

Documenting Priorities, Progress, and Potential: Planning Library Services for Distance Education*

By: Stephen H. Dew[†]

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Abstract:

The ACRL Guidelines for Distance Learning Library Services recommends that every library develop a written profile and a written statement addressing the needs and outlining the methods by which progress can be measured. Many libraries do not have a written plan, and occasionally at such institutions, services for distance-education students suffer as a consequence. In 1998, the University of Iowa Libraries instituted a written plan for developing library services for its off-campus students, and the plan has been an effective tool. Highlighting the University of Iowa Libraries' plan, this article discusses a variety of subjects that should be addressed when preparing, writing, and implementing a plan for distance-education services.

Article:

The ACRL Guidelines for Distance Learning Library Services (2000) recommends that every library develop a written profile of its distance learning community and a "written statement ... (that) addresses the needs and outlines the methods by which progress can be measured" (p. 1026). Many libraries, however, do not have a written plan, and occasionally at such institutions, services for distance-education students are lost in the shuffle of day-to-day work routines. In 1998, the University of Iowa Libraries instituted a written plan for developing library services for its off-campus students, and the plan has been an effective tool, allowing librarians and other university staff to focus their efforts on priorities, progress, and potential improvements in service. The objective of this article is to inform readers about a variety of issues and subjects that should be addressed when preparing, writing, and implementing a plan for distance-education library services.

First of all, however, some background information about distance education at the University of Iowa is in order. I began work at the University of Iowa Libraries in September 1998. I was the first librarian at Iowa whose job responsibilities were devoted entirely to distance education. The University of Iowa Libraries cooperated with the Division of Continuing Education to create a new professional position—Coordinator of Library Services for Distance Education. Prior to my employment, the University Libraries had been attempting to address concerns about services for

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[†] University of Iowa

off-campus students, but since responsibilities were divided among different staff members spread about in a very large library system, some details concerning distance education always seemed to fall between the cracks. Library staff had prepared a few outlines of some distance-education services, and a couple of brief handouts had also been developed. There was, however, no overall description of library services for distance-education students, and there was no plan for developing services. As the new Coordinator of Library Services for Distance Education, I was assigned the responsibility of writing and developing a plan. It became one of my first priorities.

My first order of business was to educate myself about the variety of distance-education programs at Iowa and to immediately begin promoting library service to support those programs. I believed that I could develop a plan soon enough, but in order to be prepared to write the plan, I needed to immerse myself in the details of distance-education library services at the University of Iowa. I read all of the material concerning distance-education programs and library services at the University. I talked with all library staff who worked in some fashion with off-campus programs. I traveled to a number of off-campus sites, visiting with faculty, students, and staff. I lectured to several distance-education classes. I began developing a library Web site to support distance-education students. I met with the staff in the Center for Credit Programs and other administrators who managed distance-education programs and courses. I supervised a survey of distance-education students, a survey that proved most valuable in helping me understand my most important clients. I learned important details about the University of Iowa's off-campus programs, and eventually, I was able to start outlining a plan.

I gathered together several documents to help me prepare the plan. The documents included copies of the ACRL Guidelines for Distance Learning Library Services, the University of Iowa Libraries Strategic Plan, the University of Iowa Center for Credit Programs Strategic Plan for Distance Education, my job description, my written annual goals, and a few other documents related to library services or distance education at the University of Iowa.

In addition, I also did a literature review on the subject of library planning related to distance education. I found very little published on the subject, and most of what had been done related to the narrow subject of electronic services. Although a few articles provided interesting examples of the issues that distance librarians need to consider, no article or book provided a specific example of a planning document. I did, however, find a few examples of planning documents for distance-education library services on the Web (University of Minnesota, 1999; Cornell University, 1998; Florida Distance Learning, 1999). Although these documents were either much more detailed or different in focus than what I had in mind, they did inform me about some of the issues and subjects that I would need to address.

Using a wide variety of documents and on-the-job knowledge that I had gained over the previous six months, I began fleshing out my plan. By March 1999, I finally had a first draft ready to reveal to my supervisor and the staff in the Center for Credit Programs. I was very pleased that both the library administrators and the Center for Credit Programs accepted the plan. Soon afterward, copies of the plan were distributed to appropriate library staff and managers in the various distance-education programs.

Heeding Publilius Syrus' warning in his Maxim 469, "It is a bad plan that admits to no modification" (as cited in Bartlett, 1980), I wrote The University of Iowa Libraries Plan for Distance-Education Services with the understanding that it would be revised many times. One of the most important qualities of the plan is that it can be, and should be, easily revised. As our resources or services changed, as new programs or services were initiated, and as I occasionally discovered new information, I found a need to revise the plan. Over the three years since the plan was first drafted, it has been revised approximately a half-a-dozen times. Easily adaptable and regularly reviewed plans such as this are often referred to as "rolling plans" (Evans, Ward, and Rugaas, 2000). The University of Iowa Libraries Plan for Distance-Education Services has proved to be an essential tool for me in my work. It helped me develop an overall conception of what is involved in the University's distance-education programs; it helped me understand where my priorities should be; and it helped me focus on areas needing improvement. In addition, an extremely important point is that the plan has not only helped "me" understand all of that—the plan also has served as an informational tool and guide for many of my colleagues, especially other library and University staff members involved in distance-education services and, very importantly, my supervisors in library administration.

This article will now turn to a brief review of The University of Iowa Libraries Plan for Distance-Education Services (see Appendix A). The plan is organized into eleven broad sections. On the front page, following the title and author, is a date indicating when this version of the plan was revised. I would advise anyone working on such a plan to put the revision date on the front of the document, not on the back or off the front page—put the date up front where it can be seen immediately. If a plan is revised fairly frequently, then no doubt multiple versions will be in use or lying around the office at any given time, and if the revision date is on the front of the document, users can quickly identify the version in hand.

