS Evaluation of Reference and User Services committee in the development of RUSA standards and guidelines for reference service statistics.

6) *What recent programs/products have been generated by the committee?*

The committee sponsors the annual Reference Research Forum in which invited speakers discuss their research. The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum at the Annual Conference in Atlanta was the first one that was approved as an official program and therefore could be listed as such in the program. The Forum for Toronto in 2003 was also approved as a program. Committee members annually compile the Reference Research Review highlighting significant research-oriented publications in selected professional journals. The review is accessible via the committee's web site, and is also published in the RUSA Update.

### **Evaluator:**

7) *What is the interest level in the committee as evidenced by attendance and participation by members and observers?*

Attendance at the Reference Research Forum varies depending on the speakers selected. Past Forums have drawn anywhere from 35-100 attendees. The committee currently has 13 members, an indication of the active interest in this area.

8) *General comments / observations / suggestions:*

The committee has been very active in promoting and highlighting quality research. The Section may not be able to continue to support the Research Forum as a program every year, since we sometimes have more program proposals than we have slots, but we are committed to supporting the work of the committee.

## **Services to Adults Committee**

Committee Review Checklist – Elenore Kilpatrick, Chair

1. *Is the committee aware of its stated purpose?*

Yes. As posted on the MOUSS web site, “The purpose of the Services to Adults Committee is: to identify the library and program interests of adults, to collect and disseminate information on existing library programs and services, to develop guidelines for programs and services to meet specific interests and needs of adults, to serve as a consultant for libraries with adult programming and/or services problems, to create ad hoc subcommittees as needed to accomplish the above goals.”

2. *What are the current activities of the committee?*

Working on program for 2002 Annual Conference “Making Our Place Their Place: Advertising, Marketing and Programs.” Working on updating and possibly publishing materials from the 2000 program on a place for place.

3. *Do these activities reflect the stated purpose of the committee?*

Yes.

4. *In what ways does the work of the committee contribute to the objectives of MOUSS?*

The programs have provided practical help to librarians working with adults.

5. *Is the committee aware of other MOUSS, RUSA, and/or ALA units which have similar concerns? Does the committee work with such units?*

The committee has looked for other ALA units that deal specifically with adults, especially in PLA, but we have not identified any.

6. *What recent programs/products have been generated by the committee?*

Program at Annual Conference 2002 - “Making Our Place Their Place: Advertising, Marketing and Programs.” Program at Annual Conference in 2000 - "A Place for Place: The Virtual Library in a Non-Virtual World"

### **Evaluator:**

7. *What is the interest level in the committee as evidenced by attendance and participation by members and observers?*

The committee membership has varied and attendance has not always been good, but at the moment the committee has a good number of people on it, and there have been some visitors at recent meetings.

8. *General comments / observations / suggestions:*

There have been some questions about the purpose of this committee, since almost all MOUSS committees do deal with adults. However, adult services is a recognized area within public libraries, a population MOUSS and RUSA are trying to reach out to, and the committee’s programs have been very well attended. The committee could perhaps also look at issues surrounding older, returning students in academic libraries. This seems to be the only committee

within ALA that deals specifically with adult services, and as such should probably remain as a separate committee.

## **ILL Discussion Group**

Committee Review Checklist – Marilyn Grush, Chair

*1. Is the committee aware of its stated purpose?*

Yes, the purpose of the committee is “To provide a forum for discussion of issues pertaining to interlibrary loan and resource sharing among all types of libraries. “

*2. What are the current activities of the committee?*

Hold discussions at Midwinter and Annual meetings. Meetings typically include updates from other committees and various national libraries, library organizations and vendors. Recent meetings have also included presentations on specific aspects of ILL or resource sharing.

*3. Do these activities reflect the stated purpose of the committee?*

Yes.

*4. In what ways does the work of the committee contribute to the objectives of MOUSS?*

The ILL Discussion Group is one of the main avenues for ILL and resource sharing librarians to meet and share common issues, concerns, problems, and solutions. It is a major source of practical knowledge and help for those librarians.

*5. Is the committee aware of other MOUSS, RUSA, and/or ALA units which have similar concerns? Does the committee work with such units?*

The discussion group works closely with the ILL Committee and also has ties to many other resource sharing groups within and without ALA.

