To: Tulip
From: Necia, chair
date: 2-1-95/2-2-95 revision/ 2-3-revision

I was continuing to think about core skills and BI, and since we won't be meeting this Friday, I thought I'd share my thoughts on paper, instead, for your comments, and for discussion next time we meet.

Goals as determined by TULIP:
We expect students to be able, or for basic library instruction to teach them to:
1) use the online catalog to find books and other materials
2) use indexes (in whatever format) to find citations to articles on a specific subject, and to use print indexes as a source of topics for papers and speeches,
3) understand the use of boolean operators to search the catalog and the indexes which are computer-based, and understand that special terminology may be needed, such as LCSH or synonyms; and that word searches may pull up more or different material than subject searches.
4) understand that the library is organized by subject and format
5) find a periodical once they know the title.
This is a preliminary list, not all inclusive.

Further discussion:
Can we define user groups and present levels of sophistication? User groups can be defined by class status, affiliation, or skill level. The needs of user groups and their theoretical level of sophistication may be partially delineated by syllabi and class assignments; however, what they are expected to know and what they do know varies radically within each class group.

Can we determine the purpose of instruction? The purpose of instruction may be defined as our intention to teach the basic use of the library catalog and the indexes, to allow the students to find material to write papers, compose speeches and support their research needs and their opinions. A further goal is to help them to learn enough about library use/research strategy to allow them to do research in later classes or employment with a reasonable degree of confidence (support life-long learning).

On the other hand, is a purpose of instruction to introduce librarians to the students as people who will help them negotiate the information "world"? Is this instruction mostly
public relations?

How do we give them what they want without leading them by the hand or getting overwhelmed?

Can we select relevant "terminal objectives" for undergraduate BI? Relevant terminal objectives may be those listed, or those things plus expansion or modification, or others as determined.

One of several difficulties remains: how to do successfully whatever we are trying to do has yet to be fully discussed. Certainly we provide a varied range of instruction for our students. However, at this point, aside from our observation of students who have had instruction, we don't know in any real sense whether what we are doing achieves what we hope it will. Surveys such as the User Satisfaction survey show qualitative opinion, (more or less how the respondents feel about what they were offered as services) but tests of quantitative learning are cumbersome and time-consuming to develop and manage, and may not demonstrate true long-term absorption of the instruction. Even the longer-term indirect instruction provided in the workbooks varies in its effectiveness. Most forms of evaluation are difficult in this (our current) context; given that we usually only have 50 minutes to tell them or show them what we think they need to know, even pre-tests and post-tests only show short term learning, or even short term memorization, which may or may not carry over to later work. We rarely get feedback from professors, and to get it we usually have to press them for it. There is no qualitative evaluation of bibliographies that we can do, for example, to see if our instruction showed the students how to find good sources. We also don't know what they enter the library knowing. How can we find out what our students know? Is there a way? Some extrapolation can be made from studies in other libraries, but not a universal determination of skill levels or success.

Can we develop enabling objectives? Enabling objectives will be/ must be determined after we deal with terminal objectives. We all have goals when we teach; at this point, we have no real way to test whether or not the intended learning took place. Enabling objectives for assessment and evaluation of instruction may be needed first.

**Expansion of goals into concrete terms:**
I expanded the goals of the committee for core classes instruction into more specific, concrete terms--

Goals and objectives for core classes:

1. Students will learn how to use the online catalog.
   a. Students will demonstrate an author search, a subject search and a word search.
2. Students will learn how to use indexes.
   a. Students will demonstrate use of a print index, a CD-ROM index and an online index, finding citations on a topic of their choice.

3. Students will learn how to find a periodical in Mullins library.
   a. From the citations retrieved in the previous process, students will choose one journal or magazine citation, use InfoLinks to find the call number, and show that they know to go to the proper floor and bay to retrieve the item.

4. Students will learn that there are alternative terms or special methods of searching the online catalog or other databases or indexes.
   a. Students will find materials on a specific subject using library of congress terminology, synonyms, or other indexing language.
   b. Students will use boolean connectors to limit a search on the CD-ROM indexes.

Problems:
My main objection to my modified objectives, above, is that we cannot test each student to see if they can truly do these things. Do we need to?

Can we assume that if they can manage to pass their classes then they have absorbed what we tried to tell them?

How much influence (if any) does the use of the library have on college success? (Opinions vary).

How important are we as a point of support and social contact? We may be the most available, friendly adult faces many students see.


This article discusses the difficulties involved in evaluation of library instruction and offers a test which Don found useful at the Univ. of New Mexico. I would like to try this one (his test) on some classes if he agrees and if you think it would be useful.

2. See ACRL/BIS’s *Model Statement of Objectives for Academic Bibliographic Instruction, May 1987*. I paraphrased these questions from their advice on using the Model Statement.