Section I of the plan is an "Introduction" that summarizes distance education at the University of Iowa, emphasizing the wide variety of teaching methodologies and the increasing use of new technologies. The "Introduction" is followed by the "Objectives," which speak to the heart and purpose of the plan—to document and summarize current library services, to identify library service priorities, to identify aspects of services that can be improved, and to suggest methods and solutions for improvements.

Section III, "Programs & Subject Priorities," presents a list of all of thirteen distance-education degree-granting programs offered through the University of Iowa. The first paragraph in the section declares that priorities will be given to library services and subject resources that support the programs listed. Section IV, "Student ID Card or Borrower's Permit Required," details the ID and permit requirements demanded by the Registrar and the Libraries. In order to be able to access library resources and services from off-campus, students must have either an ID card or a permit.

Following the Introduction, Objectives, Priorities, and ID Requirements, the plan turns to a discussion of various library services. The first service is, I think, the most important service for students being served at a distance—"Electronic & Web-based Services." For anyone involved in distance education, electronic and Web-based services are extremely important now—and they will, of course, continually increase in importance. The Internet has revolutionized the way all li-

braries provide services, but the Internet has been especially revolutionary for academic libraries serving distance-education programs. Clearly, the Internet will continue its profound influence during our lifetimes, and those libraries that best serve their distance-education students will most likely be those libraries that best use the power of the Internet to provide access to electronic resources and services. In this section, the plan describes the Coordinator's responsibility for developing, maintaining, updating, and improving the "Distance-Education Library Services" Web site (Dew, 2001a). By developing Web sites to support off-campus students, distance-education librarians can succeed in overcoming the challenge of location and remoteness. We should seize the opportunity and exploit this powerful tool by developing useful and functional Web sites that are designed to serve from a distance.

After the section on Electronic and Web-based Services, the plan next turns to an outline of the Libraries' "Document Delivery Services." A reflection of how important document delivery services are can be found in the fact that three pages of the plan are devoted to the subject. In this section, various options that students have for obtaining documents are listed, beginning with the most popular method of delivery—Electronic Access to Full-Text. The plan notes that in 1998-99, the Libraries conducted a survey of distance-education students, and the survey revealed that two-thirds of the students felt that providing online full-text resources was one of the most important services that the Libraries could offer, ranking second among twelve library services listed (Dew, 2001b). Over the three years since the plan was first drafted, the University of Iowa has added a number of important full-text files to its list of resources, and the Libraries will continue, of course, to add appropriate full-text resources. This portion of the plan ends with the important declaration that the Libraries should consider for acquisition any full-text file that supports one or more of the University's distance-education programs.

Since interlibrary loan services are generally free, I discuss that document-delivery option next in the plan, and then immediately following, I discuss in some detail the Libraries' special "Distance-Education Document-Delivery Service." When the first version of the plan was completed in March 1999, this service was not available, but the first version of the plan called upon the Coordinator to investigate the possibility of developing such a fee-based service. The survey of distance-education students completed by the Libraries in 1998-99 showed that over sixty-percent of the students felt that, despite the fee, providing such a document-delivery option was one of the most important services that the Libraries could offer, ranking third among twelve library services listed. As the current version of the plan notes, the Distance-Education Document-Delivery Service began in the fall of 1999, and it offers students fast delivery of articles and books for a basic fee of three dollars for each item. Students may request that articles be either faxed or mailed, while UPS delivers books. Web-based request forms provide quick and easy access to the service, and faxable request forms can be used, if a student prefers. The plan also notes that social work students receive the document-delivery service free through financing by a special endowment—the Laura L. Davis Fund. Importantly, following a discussion about the responsibility for collecting statistics, the plan reinforces the Libraries' Strategic Plan, noting that statistics should be reviewed as an indicator of distance learners making greater use of library services.

Following the discussion of the document-delivery service, the plan briefly outlines circulation and library-use privileges that University of Iowa distance-education students enjoy at a variety

of institutions, and then, the plan turns to a discussion of “Reserve Book Collections” and “Electronic Reserves.” When the original version of the plan was drafted, the Libraries did not support either book reserves or electronic reserves for off-campus students. Soon afterward, however, I opened a discussion among library staff members about developing these services, and later versions of the plan directed the Coordinator (me) to investigate the possibility of developing these services. Finally, after working out procedural details and financing, during the fall semester 2000, both book reserve and electronic reserve services were instituted on a limited basis. The current version of the plan directs the Coordinator to investigate the possibility of expanding the electronic reserve service to distance-education programs other than just social work, noting that library and information science will most likely be the next program included.

Following the section on document delivery, the plan next turns to “User Education.” This section is divided into five subdivisions—Classroom Instruction, Web-based and Computer-Assisted Instruction, Handouts (see Appendix B) and Other Print Material, UI Information Initiative, and Teaching with Innovative Style & Technology. Significantly in this section, the plan again reinforces the Libraries’ Strategic Plan, as it directs the Coordinator to develop library education components for all graduate and professional programs involved in distance education. In addition, this section also notes that the Coordinator is responsible for maintaining appropriate statistics, and the plan directs the Coordinator to develop skills in using appropriate user-education technologies (interactive television, Web-based instructional tools, etc.). The Coordinator is also directed to work with interested faculty members to incorporate information literacy skills into distance-education classes.