*6. What recent programs/products have been generated by the committee?*

Discussions at Midwinter and Annual meetings. The discussion group presentations from the 2002 meetings are available on the discussion group’s page on the MOUSS web site.

### **Evaluator:**

*7. What is the interest level in the committee as evidenced by attendance and participation by members and observers?*

Attendance is always quite high, often over 100. The Virginia Boucher/OCLC Distinguished ILL Librarian Award has been presented at the ILL Discussion Group meetings because of the high attendance.

*8. General comments / observations / suggestions:*

Recently the discussion group has been working to shorten liaison reports and ILL Committee subcommittee reports and return to more discussion.

**Performance Issues for Reference and Information Librarians Discussion Group**  
Committee Review Checklist - Daniel Barkeley, Chair

*Committee Purpose:* (1) To provide a forum for the informal exchange of information and the discussion of common challenges relating to performance issues in reference services; (2) to serve as a vehicle for raising awareness of performance standards and their use in the provision of quality reference service.

Leadership: 1 Chair

1) *Is the committee aware of its stated purpose?*

Somewhat. The discussion group focuses on topics highlighting trends in the provision of reference services. Their approach seems to be more general than focused on performance per se. Attention to standards of performance is not evident from recent discussion topics. After discussions with the current chair of the group, closer attention to the purpose is expected to be achieved in the future.

2) *What are the current activities of the committee?*

Discussion programs at both midwinter meetings and annual conferences are provided. Discussions generally are focused on a particular topic or theme and often include speakers. Annual conference programs usually are more formal presentations than midwinter discussions.

3) *Do these activities reflect the stated purpose of the committee?*

Somewhat. Recent programs address challenges to performance of reference services but don't appear to clearly address standards of performance. The focus on performance per se seems a bit tenuous.

4) *In what ways does the work of the committee contribute to the objectives of MOUSS?*

*The discussion group provides a professional development opportunity at each midwinter meeting and annual conference. It provides a forum for the sharing of experiences and information among librarians from diverse types of libraries.*

5) *Is the committee aware of other MOUSS, RUSA, and/or ALA units which have similar concerns? Does the committee work with such units?*

Not initially. After discussions with the current chair, a greater awareness of potential allies has been achieved.

6) *What recent programs/products have been generated by the committee?*

The 2002 midwinter meeting discussion was sparsely attended. The 2001 midwinter meeting discussion topic was "Online Interactive Reference Service". The 2000 annual conference discussion topic was reference service to remote users. The 1999 annual conference discussion topic was "Roving Reference: A Human Presence for the Information Age". The 1999 midwinter meeting discussion topic was the approachability of reference librarians.

**EVALUATOR:**

7) *What is the interest level in the committee as evidenced by attendance and participation by members and observers?*

Attendance generally is between 40-60 persons for each discussion session. The 2002 midwinter meeting was sparsely attended and this was at least partly attributable to a lack of publicity.

8) *General comments / observations / suggestions:*

The discussions of this group seem to have overlapped with the other MOUSS discussion groups for reference services in large and medium-sized research libraries. The focus on performance issues and standards has not been strong in recent years.

No reports have been made at the MOUSS Executive Committee meeting since 1999 Annual Conference, but short recaps of discussions generally appear in *MOUSS Tales*. The group is not currently making effective use of its website: no reports or activity announcements are present. It does not provide minutes or transcriptions of discussions.

Discussions with the new current chair of the discussion group provided an opportunity to begin restoration of this group. Continuity in leadership has been a problem. To address this issue, the group is planning to create a steering committee of three people with staggering terms to provide a person to take notes/minutes for discussions (first year), a person to chair the group and make arrangements for meetings (second year) and a person serving as past-chair to assist newer steering committee members with their duties (third year). A volunteer for a second steering committee member was found during the 2002 midwinter meeting and a third person will be requested during the 2002 annual conference. Provision of a multi-person steering committee is expected to help the group maintain some continuity of focus and operation. This also will provide a means to encourage additional persons to start becoming involved in the section and division.

