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Instruction Plan for Dewey Library
2007-2008

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Basic Principles

Dewey Library offers a range of information resources and services to support research and education in management and the social sciences. The purpose of the instruction program is to make users aware of these resources and to promote and enhance their use of these resources through varied forms of instruction.

By instructing users about library resources and services, our goal is to help them successfully achieve the knowledge and outcomes they seek in their work and education.

Instruction should begin with an understanding of users' needs and respond as much as possible to the variety of learning styles and preferences they represent.

Limitations on time and resources mean that we cannot pursue all instructional options. We will need to select and focus on activities that we believe will have the greatest impact on users and which coincide with the MIT Libraries' strategic initiatives.

Dewey's instructional program will evolve over time. Its development will draw on Dewey librarians' willingness to experiment and their commitment to continuously assess resources and services.

Overview: Users, Instructional Needs, Options for Delivering Instruction

User groups served by Dewey Library

Graduate students in management

Graduate students in economics and political science

Undergraduate students in management and social science courses and programs

Faculty in management and social sciences

Research associates and assistants and visiting scholars

Students and faculty from other disciplines who are engaged in interdisciplinary research (e.g., product developers, technology policy analysts)

Staff from MIT departments and administrative offices who use business information resources

Dewey Library users need knowledge and skills to help them

Be aware of the array of information resources available for business and social science research

Select appropriate databases according to their research needs

Assess and critically evaluate resources

Create effective searches in electronic resources

Understand the functions of Vera and Barton

Successfully use tools and services that support research productivity (export files, download numeric data, manage citations)

Identify and assess appropriate print resources

Be aware of resources beyond MIT and understand how to access them

Options for delivering instruction to Dewey's users

User aides in print and electronic format (cheat sheets, manuals, subject guides)

Tutorials and interactive tools on the MIT Libraries web site, SloanSpace, and course management systems

Face-to-face interactive activities, including:

Library orientations
Provides a general understanding of what library services are available and how they function (includes tours)

Course-related instruction
Teaches how to use a set of information sources related to a subject course

Course-integrated instruction
Teaches how to solve a series of information problems related to each stage of a subject course's teaching

Special workshops
Demonstrates how to master specific skills

Independent seminars
Offers instruction independent of any subject course

Library sponsored special events
Programs offered for bibliographic, instructional, cultural, recreational, or educational purposes

Instruction to an individual user
Teaches specific skills with hands-on exercise

Proposals for Continued Development

Over the last five years Dewey Library has been successful in developing instructional programming for its core, and largest, user group: graduate students in management and social sciences.   Even though graduate students are our main focus, Dewey librarians also provide instruction related to management and social science information to other groups in the MIT community.

We have seen that our instruction program may evolve in response to new developments and circumstances. We continue to learn about sustainability and the importance of moving in a focused way to institutionalize our achievements.

At the same time as we consolidate accomplishments, we are also ready to create new programming, to refresh existing programming, and to discontinue activities that have not proved their potential. Most importantly, we continue to learn about and respond to the needs of our users.

The following proposals encompass three goals: 1) creation of new programming in response to new opportunities and needs; 2) pursuit of previously stated but as yet unrealized programming; and 3) continuation of existing programming that has proved of value to users.

The proposals are based on Dewey's current level of staffing, space, and technology resources. Other factors that may shape our efforts are the Libraries' adoption of a system-wide instruction plan, establishment of tutorials guidelines, and implementation of database cross-searching functionality.

Library Orientation for the Management and Social Science Communities

Proposal 1   Continue to offer orientations tailored to the needs and interests of the following groups. Work with program offices and departments to identify needs and revise or expand orientation programming as appropriate.

