

MOBIUS Electronic Resources Advisory Committee (MERAC)

Minutes for 10/25/2001

MERAC met at the MOBIUS Consortium Office (MCO) at 10:00 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 9, 2002.

1. Airing it Out

The Committee celebrated its one year anniversary with cake and noisemakers and with each member expressing thoughts about the contributions and the successes of MERAC and MOBIUS. Mary Slater, Missouri Valley College, announced that the Quest catalog is now online and it's Missouri Valley's first online catalog. Axie Hindman celebrated the fact that we have two databases up and running. George Rickerson said, "You are very hardworking and I have been gratified at the enthusiasm and energy you brought to this task. You clearly understand the possibilities... I think you are going to be challenged over the coming months because it will not be easy with the current state of the economy. I want to encourage you not to let that affect you going forward." George congratulated committee members "on your outstanding work."

2. Old Business

In continuing the rotation of the secretarial position, Stephanie Tolson, Archway Cluster, agreed to prepare the minutes for the January meeting. Raleigh will continue his role as recorder.

3. New Business

A. Report from the Mobius Consortium Office—George Rickerson. George said that the Coordinating Board for Higher Education approved the FY03 MOBIUS appropriations request including the request for electronic resources. The appropriations request goes to Governor Holden, who will issue his FY03 recommendations in late December. The governor's recommendations will then go to the House of Representatives. MOBIUS will try to persuade Governor Holden to include funding for at least part of the Committee's request. George encouraged the committee to look at ways of providing databases to MOBIUS members using models other than full state funding and to consider some of the different models being used around the country. Stephanie asked about feedback from MOBIUS Council Members regarding our newest databases. George said that, in general, the feedback was positive. There were a few negative comments. We may not have communicated extensively enough that we are trying to get a program started and that this was the first step.

Axie Hindman and Terry Austin. Terry showed the Committee the MERAC home page which has a link for **MERAC statistics** (<http://sequoia.lso.missouri.edu/mobius1/merac.htm>) on the use of the ABC-CLIO databases for September 2001. A handout provided ABC-CLIO usage statistics by institution for August and September. The electronic resource contacts should be receiving statistics on usage. Axie mentioned the discussion on the Listserv about JSTOR linking. Linking from the ABC-CLIO databases to JSTOR will appear in November. If a user in a non-subscribing institution clicks on the JSTOR link, they will be prompted for a password and an ID. Axie has notified ABC-CLIO of MOBIUS interest in having this feature one that could be turned off by individual libraries.

B. Fee For Service Databases. The group reviewed a handout regarding "Fee for Service Database Considerations." This listed 27 databases for which licenses have already been negotiated for some institutions. The committee shortened the list by eliminating databases that are not full-text and one database for which state funding is being requested. Several additional databases were added resulting in a list of 16 databases. Axie and Terry suggested seeking pricing information for two databases that members could license at consortial rates if they wished. The list will be sent to electronic resource contacts and library directors so they may indicate their interest in these databases and return one response per library. A second survey will be sent out. Then two databases will be selected for a voluntary group purchase. Per Almquist prepared a draft memo to accompany the survey. MERAC wants to have pricing information before the MOBIUS Council meets in January. Mary mentioned that Education Full Text is disappointing (ASCII full text) but is heavily used. Xiaotian Chen mentioned that Project Muse has a few problems. One is how many of the Project Muse packages do you subscribe to? If you subscribe to one, you have indexing for all, but access is denied at the article level for articles in packages that you don't license. There is a problem with ISSN's which prevents linking to local holdings. Xiaotian recommends that if MOBIUS licenses Project Muse, we license the whole group of packages.

Independent Offers. Axie noted that several vendors have approached MOBIUS about offering discounts on database subscriptions to MOBIUS members where the institution would subscribe independently. A handout described the discounts offered to MOBIUS members by Columbia University Press on its four online products. Axie and Terry suggested that they could approach vendors to request discounts.

C. MOBIUS Long Range Plan. This was distributed as an informational item. Scarlett called attention to the mention of electronic resources in the long range plan.