Closer attention to the subject focus of the group is expected. Discussions will be developed to focus more closely on performance issues rather than on general topics. To assist in this, closer contact with allied units within MOUSS and RUSA will be developed. Among the units of initial concern are the MOUSS Evaluation of Reference and User Services Committee, the MOUSS Management of Reference Committee, the RUSA ad hoc Professional Competencies Committee, and the RUSA Standards and Guidelines Committee. Additionally, the ALA Office for Human Resource Development and Recruitment and the MOUSS Research and Statistics Committee may be contacted.

The group will attempt to better publicize discussions. Posting notices to discussion lists and to past participants and using RUSA and MOUSS publicity opportunities (including the groups' own website) will be attempted to encourage attendance. Creating minutes of discussions and posting them to the MOUSS website for this group also should enhance its visibility and publicity.

Although this discussion group has strayed from its purpose in recent years, a revision of organization and focus by the current leadership should help the group get back on track. The new chair is very willing to help the group and is quite open to suggestions. This group has been

providing and is expected to continue to provide a continuing education opportunity for RUSA members at both midwinter and annual meetings.

Reviewer: John C. Hepner

*12 FEB 2002*

## **Reference Services in Large Research Libraries Discussion Group**

Committee Review Checklist – Paul Constantine, Chair

1. *Is the committee aware of its stated purpose?*

Yes. The purpose, as stated on the MOUSS web site is “To provide a forum for the discussion of issues of mutual interest to heads of reference departments in large research libraries.

2. *What are the current activities of the committee?*

Holds discussion forums at Midwinter and Annual meetings.

3. *Do these activities reflect the stated purpose of the committee?*

Yes.

4. *In what ways does the work of the committee contribute to the objectives of MOUSS?*

Like most discussion groups, this one provides a change for reference librarians in similar sized institutions to get together and discuss common issues, concerns, and practices. They provide some of the best practical help provided by ALA.

5. *Is the committee aware of other MOUSS, RUSA, and/or ALA units which have similar concerns? Does the committee work with such units?*

There are no other discussion groups that cover this topic. It is possible that this discussion group could work more closely with the Reference Services in Medium Sized Research Libraries Discussion Group. Sometimes the issues are not similar, but sometimes they are.

6. *What recent programs/products have been generated by the committee?*

Discussion forums at Midwinter and Annual meetings. Some have focused on specific topics, such as reference statistics, which was very heavily attended.

### **Evaluator:**

7. *What is the interest level in the committee as evidenced by attendance and participation by members and observers?*

The group averages 30-40 people for the regular discussion and has attracted many more to its more specialized discussions.

8. *General comments / observations / suggestions:*

The committee has never reported to the MOUSS executive committee and has never appeared to feel very closely tied to MOUSS. This may change since a new chair will be coming on board. MOUSS is also doing a better job of having a member at large as liaison to the Discussion Groups. There has also always been some mystery about what constitutes “large.” Sometimes people are not sure if they should be attending the meeting or not, and since the group used to be Head of Reference in Large Academic Libraries, I think there is still some residual feeling that this is a group of heads of reference departments, not just people who are interested in reference in large institutions, and there has at times been a sort of “clubby” feeling

to the group. I hope that having a new chair and having a liaison to the MOUSS Executive Committee will help tie the discussion group more closely to MOUSS.

## **Reference Services in Medium-sized Research Libraries Discussion Group**

Committee Review Checklist - Patrick Oberholtzer, Chair

*Committee Purpose:* To provide a forum for sharing of information and experience of reference librarians from those libraries smaller than the 54 largest Association of Research Libraries, whether academic or public.

The discussion group has a steering committee (elected from participants) of four persons who rotate through a sequence of four positions during their tenure: member-at-large, secretary, chair, and past-chair. Steering committee members must maintain RUSA and MOUSS memberships during their tenure. Steering committee membership was reduced from 5 to 4 members at the 1999 ALA Midwinter Meeting to reduce the time commitment of members.

1) *Is the committee aware of its stated purpose?*

Yes.

2) *What are the current activities of the committee?*

The discussion group meets for moderated discussions at both ALA midwinter meetings and annual conferences. The meetings are open to anyone who wishes to attend, regardless of RUSA membership status. Minutes of discussions are emailed to the discussion group's participants and are posted on the RUSA MOUSS website. An archive of minutes of discussions begins with the 1995 Annual Conference and continues to the present.