After User Education, the plan next turns to a discussion of “Reference Assistance & Consultation” services. Highlighting the importance of reference assistance, the plan declares that reference questions always take priority over regular tasks and should be answered as quickly as possible. This section also reinforces the Libraries’ Strategic Plan, noting the Coordinator’s responsibility to maintain statistics, as an indicator of distance learners making greater use of library services. When the original version of the plan was completed in March 1999, only e-mail and non-toll-free telephone reference was offered. As the plan evolved, however, a toll-free telephone service was added, and an electronic consultation-request form was added to the Web site. Also notable in this section, the plan directs the Coordinator to work with the Virtual Reference Working Group to establish a digital-reference pilot project during the spring semester 2002.

In Section IX, “Communication with Faculty,” the plan directs the Coordinator to send letters each semester to faculty members involved in distance-education programs, summarizing library services and offering classroom instruction and other user-education services. The plan again reinforces the Libraries’ Strategic Plan, highlighting the fact that the letters support two Goals in the Strategic Plan. This section also urges the Coordinator to visit regularly with faculty members, students, and librarians at each off-campus site.

In a large academic system like the University of Iowa, the Coordinator of Library Services for Distance Education must work with a wide variety of people located in a wide variety of places. Section X, “Cooperation & Collaboration,” provides a summary of the various education centers, universities, colleges, community colleges, hospitals, public libraries, private corporations, and

other groups that are connected to or associated with the University's distance-education programs. The plan directs the Coordinator to communicate with personnel located at each site, keeping them up-to-date on library services and visiting the site when appropriate.

Review and evaluation are both necessary to accurately judge the quality of library service, and both are also key factors in determining aspects of library service that might be improved. In that vein, Section XI addresses the key issues of "Review & Evaluation." The plan directs the Coordinator to supervise regular student surveys for formal evaluation of library services and to develop Web-based forms for individual feedback. The University of Iowa Libraries Plan for Distance-Education Services ends by noting that, although the plan is subject to review and revision at any time, at least once each year the Coordinator and the Director of Central Public Services review the document. As mentioned earlier, over the three years since the plan was first drafted, it has been revised approximately half-a-dozen times, and no doubt, it will be revised many more times. One of the great qualities of a "rolling plan" like the one at the University of Iowa is that it can be easily revised. As Marilyn Gell Mason (1999) has concluded, "As change inevitably occurs, we must adapt our plan accordingly.... the plan is never really completed. It just continues to evolve" (p. 4). In addition, librarians attempting to write a rolling plan for distance-education library services should also keep in mind Douglas Zweizig's observation (1996), "Planning is a series of successive approximations to a moving target.... a process of continuous consideration of what the library is and where it is going" (p. 5).

The University of Iowa Libraries Plan for Distance-Education Services is just one example of what can be done in order to plan library services for off-campus students. Since distance-education programs vary widely across the nation and around the world, plans for library services should also differ according to each peculiar situation. Planning documents should be as unique as the individuals and institutions creating them, but certainly librarians can share ideas about ways to approach the planning process. For librarians interested in planning distance-education services, the University of Iowa welcomes the use of its plan as a source for ideas. Librarians should also keep in mind that, although the written plan is the final goal of the writing process, the process itself could be quite rewarding, as well. From the writing process, I learned a great deal about the details of distance-education services at the University of Iowa, and that knowledge, I think, helped me address and perform my responsibilities better. As Donald Riggs (1997) once observed about the planning process, if it is done properly, "participants may find the process ... as useful as the document itself" (p. 401).

The document itself, however, is also vitally important, of course. In addition to the learning experience gained from the writing process, I have found my plan to be extremely valuable as well. The plan is an essential tool for me in my work. It helped me develop an overall conception of what is involved in the University's distance-education programs; it helped me understand where my priorities should be; and it helped me focus on areas needing improvement. In addition, the plan also has served as an informational guide for many other library and University staff members involved in distance education. It has helped them understand the small details, as well as the broader picture, of library services for distance education. *The University of Iowa Libraries Plan for Distance-Education Services* has empowered librarians and other university staff members, providing them a tool through which they can focus their efforts on priorities, progress, and potential improvements in service.

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**The University of Iowa Libraries
Plan for Distance-Education Services
Stephen Dew, Coordinator
Library Services for Distance Education**

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I. INTRODUCTION

Increasingly, Iowa citizens are pursuing educational opportunities that are close to their homes and jobs, and they are more inclined to enroll in courses that are not tied to the conventional constraints normally associated with a traditional university experience. To meet this growing demand for distance education, the University of Iowa has increased its course and degree offerings by utilizing a wide variety of teaching methods, formats, and technologies. Although some distance-education classes continue to conform to the traditional correspondence-course format, others are conducted entirely over the Internet or entirely by videotape. Most distance-education classes, however, involve some level of live interaction between faculty and students. For some courses, faculty members travel to classrooms located at various sites throughout the state, where they lecture, hold class, and interact with students. In an ever-increasing number of situations, faculty members use the interactive capabilities of television, especially the Iowa Communications Network (ICN), and they conduct their classes while communicating simultaneously with students who are located at several different sites around the state.

The University of Iowa Libraries support the informational, research, and instructional needs of UI students and faculty participating in distance-education programs regardless of course format or location. In addition, the Libraries strive to adhere to the standards established in the "ACRL Guidelines for Distance Learning Library Services." Currently, for students involved in distance education, the Libraries provide a number of services, including access to electronic and Web-based resources, document delivery services, user-education services, and reference assistance. Library staff members are constantly seeking ways to improve or expand distance-education library services, and a planning document can be a powerful tool to employ. A properly developed plan enables staff members to focus on the current extent of library services and the potential for improvements.

II. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this plan are as follows:

- To document and summarize current library services for UI students and faculty involved in distance education.
- To identify library service priorities.
- To identify aspects of service that can be improved.
- To suggest methods and solutions for improvements.

