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NELIG Meeting - May 14, 2004

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NELIG Meeting

May 14, 2004

Olin College of Engineering

Minutes

Eighteen members were present including officers Chris Cox, chair, Kendall Hobbs, Webmaster, Sandra Rothenberg, Secretary

The meeting began with a welcome from Chris Cox and a tour of the Library of the Olin College of Engineering by Stephanie White, the Resource Librarian at Olin. Olin is a very selective residential college and is two years old. In the library there are no computers as there is a wireless network and all students have their own laptop computers. There is an honor code at Olin and thus the library building is open twenty-four hours a day and with a self check-out for books. There is no reference desk, but students can seek out the librarian for help. There are three and a half staff members in the library.

Howard Silver, Associate Head of the Science Library and Anne Graham, Civil Engineering and GIS Liaison at MIT presented the library's involvement in the Terrascope program at MIT. There are two classes in this program, and they are open only to freshmen who work in teams in a educational model based on complicated problems related to Planet Earth. For the course, students worked projects such as the issue of oil exploration and extraction. For the class, students create Web Sites, produce a museum exhibition, and communicate their findings to experts in the field. The students have an undergraduate teaching fellow and graduate assistant to help them.

Library participation began through a couple of chance encounters with students and faculty and has grown and evolved from year to year. Librarians began to become proactive with the student teams as well as with faculty. About five library liaisons involved. There was much experimentation as librarians tried to see where they fit into the course. All teams had a librarian attached to them. Librarians did a number of things to be involved with the course including helping with course reserves, sitting-in on brain storming sessions, information research labs (where students came in to ask questions), auto catalogue searching, and lecturing in a high-tech classroom. It was estimated that 3-4 hours (3 hours in-class time) was spent by the librarians with their group. Approximately 5-10 hours were spent on reference questions with each group.

As a result of the project, student/librarian interaction increased, undergraduate teaching fellows became more accepting of the library role, students consulted librarians more, and citing of sources improved. The library benefited from the project by increased visibility (promoting library instruction), experience working in multi-library teams, being rewarded by faculty interaction, and insight into the difference between the learning process and the product of this process. There was no formal assessment in terms of library interaction in relation to the project. However, there was much positive feedback from faculty and students as well as increased librarian interaction with students and use of library content by students.

In terms of general discussion at the NELIG meeting, it was brought up that different subject librarians are discussing information literacy including ARLIS (Art Libraries Society of North

America) as well as the (ASWE) American Society for Engineering Education (see their standards at <http://sciencelibrarian.tripod.com/ILTaskForce/ILIndex.htm>). It was suggested that a future NELIG meeting might address how specialized subject libraries are dealing with information literacy. The question was also brought up about if libraries list their information literacy plan on their public Web site or not.

On another subject, it was mentioned that some librarians are planning to use the RoboDemo software to create Web tutorials. Chris also mentioned that the upcoming annual meeting at Tufts had a bigger enrollment than in previous years. The minutes from the January 2004 NELIG Meeting were approved (through an email vote).

Respectfully submitted, Sandra Rothenberg, Secretary, NELIG.