D. Educational Role of MERAC. The group discussed what educational role MERAC should have using the handout, "Educational Role for MERAC" which was included in the packet of materials sent in advance of the meeting. Scarlett suggested that the group take on some responsibility for publicizing the **ABC-CLIO** databases. The usage statistics for these databases provides an outcomes measure and will be helpful in assessing MERAC's success. Raleigh asked if this should be called a "Promotional" role? Suggestions included:

- (1) Publicize the databases in the campus newsletter;
- (2) Make sure that each library has the databases listed on the campus web page with appropriate links;
- (3) Share information on the broader MERAC listserv;
- (4) Use the MOBIUS newsletter to share information;
- (5) Share resource guides and user guides (handouts) that we create for patrons and publicity that wasn't generated by the MOBIUS office;
- (6) Obtain more ABC-CLIO promotional materials and distribute them more widely;
- (7) As appropriate, use the ABC-CLIO databases when demonstrating library resources to patrons;
- (8) Offer presentations or demonstrations at the MOBIUS Annual Conference or at other meetings. Axie asked Mary to put in writing her comments about students use of CLIO notes and asked Scarlett to write up the ways she publicized the ABC-CLIO databases at Longview. Each MERAC representative will check with the institutions in their cluster to see that the databases are available on the library web pages and will convey the emphasis that the committee is placing on publicizing the ABC-CLIO databases. Two other roles that the committee wants to pursue are:
- (9) Update MAROON, perhaps after the first of the year; and
- (10) Investigate grant funding for statewide access to resources.

E. Alternative Sources of Funding. Scarlett reported on her investigation of the possibility of getting grant funding for electronic resources. In meeting with grant writers, she learned that grants must be innovative, should reflect partnerships; and must be outcome-oriented so results can be shown. The Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) may offer grants for which MOBIUS would qualify. Scarlett suggested going for a three-year grant. She also thought that the MCC grantwriter might be willing to help us. Axie will check with George on MOBIUS' ability to seek and receive grant funding. This will be on the January agenda.

F. Working Goals. The Committee agreed on the following working goals for 2001-2002:

- (1) Encourage information sharing and sharing of promotional materials such as resource guides; Use Listserv for this purpose.
- (2) Pursue 2 possible databases to offer to members on a fee for service basis.
- (3) Explore offers from vendors for databases who will deal with MOBIUS members individually and offer a MOBIUS discount. These arrangements can be sought proactively. Committee members can suggest databases to be pursued.
- (4) Promote MOBIUS databases (currently the ABC-CLIO databases).
- (5) Explore the possibilities of grant funding and grant opportunities.
- (6) Improve communication with MOBIUS Council members; Improve communication between committee members and the member libraries in their clusters.

4. Other

5. Meeting Assessment. The Committee participated in a brief plus/delta assessment to provide immediate feedback about the meeting. Under the first column which dealt with positive things the group had accomplished, committee members mentioned the following:

- (1) Good list of goals;
- (2) Well-organized; kept on track

- (3) Cake was great;
- (4) Good scheme for narrowing the fee for service databases;
- (5) Celebrating successes
- (6) Sending meeting materials through the MOBIUS courier service is a good idea;
- (7) Scarlett's leadership gives a light at the end of the tunnel

Under the delta column, which is concerned with improving committee meetings, these suggestions were offered:

- (1) When a decision is made, the Committee needs to formally sign off on it to keep track of decisions resulting from discussion;
- (2) Information should be sent electronically so it is easier to pass on to other interested parties.

The meeting was adjourned.

Attending were: Carol Antoniewicz, Washington University, WASH U; Kathy Schlump, East Central College, ARCHWAY; Stephanie Tolson, St. Louis C C, ARCHWAY; Per Almquist, Covenant Theological Seminary, BRIDGES; Mary Slater, Missouri Valley College, Quest; Xiaotian Chen, Truman State University, LANCE; Lynn Cline, Southwest Missouri State University, SWAN; Rhonda Whithaus, Observer, UMC, MERLIN; Lorna Mitchell, Westminster College, ARTHUR; Raleigh Muns, UM-St. Louis, MERLIN; Scarlett Swall, Metropolitan Community Colleges, WILO; George Rickerson, MOBIUS Executive Director; Axie Hindman, Coordinator of Electronic Resource Licensing, Library Systems Office; and Terry Austin, Library Systems Specialist, Licensing, Library Systems Office.

Lorna Mitchell, Rotating Secretary
Raleigh Muns, Recorder