III. PROGRAMS & SUBJECT PRIORITIES

Design and development of library services for distance education will focus on the off-campus credit programs that are offered by the University of Iowa. Priorities will be given to library services and subject resources that support the following degree programs:

The Center for Credit Programs in the Division of Continuing Education currently supervises the following distance-education programs:

- Bachelor of Liberal Studies
- Bachelor of Science in Nursing
- Master of Science in Nursing
- Master of Public Health
- Master of Social Work
- Master of Arts in Library and Information Science
- Master of Science in Computer Science
- Master of Science in Electrical & Computer Engineering
- Master of Science in Science Education
- Master of Arts in Higher Education
- Graduate Endorsement in Behavioral Disorders
- Doctor of Pharmacy

The School of Management in the Henry B. Tippie College of Business Administration currently supervises the following distance-education program:

- Master of Business Administration

IV. STUDENT ID CARD OR BORROWER'S PERMIT REQUIRED

A. University of Iowa No-Picture ID Card

The University of Iowa Libraries offers services to all distance education students enrolled in the degree-granting programs directed by the Center for Credit Programs and the School of Management. In order to gain access to library services, however, students must obtain a **“University of Iowa No-Picture ID Card.”** As students register for classes, the Center for Credit Programs and the School of Management distribute ID application forms, and in addition, they send copies of the form to students who request it. The Coordinator of Library Services for Distance Education will also maintain a supply of application forms to give to students as needed. Completed forms are returned to the Registrar's Office. The Registrar produces the ID cards, sends them to the students, and adds the students' records to the Libraries' patron database.

B. Library Borrower's Permit

Students taking Guided Correspondence classes are not eligible for library services unless they are also enrolled in the Bachelor of Liberal Studies (BLS) program. In order to gain access to library services, BLS students must obtain a **Library Borrower's Permit.**

The process is as follows: The Coordinator is responsible for writing a letter that explains the availability of library services—the letter accompanies the application form for the Library Borrower's Permit. The Center for Credit Programs distributes the letter and the application form to BLS students as they register for class. Completed application forms are returned to the Center, and the Center then forwards the forms to the Coordinator. With the assistance of the Access Services staff, the Coordinator adds the new records to the patron database. The

Coordinator then mails each student a Borrower's Permit, accompanied by appropriate user-education handouts.

Service would probably be improved by making the ID process for BLS students the same as that for all other distance-education students. To reach that end, the Coordinator has requested that the library programmer develop a program that will query the ID Card, BLS, and Guided Correspondence databases to automatically activate library privileges for BLS students.

V. ELECTRONIC & WEB-BASED SERVICES

The Coordinator of Library Services for Distance Education will work with the Library Webmaster, the Hardin Electronic Services Team, the Information Systems Support Team, and other library staff to ensure functionality and accessibility for all electronic and Web-based services that support distance education. All of the Libraries' electronic resources that can be accessible from remote locations will be identified, and appropriate links will be made from library Web pages. The Coordinator will work with subject specialists on the library staff to identify electronic and Web-based resources that can be useful to students and faculty involved in the University's distance-education programs. Currently, the Libraries use Ezproxy software to provide off-campus students access to restricted databases—in order to gain access, students just enter their ID numbers when prompted.

The Coordinator will develop an expertise in using Web-editing tools (such as *CLARIS HOME PAGE*, *DREAMWEAVER*, etc.), and he/she will maintain, update, and improve the "Distance-Education Library Services" Web site: <http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/disted/index.html>

The Web site became fully functional in September 1999, and currently, the Coordinator maintains twenty-six Web pages related to the site. The site provides general information and instruction useful to all distance-education students, as well as a list of the best electronic resources for each program. Web pages concerning electronic reference, consultation, telephone reference, and document-delivery services have also been developed (see Sections VI and VIII).

VI. DOCUMENT DELIVERY SERVICES

A. Student Options for Obtaining Documents

Students enrolled in distance-education classes have the following options when they need books, articles, and other documents.

1. Electronic Access to Full-Text

A significant and growing number of electronic resources provide access to full-text copies of books, journal articles, and other documents. Resources that provide full-text material include, among others, *EBSCOhost*, *Elsevier Science Direct*, *LEXIS-NEXIS Academic Universe*, *netLibrary*, *Books 24x7*, *Project Muse*, *JSTOR*, *WilsonWeb*, *Electric Library*, and several databases available through Hardin Library's *HealthNet*. Other full-text documents (especially ready reference sources and government publications) are available through the Libraries' "*Gateway to Online Resources*," and in addition, the *InfoHawk* catalog provides links to full-text journals, books, and other documents. In 1998-99, the Libraries conducted a survey of its distance-education students, and the survey revealed that two-thirds of the students felt that providing online full-text resources was one of the most important services that the Libraries could offer, ranking second among the

twelve library services listed. Any full-text file that supports one or more of the distance education programs should be considered for acquisition.

2. Interlibrary Loan (ILL)–Free delivery of books and articles

Since ILL services are generally free, distance-education students are encouraged to use regular interlibrary loan services when possible. All students should be able to use the services of their local public libraries, but for those involved in certain programs, students can also use their affiliated college or university libraries (see Sections X-B, X-C, & X-D). ILL services can take just a few days, or they can take up to three weeks. Students are encouraged to place requests as soon as possible.

3. Distance-Education Document Delivery Service–\$3 per request

Beginning in the fall semester 1999, the Libraries began offering the Distance-Education Document-Delivery Service. For students who would like to have books or articles sent directly to their homes or offices, especially those who need material quickly, the UI Libraries provides this special service that will deliver material to students usually within 24-to-48 hours of each request. There is a fee, however.

