2009 Midwinter Education minutes

From GODORT

GODORT Education Committee
ALA 2009 Midwinter Meeting
Sunday, January 25, 1:30-3:30 p.m.
Colorado Convention Center, Korbel Ballroom 4B

Present: Jennie Burroughs, Jeffrey Elliott, Lori Lester, Tina Plottel, Linda Spiro, Carol Spector, Tim Dodge, Tom Twiss

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Approval of Agenda – Approved with two additions under new business

III. Discussion session: Library school curricula on government information

To begin the discussion session, Karen Hogenboom, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, talked about her experiences incorporating government information into LIS courses on general reference, medical reference, and social science reference. She noted that effectively conveying useful skills and tools is a challenge because there is no way to convey the scope of government information in a one-shot session. Fifty to one hundred minutes of exposure is not enough. Also, she typically teaches in general classrooms, not tech classrooms, which makes it harder to demonstrate government information examples. She charged the group with thinking about how we can better convey the value of government information in generalist courses.

Jennie Burroughs read the top trends and implications for government information LIS courses submitted by Geoff Swindells, Northwestern University. Geoff noted "globalization" as a key trend and suggested courses focus less on federal government information and take a more integrated and multilevel approach, with a greater emphasis on theoretical tools. A comparative approach that focuses on similar governmental processes (in addition to talking about agency and tool-centric approaches) may provide a sound basis for future learning. Geoff also described "disintermediation" as a core trend, which places more focus on the value of expertise and on paying attention to innovative services outside of the traditional library sphere.

In the breakout discussions, attendees discussed the need for making LIS instructors more comfortable with government information. In general, participants felt it more worthwhile to teach theoretical concepts (such as government literacy, statistical literacy, and models of access) rather than specific tools due to the variation in local needs and changing nature of these resources.

IV. Approval of Minutes from Annual 2008 meeting – approved with no changes

V. Liaison Reports

A. FDTF – no action items

B. SLDTF – no action items

C. IDTF
• IDTF will be pursuing means to provide more training on EU materials.

D. Education Assembly
• ALA is preparing a model to submit courses for continuing education (CEU) credits.
• ALA is thinking about staff certification. It will be a portfolio system with about $350 for staff certification. This will be field tested this summer.
• As an outreach idea, MAGERT has noted that they visit library schools in the vicinity of ALA conferences in order to teach about map librarianship.

E. Literacy Assembly
• Literacy Assembly is interested in working with GODORT to create a government literacy toolbox. The Assembly has been inundated with requests for e-government and immigration help. They are also interested in civics, civic engagement tools, and general government literacy. Literacy Assembly has full time staff that may be able to help GODORT Education create toolboxes.
• There will be a virtual library literacy summit on April 7 (webcast).

VI. Old Business

A. Competencies for Government Information Specialists
The committee discussed the next steps in the competencies project. There were 140responses to the survey sent out in fall 2008. In drafting the competencies, there will need to be several tiers based on audience: general reference librarians, new government information specialists, and experienced government information specialists. Competencies should include general skills and philosophical concepts (e.g., awareness of governmental changes) and provide an updateable list of recommended tools and resources.

The intent of the competencies project was addressed again in discussion. There is not a clear consensus whether or not the intent is to create competencies for certification or for self-assessment and general guidance to information professionals.

In the discussion it was noted that local needs vary greatly, which would affect any recommended resources with which to be familiar. Survey responses on recommended tools will need to be distilled into larger competencies/skill sets. It was determined that it was worthwhile to continue with the project, but competencies must be general (given differences in local staffing and services) and that they must not focus on federal government information.

The committee will use GoogleDocs to create a beginning draft of the competencies, with a portion available for review at ALA Annual 2009.

VI. New business

A. GODORT online programs
• Andrea Morrison has proposed using the revenues from her book to fund the development of online GODORt courses. ALA has licensed software for online programming, so that may be a platform for the courses. Government literacy, e-government, immigration resources, K-12 resources, and core competencies were all suggested as program topics.

B. RUSA-model programs
• It was recommended that GODORT use the RUSA, ACRL, and the Medical Librarian Association models for online programming. Any programs GODORT produces should be up to the ALA standard for certification. The committee agreed to add online programming and related coordination with other entities to the GODORT education agenda.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.

Chair and recorder: Jennie Burroughs

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