Selections from A Bill of Rights for the Distance Learning Community

- **Access for Achievement of Superior Academic Skills:** Access to appropriate library services and resources is essential for the attainment of superior academic skills in post-secondary education, regardless of where students, faculty, staff, and programs are located. Members of the distance learning community, including those with disabilities, must therefore be provided effective and appropriate library services and resources, which may differ from, but must be equivalent to those provided for students and faculty in traditional campus settings.

- **Direct Human Access:** Direct human access must be made available to the distance learning community through instruction, interaction, and intervention from library personnel in the provision of library services and in facilitating successful use of library resources, particularly electronic resources requiring computer literacy and information literacy skills.

- **Additional Investment:** Traditional on-campus library services and personnel cannot simply be stretched in an attempt to meet the library needs of the distance learning community without any additional investment. Special funding arrangements, specialized staffing, proactive planning, and promotion are necessary to deliver equivalent library services and to achieve equivalent results in teaching and learning, and generally to maintain quality in distance learning programs.

- **Strategic Planning:** The library must maintain a current strategic plan and vision for serving distance learners. Strategic planning is an iterative process that includes evaluation, updating, and refinement.

- **Mandated Support:** The originating institution must, through its chief administrative officers and governance organizations and the active leadership of the library administration, provide for funding and appropriately meeting the information needs of its distance learning programs in support of their teaching, learning, and research.

- **Institutional Involvement of Library and Other Personnel:** The originating institution must involve library and other personnel in all stages of the detailed analysis of planning, developing, evaluating, and adding or changing of the distance learning programs.

- **Outcomes Assessment:** The library must make outcomes assessment a major component of distance learning library services. Outcomes assessment addresses the accountability of institutions to determine whether distance students are learning effectively and whether library services are effectively meeting their needs.

- **Information Literacy:** The library must provide information literacy instruction programs to the distance learning community in accordance with the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. The attainment of lifelong learning skills through general bibliographic and information literacy instruction in academic libraries is a primary outcome of higher education, and as such, must be provided to all distance learning students.

See the full Standards document (and the full Bill of Rights) at ala.org/acrl/standards/guidelinesdistancelearning

Integrating information literacy in distance learning contexts

Discussion

Consider these questions in our discussion today:

- Distance learning
    - What is different about a distance student vs. an on-campus student?
    - How do you make the library visible to distance students?
    - How can distance services be informed by usability & accessibility practices?
- Reference
    - How can you provide equivalent reference service to distance students?
    - What about students who might be in very different time zones?
    - How would you market reference services?
    - What new materials might you have to create?
- Instruction
    - Can you provide instruction support at the point of need?
    - Could you feasibly embed yourself in an online course?
    - How can you partner with faculty to promote information literacy?
    - What is the role of a librarian in curriculum design for an online course?
    - What kinds of online tutorials are effective?
    - What new materials might you have to create?

You might also want to consider these, although they aren't directly related to today's topic…

- Circulation
    - Will your library mail books to students who live outside your city/state/country?
    - Will distance students be able to use ILL?
- Campus community
    - Who heads the online education office at your campus, if it exists?
    - What's your campus policy for online education? Does it mention the library?
    - What additional support is the library getting from the online programs?

Continue the discussion

- ACRL/NY Distance Learning SIG acrlny.org/discussion-groups/distance-learning-group
- METRO Distance Education SIG libguides.metro.org/desig
- #dls16 — today! Distance Library Services Conference libguides.cmich.edu/dls2014 (next in 2016)

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