

Mobius Electronic Resources Advisory Committee (MERAC) Minutes, October 10, 2000

MERAC met at the Mobius Consortium office at 10:00 a.m., October 10th. Attending were Mobius Consortium Office staff members, George Rickerson, Axie Hindman, Gary Harris, and Kurt Kopp; and committee members Raleigh Muns, MERLIN; Lynn Cline, SWAN; Mary Slater, Central West-now QUEST; Kathy Schlump, ARCHWAY; Stephanie Tolson, ARCHWAY; Darrin Daughtery, Northwest; Xiaotian Chen, LANCE; Scarlett Swall, WILO; Carol Antoniewicz, Washington University; Anne Booker, BRIDGES; Karl Suhr, Southeast; and Lorna Mitchell, ARTHUR.

Significant dates: Cluster representatives agreed to send the names, e-mail addresses, and telephone numbers of the Electronic Resources contact for each Mobius member library to Axie by October 17th. (HindmanA@umsystem.edu)

The committee's goal is to have member libraries enter their current, locally paid electronic resource subscriptions into a database by November 1st. The next meeting of the Committee will be November 9, 2000, at 10:00 a.m. at the Mobius Consortium Office. Lynn suggested that when we contact other libraries we ask them to let us know about new items they would be interested in purchasing.

The Mobius office distributed handouts with Mobius Advisory Group Guidelines and Charges; a list of electronic resources with descriptions for possible consideration; the California State University Principles for CSU Acquisition of Electronic Information Resources; and possible funding models for Mobius with examples from other consortia.

George said that the committee will make recommendations about how Mobius will select products and how Mobius will distribute the costs among the member libraries. What types of resources should Mobius be looking at, specifically with regard to initial priorities? There is presently no state funding for electronic resources. A legislative request is pending for \$900,000 for new projects for Mobius operations. If approved, this could provide some funds for initiatives such as database licensing. We need to tell the legislature what we will be doing with the proposed funding.

George suggested that the committee consider having as a goal that Mobius will license products for consortium-wide access. He originally envisioned a two-stage process: (1) the committee would do an inventory of electronic products member libraries currently license; and (2) the committee would evaluate products for future implementation with future funding. The first stage could result in consolidating and getting state licenses for some commonly held products, paying for those 100% with member money. The second stage would most likely involve cost-sharing, utilizing a combination of state and institutional funding-although not necessarily a 50/50 division. These stages may need to overlap. The committee may need to come up with options based on different funding scenarios.

George said that he sees Mobius as the organization for higher education licensing and support and training for end users. He hopes that Mobius can provide enough resources at the Consortium level that institutions will be able to fill in with items to meet local needs. He said that Mobius can only do things that it has the funding to do. It cannot currently initiate projects on its own.

Timeline. If the Committee makes a recommendation that affects the budgets of member libraries, that information is needed at the beginning of the year. Information to be presented to the Council is needed prior to the Council's December 1st meeting.

Raleigh volunteered to be Recorder for the meeting. Lorna was asked to be Chair for a few months. Axie was asked to continue as Chair for the initial meeting.

Raleigh, who is Chair of the Merlin Reference Services Committee (MRSC), demonstrated a web-based Resource Evaluation Database (RED) which facilitates the evaluation of electronic resources by the Merlin Libraries and by Washington University. The software allows the Committee to track new resources, resources that need to be upgraded, those that are being evaluated through a trial period, etc. Primary responsibility for evaluating a product is assigned to one person on the committee. Raleigh recommended that committee members not think of the selection process as voting.

Raleigh is willing to create a similar database for the MERAC inventory which he called MAROON. Each institution

will have access to a page for institutional information.

Scarlett said that her cluster prepared a list of what each institution owned and made a wish list of items they wanted the Committee to consider. She said the WILO cluster is very interested in eBooks through Net Library, ProQuest's Periodical Abstracts; FirstSearch; and Books in Print. Kathy said that the ARCHWAY cluster also gathered their information.

In addition to eBooks, committee members expressed interest in the full text of academic periodicals and scientific and medical journals (e.g. CINAHL). Karl suggested looking at Project Muse. Lorna mentioned EBSCO's Academic Elite for which MOREnet had obtained pricing. Axie mentioned that there may be a problem with using the full-text periodical databases as a first cut since some institutions have already made commitments to various titles. Xiaotian said that Project Muse does not use standard ISSNs making it difficult to link from citation databases to the full text.

Darrin suggested focusing on three or four products that could be purchased at a lower price.

Stephanie mentioned that if we make a recommendation, we will be asked questions about how the costs are going to be apportioned. Axie noted that this is one of the most difficult tasks and suggested that members look at the websites in the handout. Models discussed included an FTE model, a weighted FTE model, and models based on simultaneous users or ports, library acquisitions budgets, or the formula for figuring Mobius fees. Another possibility is expanding a Small-Medium-Large cost apportionment to a hierarchy of five classes.

After the inventory of current subscriptions is entered, Raleigh may construct a database for the new products that are suggested. In the interim, we can use the MERAC listserv as a way to post suggestions.

The question of whether pricing could be obtained for some products before our next meeting was discussed. Axie mentioned investigating a couple of the items we had talked about-Project Muse, Net Library, and perhaps one database-and seeing how different pricing models would work out. The group also discussed waiting until the inventory was done to find a widely held product and obtain pricing information for it. .

Raleigh Muns, Recorder
Lorna Mitchell, Chair
Approved 11/9/2000