

VALE SIL COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting January 17, 2008

Attendees: L. Beninghove, B. Bloom, V. Bowman, J. Cassel, A. Ciliberti, J. DaCosta, T. Haynes, C. Herz, R. Kearney, S. Knight, S. Kurzmann, D. Marshall, K. Malanga, E. Renaud, C. Rosenberger, D. Scharf, N. Weiner, D. Wertheimer

The meeting was held via video conferencing involving two locations: Alexander Library, Rutgers University, New Brunswick and the Robeson Library, Rutgers University, Camden.

VALE Users' Conference

Anne Ciliberti complimented Linda Beninghove on the poster she created to advertise the new VOILA database at the VALE Users' Conference. It was well received by those at the conference and attracted a lot of attention. Bookmarks and handouts about the newly redesigned/renamed SIL website were provided to conference goers and we look forward to increased interest in VOILA.

Update on VOILA

Richard Kearney provided an update about the material received so far for inclusion on the VOILA website. He also reported that Vib Bowman, Ruth Hamman and Caroline Geck have volunteered to review submissions. Richard will also send a message out to VALE member libraries promoting the newly redesigned, renamed site and describe what it is about and what material is being sought for inclusion.

Since there have only been 11 items submitted so far, the group identified some of the potential obstacles regarding the paucity of submissions. Aside from the lack of time, issues pertaining to control of material content, in terms of editing/revising and local technical support issues were thoroughly discussed. Richard also explained that the VOILA database is structured to accept URL links to the material, and if anyone had issues with this, to let him know.

The content and the types of material sought was another area of concern, since many in attendance were reluctant to submit materials that were not "perfect". Because perfectionism is a common trait among librarians, it hampers dissemination of information that may be found useful by others and those in attendance were urged not to let this prevent them from submitting material. For the time being, it was also decided that the content would be obtained primarily from local contributors rather than national material. While the majority of material submitted would consist of items used to support learning information literacy, such as assessment tools, lesson plans, tutorials, simulations and virtual tools and handouts, it was suggested that material that would be of interest to faculty be included as well.

Anne charged all in attendance with looking at the VOILA web page and submitting one item before the next meeting. This was quickly revised by invoking the "Davida Rule"

that calls for each member of the committee to enlist one other person at their institution, requiring each committee member to submit at least two items to VOILA.

Assessing Information Literacy Skills

Davida Scharf indicated she would write up some guidelines on the development and use of rubrics and she suggested that members submit relevant materials or other rubric examples. She also thanked Christine Herz for submitting her rubric. Discussion focused on how best to use rubrics across institutions and on what types of assignment. The details of gathering student work and applying the rubrics would still need to be worked out. Davida will continue to collect examples or suggestions pertaining to rubrics and they will be discussed at a future date. In addition, Susan Kurzmann and Shirley Knight shared their experiences in development of a collaborative rubric at Ramapo that will be piloted in the spring and will share additional information about this project with the group.

Examples/Models of Information Literacy Plans

Since the last meeting, Denise Marshall has been gathering examples and models of information literacy plans from librarians throughout the state. A few more plans/models and frameworks were discussed by those in attendance and from the discussion it would seem that many more plans/models would be forthcoming. While most felt comfortable sharing materials with members, not all should be shared via the VOILA website since that would be publically available. But, since all felt that the examples/models would benefit SIL members, the suggestion was made to make them available for viewing using a password protected platform. While the initial plan called for Denise to forward what she has to SIL Committee members, Jeris Cassel volunteered to create a Sakai site that would allow for control over access to the material that is submitted. Jeris will notify everyone with more details when the site is available along with instructions as to how the plans/frameworks should be submitted.

It should also be noted that members debated the use of the phrase ‘information literacy’ since most were in agreement that many faculty members do not fully understand the concept. Recognizing that there are issues with the terminology, a suggestion was made to use language that makes sense to your own faculty, such as using “information skills” or ‘information competencies’ to market information literacy plans to faculty and administration.

Preparing for Middle States

Anne Ciliberti is seeking directors or deans from institutions who have recently been through a Middle States visit or have one scheduled in the near future since she would like to hold informal discussions with them. Ellen Renaud reported that Hudson County Community College expects a visit in March and Chris Herz reported that Gloucester Community College expects a visit in April. All were in agreement that this is an issue that would be of interest, and Anne will send out a message to the VALE and Library Directors listservs to solicit input and report back to the committee at the next meeting.

One-Shot Instruction Sessions

A number of issues pertaining to the structure and content of one-shot instruction sessions were discussed and many useful ideas were also shared. Since this seems to be a topic that many librarians would be interested in discussing more in-depth, many in the group felt it would be beneficial to develop a workshop that focuses on this issue as well as related themes such as student assignments to the scheduling of instruction sessions during the semester. Further discussion on this potential program will be held since a venue, potential co-host and format of the program would need to be decided.

Theo Haynes reported that the User Education Committee of NJLA/CUS has agreed to promote co-sponsorship of its program with the SIL group at the annual NJLA Conference scheduled for April. Theo will send out the details of the program shortly.

Next Agenda

Davida will prepare an overview of a study done exploring the connections between the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and information literacy.

Next Meeting

No specific date was selected, but the middle or end of March would be likely. Anne will send out date suggestions and confirm.