- **Articles:** Distance-education students have the option of having articles mailed to any address that they provide or faxed to any fax number that they provide. For articles of ten pages or less, the charge is **three dollars** (\$3) for each article. For articles over ten pages, there is an additional charge of **ten-cents-per-page (for pages eleven and higher)**.
- **Books:** Students also have the ability to request that books be sent by UPS to any address that they provide. The charge is **three dollars** (\$3) for each book. Students are responsible for returning books to the Main Library or Hardin Library before the due date, and they may use any delivery method that they prefer (mail, UPS, hand-delivery, etc.). Renewals are possible.

Requests can be submitted electronically through the Internet or by fax. Electronic forms are available from a link on the Distance-Education Library Services Homepage, and in addition, printed forms that can be faxed are provided upon request. The Coordinator is responsible for maintaining the Web pages and all printed documents relating to this service.

For students enrolled in programs that have made financial arrangements with the Libraries (such as Social Work), total costs will be charged to the program account. Otherwise, total costs will be charged to the student's University Bill. For **social work students**, however, this service is provided **FREE** through financing by the **Laura L. Davis Fund**.

The Main Library and Hardin Library interlibrary-loan staffs will maintain monthly statistics on the distance-education document-delivery service. Statistics will be maintained on the number of requests received by program, the number of requests filled/unfilled, whether a request was mailed/faxed, and which UI library supplied the material. In addition to other uses, these statistics will be used as an Indicator (4) of Goal 1, Strategic Direction 1, in the Libraries' Strategic Plan—"UI distance learners make

greater use of library services as indicated by increases in statistics for document delivery, telephone, and electronic reference services.”

4. On-Campus Circulation Privileges

Student records are included in the Libraries’ patron database for all distance-education students who have a **University of Iowa No-Picture ID Card** or a **Library Borrower’s Permit**. Distance education students have the same circulation privileges as on-campus students, and therefore, whenever they visit campus, distance-education students may use their IDs or permits to check out books and use all other library services that are available to on-campus students.

5. Circulation Privileges at Other Schools

A number of UI credit programs are operated with the cooperation of another university, college, or community college (see Sections X-B and X-C). In those cases, UI students also have circulation privileges at libraries connected to those institutions. In addition, UI students have circulation privileges at the other Regents Universities—Iowa State University and the University of Northern Iowa.

6. Public Libraries and Other Academic Libraries

A survey conducted in 1998-99 revealed that over sixty-percent of UI distance-education students used their local public libraries on some occasions to support their research. Although resources at public libraries vary widely by location and tend to be limited, many libraries provide basic books, journals, and electronic resources, and importantly, most also provide interlibrary loan services. Public libraries in cities where UI programs are also located are especially useful to our students (see Section X-E).

B. Reserve Book Collections

During the fall semester 2000, the Libraries began supporting reserve book collections for the distance-education programs in nursing and social work. These programs are connected with several colleges, community colleges, and universities around the state (see Section X-A, X-B, & X-C), and therefore, since the programs are located at permanent sites, reserve book collections can be established in the cooperating libraries or in the offices of the local program. The process for developing the reserve collections follows. Faculty members at the off-campus sites notify the Coordinator about books they wish to place on reserve. The Coordinator notifies the appropriate Bibliographer, who reviews the requests and orders the books. When the books are received, records are added to the *InfoHawk* catalog, but the records are masked so that the information is only accessible by library staff (the information is blocked from the public catalog). The books are then sent by UPS to the off-campus site. Books for the social work program are purchased through the Laura L. Davis Fund. Purchases for the nursing program are made through the General Fund.

C. Electronic Reserves

During the fall semester 2000, the Libraries began supporting electronic reserve modules for classes in the social work distance-education program. Through the Laura L. Davis Fund, the Libraries purchased a computer, scanner, and other equipment needed to set up electronic reserves, and the fund also financed the hiring of a part-time graduate assistant (now at one-

quarter-time). In addition to working on electronic reserves, the graduate assistant also works on the *Library Explorer* online tutorial (see Section VII-B). The process for developing electronic reserves follows. Prior to each semester, faculty members at the off-campus sites send the Coordinator a list of the articles that they wish to place on electronic reserve. The Coordinator reviews the list, determining which articles the Libraries own (only University-owned articles can be used in the electronic reserve collection). If any of the articles are not owned, the Coordinator notifies the off-campus faculty about articles that will not be in the electronic reserve module due to non-ownership. The Coordinator then sends the list of articles owned by the Libraries to the staff in the Interlibrary-Loan/Document-Delivery Department, who find and photocopy the articles. The Davis Fund pays for the photocopying. The Graduate Assistant scans the articles into PDF format, using *Adobe Acrobat*. In order to keep the files manageable for off-campus users (especially those using telephone lines), files are kept to a maximum size of five megabytes. A link to the electronic reserves module is maintained on the appropriate "Short Cut to Electronic Resources" Web page. A University ID is required to access the articles through the proxy server, thus limiting access to University students and faculty only.

The Coordinator will investigate the possibility of expanding the electronic reserve service to include the distance-education program in library and information science, with a goal to begin service in the spring of 2002. For other departments and programs, the Libraries will provide technical and professional advice about establishing electronic reserves. The Coordinator will be responsible for maintaining a working knowledge of the general provisions of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act and other issues related to electronic reserves.

VII. USER EDUCATION

The University Libraries supports user-education services that are designed to meet the current and changing information needs of a diverse community. The University Libraries encourages collaboration between teaching faculty and library staff, especially when that collaboration leads to a better learning experience for students and includes the acquisition of information and technology skills. Instruction is delivered using a variety of methodologies and formats, and emphasis is placed on integrating information literacy skills into the student learning experience. In addition, in accordance with the Libraries' Strategic Plan (Goal 1, Strategic Direction 2, Indicator 2), the Coordinator will work to develop a library education component for all graduate and professional programs in distance education. The five primary categories of user-education services for distance education follow:

A. Classroom Instruction

Each semester, the Coordinator will send a letter to all faculty members involved in distance education offering formal classroom instruction as well as other user education services (see Section IX-A). The Coordinator will work with appropriate library staff to develop and present classroom instruction for distance-education classes. Such instruction will include traditional classroom settings as well as interactive television, such as with the ICN. The Coordinator will report all formal classroom instruction using the Web-based "User Education Report Form," and in addition, the Coordinator will maintain statistics of all formal instruction given to distance-education students by other library staff.