At the 2002 midwinter meeting, Dave Tyckoson, Head, Reference Department, California State University at Fresno, will speak and promote discussion during the first hour on "Reference Past, Reference Future", where reference services have been and how new technologies and cooperative reference projects are influencing where we are going. The second hour will be devoted to topics selected by the discussion group participants that day.

3) *Do these activities reflect the stated purpose of the committee?*

Yes.

4) *In what ways does the work of the committee contribute to the objectives of MOUSS?*

The discussion group provides a professional development opportunity at each midwinter meeting and annual conference. It provides a forum for the sharing of experiences and information among librarians from diverse types of libraries. It regularly communicates its activities through the MOUSS website and directly with participants. It promotes its discussions to members through RUSA and MOUSS publications and websites.

5) *Is the committee aware of other MOUSS, RUSA, and/or ALA units which have similar concerns?*

No other ALA unit focuses on reference services in libraries of moderate size, but other ALA units oriented toward moderately sized libraries are the ACRL Western European Studies Section (WESS) College and Medium-Sized Libraries Discussion Group, the ACRL Medium-Sized Libraries Discussion Group, and the PLA Library Development Cluster (LDC) Small and Medium-Sized Libraries Committee.

*Does the committee work with such units?*

No active collaboration exists between the MOUSS discussion group and the other units addressing issues of moderately sized libraries.

6) *What recent programs/products have been generated by the committee?*

Discussions at both midwinter and annual conferences.

**EVALUATOR:**

7) *What is the interest level in the committee as evidenced by attendance and participation by members and observers?*

Attendance figures for past 5 years:

	Midwinter	Annual
2002	33	
2001	10	30
2000	22	17
1999	31	23
1998	34	30

Everyone in attendance actively participates in discussions.

8) *General comments / observations / suggestions:*

The 2002 midwinter meeting discussion date, time and format are a departure from the past. The group used to meet Tuesday mornings during both ALA midwinter meetings and annual conferences. Time of the meeting was 9:30 am-12:30 pm (generally adjourning the official discussion at 11:30 am to accommodate persons needing to catch flights home). A consideration of alternative meeting dates and times has been under consideration for several years to address the changes in the length of time people were remaining at the conferences (which had manifested itself in slightly lower attendance figures for meetings). Alternatives were determined through two email polls of all discussion group participants and through discussions of the alternatives at meetings. The recent change in ALA meeting schedules influenced the move to a Sunday meeting date and an early evening meeting time. In the past, all meetings were generally devoted solely to discussion of topics proposed by participants at the start of the meeting and voted upon to determine the order in which each topic would be addressed. Discussions generally moved through topics until adjournment, with an effort made by the group Chair (as moderator) to move to new topics when adequate discussion was deemed to have taken place. A new format being used experimentally at the 2002 midwinter meeting discussion involves a presentation by a speaker for the first part of the meeting and then a return to open discussion of proposed topics for the final part of the meeting. The format is being tried only for midwinter meetings.

Reports at the MOUSS Executive Committee meeting generally have not been made because the discussion group was meeting at the same time as the Executive Committee. The discussion group has made good use of its website and maintains a direct link with persons attending its discussions through its own mailing list.

Suggested to the discussion group was a potential name change to widen the appeal of the group to public libraries and to restore an invitation to participation by persons from smaller libraries. A potential new name for the group would be "Reference Services in Small and Medium-sized Libraries Discussion Group". At some point in the past, the "small" was dropped from the discussion group's old title. The name has caused misapprehensions among participants in the past because a definition of a "medium-sized" as opposed to a "small" library was never clear. The inclusion of both in the name is expected to solve the problem. The group has always been open to participation regardless of how small a library may be. Dropping "research" from the name of the group is expected to counteract an erroneous assumption that the group focuses only on academic libraries. Traditionally, the group has encouraged participation by academic, public and special librarians, and members of public and special libraries have been involved with the group in the past. By eliminating the word that many have perceived as excluding certain types of libraries, the group could appeal again to a more diverse group of librarians.

While the group generally has been good at publicizing its activities, it is suggested that notices about discussion times be posted not only to LIBREF-L and RUSA-L but also to PUBLIB-L. This addition hopefully will allow the group to reach more public librarians.

Reviewer: John C. Hepner  
*12 FEB 2002*