

# Guidelines for instruction programs in academic libraries: Draft

Prepared by the ACRL Instruction Section Task Force

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*Review this draft and give your comments to the committee*

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## 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

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## Background

In 1977 ACRL approved the "Guidelines for Bibliographic Instruction in Academic Libraries" as the first standard and guideline for instruction programs generally. This first document was intended to provide a framework for developing, evaluating, and ultimately institutionalizing instruction programs and services in college and research libraries and to assist any library or librarian seeking to build or maintain an instruction service. The 1977 "Guidelines" were written by the then Bibliographic Instruction Task Force and published in the *BIS Handbook*.

In 1987 the revision of the "Model Statement of Objectives for Academic Libraries" made the *BIS Handbook* obsolete. The 1977 "Guidelines" were maintained as a separate and important document which sought to outline the programmatic needs, including staffing, facilities, and budgeting of instruction services. In 1993, after a survey of membership, it was determined that the "Guidelines" should be revised to reflect the maturation of instruction programs generally and, perhaps more importantly, the impact that new technologies and changing campus environments have had on instruction programming. A task force was formed at that time to incorporate these new concerns into the "Guidelines."

In the development of the revised "Guidelines" which appear below, the task force was guided by the following principles:

1. Instruction programming is an essential and fundamental educational service which should be made available by academic libraries to their primary clientele;

2. Advances in technology should augment and enhance, not replace, the instruction department and programming of an institution;

3. The diversity of clientele mandates that issues such as the format, mode of instruction, content, method of delivery, and assessment of programs should be decisions that are made at the institutional level and reflect the heterogeneous nature of that clientele.

As such, the "Guidelines" do not delineate specific recommendations for types of programming. Rather, they focus on the process and support procedures that should be used to make these decisions.

## Hearings at Midwinter

The "Guidelines" will be the focus of an open forum at 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. on Saturday, January 20, 1996, during the ALA Midwinter Meeting. After comments are received from membership, they will be voted on by the IS Executive Committee and, if approved, will be reviewed by the ACRL Standards and Guidelines Committee and ultimately considered by the ACRL Board. Please send comments or suggestions to Beth Woodard, 300 Library, 1408 W. Gregory Dr., Urbana, IL 61801; e-mail bswoodar@uiuc.edu.

Instruction." See the *Evaluation Handbook* for guidance (publication forthcoming).

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. ■

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*(Candidates cont. from page 766)*

Beach; *Joan G. Rapp*, Director of Libraries, University of Missouri-St. Louis.

#### **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.

**Secretary:** *Roger Brisson*, Social Sciences Cataloger, Pennsylvania State University; *Martha Hsu*, North European Studies Bibliographer, Cornell University.

**Member-at-Large:** *Sarah How*, Western European Social Science Bibliographer, Cornell University; *Nancy S. Boerner*, Subject Specialist for Modern European Languages, Classical Studies, Linguistics, and West European Studies, Indiana University.

#### **Women's Studies Section**

**Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect:** *Jessica Grim*, Acting Head of Reference, Oberlin College; *Write-In*.

**Secretary:** *Shelley Arlen*, Reference Librarian/Bibliographer, University of Florida; *Barbara Heath*, Assistant Director for Technical Services and Team Leader-Acquisitions and Original Cataloging Teams, Wayne State University.

**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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