Also, in order to be able to demonstrate electronic resources and services while visiting off-campus sites, especially sites without a direct Internet connection, the Coordinator will open and maintain an account with the University's ITS Remote Access Service. When necessary, ISST staff will be consulted to ensure that the Coordinator's laptop is properly configured to access the Internet from off-campus.

B. Web-Based and Computer-Assisted Instruction

Through the Distance-Education Library Services Web site, the Coordinator will provide instruction to distance-education students on the use of relevant library resources and services (see Section V). He/she will maintain and develop the "Frequently Asked Question" Web page and other general instructional Web pages as needed.

The Coordinator will also work with the User-Education Working Group and other appropriate library staff in updating, refining, and promoting the *Library Explorer* tutorial. The Coordinator shares supervisory responsibilities over the part-time Graduate Assistant with another librarian (the Coordinator of User Education), and in that vein, the Graduate Assistant is assigned duties working on *Library Explorer*. Work related to *Library Explorer* supports Initiative C of Goal 1, Strategic Direction 1, in the Libraries' Strategic Plan.

In addition, the Coordinator will work with distance-education faculty who are interested in Web-based instructional tools such as *Web-CT*, *BlackBoard*, *MOO*, etc. (see Sections V & IX-A).

C. Handouts and Other Print Material

In cooperation with appropriate library staff, the Coordinator will be responsible for writing, producing, updating, and distributing a variety of print materials for user-education. Included in that material will be a series of handouts that summarize library services. A general handout has been produced that is used for all students enrolled in distance-education programs through the Center for Credit Programs, and the Center mails the handout to all students as they register for class. Another handout has been produced for students enrolled in the MBA program, and the School of Management distributes it as an attachment to the MBA students' listserv. Due to the special nature of the free document-delivery service offered to social work students (see Section VI-A-3), a special handout for social work students has also been produced. Other user handouts will be produced as needed.

D. UI Information Initiative (UIII)

The University Libraries and the College of Liberal Arts have joined in a partnership that is called UI Information Initiative (UIII). The goal of UIII is to integrate the acquisition of information literacy skills into the fabric of the undergraduate curriculum. The Coordinator will work with appropriate library staff and interested faculty members to incorporate information literacy skills into distance-education classes. Initial efforts should focus on classes in the Bachelor of Liberal Studies program (see Section IX).

E. Teaching With Innovative Style & Technology (TWIST)

The University Libraries TWIST Project was developed to integrate networked information into the teaching and learning process. The Coordinator will work with the TWIST staff and interested faculty members to learn Web-teaching tools (such as *Web-CT*), in order to

incorporate information and technology skills into the distance-education class experience (see Section IX).

VIII. REFERENCE ASSISTANCE & CONSULTATION

The Coordinator will be responsible for providing reference assistance to UI students involved in distance education, but when necessary, the Coordinator may seek the help of appropriate library staff (Reference, Branch Librarians, Bibliographers, etc.). Reference questions always take priority over regular tasks and job duties. Responses to reference questions should be delivered as soon as possible.

The Coordinator will maintain monthly statistics on all reference and consultation services supporting distance-education. In addition to other uses, these statistics will be used as an Indicator (4) of Goal 1, Strategic Direction 1, in the Libraries' Strategic Plan—"UI distance learners make greater use of library services as indicated by increases in statistics for document delivery, telephone, and electronic reference services." The four categories of reference assistance for distance education follow:

A. Toll-Free Telephone Assistance

During the summer of 1999, the UI Libraries began offering a toll-free telephone reference service to all distance-education students. The Coordinator is responsible for marketing and promoting the use of the toll-free number through Web pages, user handouts, and other methods. The number is as follows: **1-877-807-9587**.

B. E-Mail Reference Assistance

Using the Coordinator's regular UI e-mail account, an e-mail reference service will be maintained for distance-education students and faculty. The Coordinator is responsible for developing and maintaining a Web page that explains the electronic reference service and provides a link to the Coordinator's e-mail account (see Section V).

C. Consultation Service

The Coordinator is responsible for developing and maintaining a Web page that explains the in-depth nature of consultation service and provides a link to the Coordinator's e-mail account (see Section V).

D. Interactive Digital Reference

The Coordinator will work with the Virtual Reference Working Group to establish a digital-reference pilot project, with a goal of initiating the service during the spring semester 2002.

IX. COMMUNICATION WITH FACULTY

The Coordinator will promote regular and open communication with all faculty involved in distance education.

A. Letters

Each semester, from the Center for Credit Programs and the School of Management, the Coordinator will obtain a list of all faculty involved in distance education. The Coordinator will write a letter that summarizes and markets library services, and in the letter, each faculty member will be offered the option of formal classroom instruction as well as other user-educational

tion services (see Section VI). A letter will be sent to each faculty member, accompanied by a copy of the student handout and other appropriate material. In addition to other uses, these letters will be used as Indicator 2 of Goal 1, Strategic Direction 1, in the Libraries' Strategic Plan—"Library staff annually offer services to all faculty teaching undergraduate off-campus courses." The letters also support Indicator 2 of Goal 1, Strategic Direction 2—"All faculty teaching distance education graduate programs are aware of library instruction that can be developed to support their courses."

B. Off-Campus Visits

In order to develop and maintain proper communication about library services and resources, the Coordinator will attempt to visit with faculty members, librarians, and students at each off-campus site at least once each year (see Section X-A, X-B, & X-C).

X. COOPERATION & COLLABORATION

The Coordinator of Library Services for Distance Education must work with a wide variety of people. In order to succeed in any effort to provide the best possible service to UI students involved in distance education, the Coordinator must cooperate with and collaborate with a variety of individuals connected to off-campus education centers and other institutions. The following is a list of the most important off-campus centers and institutions connected to UI distance-education programs. The Coordinator will communicate with personnel at each site, keeping them up-to-date on library services for UI students connected to their institutions. When appropriate, the Coordinator will arrange for personal visits to the various sites listed below (see Section IX-B).

A. Education Centers

In some of the larger metropolitan areas of the state, some credit programs have established education centers where classes are held and, in most cases, computer labs are also available. The Coordinator will work with the staff at the education centers to ensure that UI students receive the best possible service. A list of the programs with education centers follows:

Master of Social Work

- Des Moines Education Center Des Moines
- Quad-Cities Graduate Study Center Rock Island, IL

Master of Business Administration

- Cedar Rapids Area Education & Conference Center Cedar Rapids
- W. A. Krause Center
Des Moines

B. Colleges & Universities

Some of the university's credit programs have special cooperative arrangements with other colleges or universities. A list of those programs and schools follows:

- Bachelor of Liberal Studies
Pennsylvania State University (University Park, PA)
The University of Iowa and Pennsylvania State University have combined forces to create an undergraduate program referred to as *LionHawk*. Students have the option of

taking a wide variety of correspondence courses through either school, leading ultimately to the award of the BLS degree from Iowa or the Extended-Access Letters, Arts and Sciences Associate Degree (ELAS) from Penn State.

- Bachelor of Liberal Studies
Iowa Regents Institutions
The *Bachelor of Liberal Studies Across Iowa* program allows our students the option of taking a limited number of courses through the other two Regents Universities (at least 32 hours must be taken of the U of I), leading ultimately to the award of the BLS from Iowa.
- Master of Social Work
Drake University (Des Moines)
Through an arrangement worked out by the Center for Credit Programs, all University of Iowa students enrolled in the Des Moines social work program have general library privileges with Drake.
- Master of Social Work
Augustana College (Rock Island, IL)
The Quad-Cities social work program is operated out of the Graduate Study Center, located on the Augustana campus, and through that arrangement, all University of Iowa students enrolled in the social work program have general library privileges with Augustana College.
- Master of Social Work
Briar Cliff College (Sioux City)
The Sioux City program is operated through the cooperation of Briar Cliff College, and all UI students enrolled in the Sioux City social work program have general library privileges with the college.

C. Community Colleges

Several of the credit programs are connected with community colleges, and in such cases, University of Iowa students have full access and circulation privileges at the library. The various credit programs that have community college connections are listed below. The Coordinator will communicate with and cooperate with all of the community college libraries to ensure that UI students receive the best possible service.

Bachelor of Science in Nursing

- Iowa Central Community College
Fort Dodge
- Iowa Lakes Community College
Emmetsburg & Spencer
- North Iowa Area Community College
Mason City
- Northeast Iowa Community College
Calmar
- Northwest Iowa Community College
Sheldon & Orange City

Master of Business Administration

- Des Moines Area Community College
Newton and Ankeny
- Muscatine Community College
Muscatine
- Scott Community College, Kahl Education Center Davenport

D. Veterans Administration Hospitals

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing program has established off-campus sites at two Veterans Administration hospitals. The Coordinator will communicate with and cooperate with the hospitals to ensure that UI students receive the best possible service.

- Veterans Administration Hospital (Des Moines)
- Veterans Administration Hospital (Knoxville)

E. Public Libraries

Currently, there are no special relationships or contracts between the University Libraries and local public libraries; however, in order to ensure that UI students receive the best possible service, the Coordinator will cooperate with all public libraries where UI students seek information. Cooperation will be especially important for those public libraries located in cities where UI credit programs are also centered. Those cities include, but are not limited to: Ankeny, Bettendorf, Burlington, Calmar, Cedar Rapids, Council Bluffs, Davenport, Des Moines, Dubuque, Emmetsburg, Fort Dodge, Knoxville, Mason City, Muscatine, Newton, Orange City, Rock Island (IL), Sheldon, Sioux City, and Spencer.

F. Private Corporations

Two of the credit programs have special arrangements with private corporations (Rockwell Collins, Inc. and KGAN-TV). Although the programs are open to all qualified applicants, most students are employed by one of the two companies. To support the programs, KGAN-TV provides classroom facilities, and it also uses a satellite system to broadcast television images of classes held simultaneously in Cedar Rapids and Iowa City. Rockwell Collins provides classrooms, computer facilities, and a special library for its distance-education students. The Coordinator will work with the staff at Rockwell Collins and KGAN-TV to ensure that UI students receive the best possible service. The programs connected to Rockwell Collins and KGAN-TV are as follows:

- Master of Science in Computer Science
Cedar Rapids
- Master of Science in Electrical & Computer Engineering
Cedar Rapids

G. Inter-institutional Library Committee on Distance Education

The University Libraries cooperates with the other Regents institutions (Iowa State University and the University of Northern Iowa) through a variety of Inter-institutional Library Committees (ILC), including one related specifically to distance education. The Coordinator and other library staff will work with ILC committees, as well as librarians at the other Regents institutions, to ensure that cooperative efforts succeed.

H. Committee on Institutional Cooperation

The University Libraries cooperates with the other Big Ten universities through the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC). The CIC-VEL project, providing uniform access to all of the online catalogs of the Big Ten University Libraries is but one of the cooperative projects involved. Other CIC projects involving distance education concern such subjects as interlibrary loan and electronic reserves. The Coordinator and other library staff will work with CIC committees and librarians at the other CIC institutions to ensure that cooperative efforts succeed.

I. Association of Research Libraries

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) is frequently involved with issues relevant to distance education, especially copyright concerns and electronic reserves. The Coordinator and other library staff will work with ARL committees and librarians at the other ARL institutions to ensure cooperative efforts succeed.

XI. REVIEW & EVALUATION

Continuous evaluation is necessary in order to adequately judge the quality of library service, and it is also a key factor in determining aspects of service that might be improved. The Coordinator will be responsible for supervising a variety of methods to review and evaluate distance-education services, and his/her activities will include writing, producing, and distributing evaluation forms and surveys. In addition, the Coordinator will become familiar with statistical packages (SPSS, SAS, etc.) so that data from evaluations and surveys can be fully analyzed.

A. Formal Surveys

The Coordinator will work with the Center for Credit Programs and the School of Management to formally evaluate distance-education library services every three years. The first formal survey of distance-education library services occurred during the 1998-99 academic year, and the next formal survey is tentatively scheduled for the spring semester 2002. Results from the surveys will be shared with staff members at the Center for Credit Programs and the School of Management, as well as with appropriate librarians, administrators, and faculty members.

B. Electronic & Web-Based Feedback

A Web-based "Suggestions" form has been developed and is accessible from the Distance-Education Library Services homepage. In addition, the Coordinator will investigate the possibility of developing a more formal method of online feedback.

C. Review of the "Plan for Distance-Education Services"

Although this plan is subject to review and revision at anytime, at least once each year the document will be reviewed formally. During the Coordinator's annual review meeting with the Director of Central Public Services, he/she will review the status of the plan, making suggestions for revision as needed.

APPENDIX B

University of Iowa Libraries, Handout for Distance Education Students LIBRARY SERVICES FOR DISTANCE-EDUCATION STUDENTS

Student ID Card Required

The University of Iowa Libraries offers services to all distance education students enrolled in the degree-granting programs directed by the Center for Credit Programs. In order to qualify for these services, Bachelor of Liberal Studies students must obtain a **Library Borrower's Permit**. All other students must obtain a "**University of Iowa No-Picture ID Card**." The application forms can be obtained by contacting the Center at the following:

[1-800-272-6430 credit-programs@uiowa.edu](mailto:1-800-272-6430_credit-programs@uiowa.edu)

Distance-Education Library Services Homepage.

This Homepage provides access to library resources and services that support distance education.

The Homepage is located at the following URL: <http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/disted>

Short-Cuts to Electronic Resources by Subject.

For each degree-granting program (business, computer science, education, electrical engineering, liberal studies, library science, nursing, pharmacy, and social work), the Homepage provides a link to a list of the most useful electronic resources and databases. Some databases provide lists of articles and books by subject, keyword, author, etc., while other files provide information, such as full-text articles, statistics, or business information.

In January 2001, the Libraries instituted a new proxy server that allows students to access electronic resources from off-campus. There are two important changes. First, with the new proxy server, users no longer have to worry about firewalls. (Many libraries and companies set up firewalls to protect their computer systems.) Under the new proxy server, students can access the Libraries' electronic resources using computers protected by firewalls. The second important development is that, with the new proxy server, users no longer have to re-configure their Web browsers. With the new proxy server, students need only type in their ID number when prompted.

Access to InfoHawk.

The Distance-Education Library Services Homepage includes a link to *InfoHawk*, a Web-based library system that replaces OASIS. *InfoHawk* provides students with access to the online catalog of the UI Libraries and the Law Library, as well as other online catalogs concerning such subjects as government publications, the Curriculum Laboratory, and the Dada Archives. Students can use a wide variety of techniques to search the system.

Document-Delivery Services (Articles and Books)

1. Interlibrary Loan (ILL)–Free delivery of books and articles

Since ILL services are generally free, distance-education students are encouraged to use regular interlibrary loan services when possible. All students should be able to use the services of their local public libraries, but for those involved in certain programs, students can also use their affiliated college or university libraries. ILL services can take just a few days, or they can take up to two-to-three weeks. Students are encouraged to place requests as soon as possible.

2. Distance-Education Document Delivery Service—\$3 per request

For students who would like to have books or articles sent directly to their homes or offices, especially those who need material quickly, the UI Libraries provides a special service that delivers material to students usually within 24-to-48 hours of each request. There is a fee, however.

- **Articles:** Distance-education students have the option of having articles mailed to any address that they provide or faxed to any fax number that they provide. For articles of ten pages or less, the charge is **three dollars** (\$3) for each article. For articles over ten pages, there is an additional charge of **ten-cents-per-page (for pages eleven and higher)**.
- **Books:** Students also have the ability to request that books be sent by UPS to any address that they provide. The charge is **three dollars** (\$3) for each book. Students are responsible for returning books to the Main Library or Hardin Library before the due date, and they may use any delivery method that they prefer (mail, UPS, hand-delivery, etc.). Renewals are possible.

Requests can be submitted electronically. Forms are available from a link on the Distance-Education Library Services Homepage. For students enrolled in programs that have made financial arrangements with the Libraries, total costs will be charged to the program account. Otherwise, total costs will be charged to the student's University bill.

Reference Services

Email and Toll-Free Telephone

Without leaving home or office, students can ask for help or advice from library staff. Any student who needs help finding information for a class project or help with research strategies should contact Stephen Dew, the Coordinator of Library Services for Distance Education. Web-based email forms are available on the Homepage. Otherwise, Dr. Dew can be contacted at the following: **1-877-807-9587**
stephen-dew@uiowa.edu