> Sloan MBAs
> Sloan Fellows
> Leaders for Manufacturing
> Master of Engineering in Logistics
> International Faculty Fellows
> Sloan international students
> System Design and Management
> Department of Political Science
> Department of Economics

Instruction for Management and Social Science User Groups

Graduate Students in Management

Proposal 1	Continue to develop the Business Database Advisor, adding new modules as appropriate. Conduct usability testing and incorporate the results into the design.
Proposal 2	Continue to offer business research workshops. Expand the series as appropriate by offering new content in response to evolving needs (examples: patent searching, searching skills, Google for business research, resources for finance).
Proposal 3	Maintain online versions of workshop content (currently, PowerPoint slides) to support distance students and others who wish to obtain workshop content asynchronously. Migrate content to alternative media as appropriate and in line with MIT Libraries tutorials guidelines.
Proposal 4	Offer instruction in Libraries-supported citation management software (currently RefWorks) as part of the business research workshop series and as special events. Design and test curriculum for a pilot session (non-hands on) comparing various citation management products to enhance student selection of such products.
Proposal 5	Continue to offer course-related and course-integrated instruction at faculty request.

Graduate Students in Social Sciences

Proposal 1	Expand instruction in aspects of data resources through workshops and course-related instruction. Engage and support the services of the HMDC Statistical Consultant for onsite instruction in statistical software.
Proposal 2	Offer instruction in Libraries-supported citation management software (currently RefWorks) through workshops or special events. Design and test curriculum for a pilot session (non-hands on) comparing several citation management products to enhance student selection of such products.
Proposal 3	Continue to offer course-related and course-integrated instruction at faculty request.

Undergraduate Students in Management and Social Sciences

Proposals for instruction for undergraduates assume that faculty must encourage and require student participation in instruction.

Proposal 1   Continue to provide course-related and course-integrated instruction at faculty request.

Proposal 2   Explore what might constitute "business information literacy" and "social science information literacy" as a prerequisite to dialogue with faculty about instruction for undergraduates in management and social sciences. Assess this content in terms of in-class and self-help modes of delivery.

Proposal 3   Contact and work with relevant program administrators and faculty to develop venues for offering instruction to undergraduate majors in management and social sciences. Look for "touchstone" opportunities offering optimal impact for undergraduate majors.

Proposal 4   Incorporate a brief introduction to RefWorks into course-related or course-integrated instruction sessions for undergraduates.

Faculty in Management and Social Sciences

Proposal 1   Continue to offer personalized consultations with subject specialists.

Proposal 2   Offer instruction in the use of RefWorks and other citation management software through appropriate avenues (consultations, small group presentations, workshops for departments).

Research Associates, Research Assistants, Administrative Assistants and Visiting Scholars in Management and Social Sciences

Proposal 1   Continue to offer individual consultations with subject specialists. Offer special workshops or orientations as the need arises via the appropriate subject specialist or departmental liaison.

Students and Faculty from Other Disciplines
Interdisciplinary Researchers

Proposal 1   Continue to offer course-related instruction at the request of faculty or librarian subject specialists for courses where the information resource needs fall within Dewey's areas of subject expertise and collections strength.

Proposal 2   Continue to offer cross-training in company and industry resources to librarians in other divisions to support their supplementary or outreach programming. Periodically assess effectiveness of this strategy for meeting the needs of various MIT communities.

MIT Administrative Staff Using Business Information Resources

Proposal 1   Continue to offer ad hoc instruction on request. Discuss any requests for ongoing or collaborative programming in management or the social sciences with MIT Libraries Associate Director for Public Services.

Components of Program Development

Marketing

The following excerpt from the first edition (2002) of the Dewey Library instruction plan suggests an interrelationship between instruction and marketing.

> "Because it is a point of interaction with the Library, instruction is a form of marketing. Yet instruction itself must also be marketed. Like other products, instructional programming must be designed and packaged in ways that make it relevant to users' needs."

This premise has guided our strategies for developing and marketing instruction, particularly to graduate students, who constitute the majority of Dewey's user community.

In terms of marketing communication we have found that email announcements to appropriate distribution lists are an effective medium. There is anecdotal evidence that the business research workshops, and hence Dewey, have high recognition among Sloan program administrators and students, even those who never register for workshops. And recently, Dewey's Associate Head performed a scatter plot

analysis of data from the 2005 Library Survey. His analysis found that Sloan respondents rated the workshops high in terms of their awareness and attribution of importance.

The marketing of information literacy instruction to undergraduate program administrators and faculty poses different challenges. Some strategies that might help us meet these challenges include:

- building an understanding of the structure of undergraduate major requirements
- revisiting with administrators and faculty the value of "learning how to learn," an MIT priority for undergraduates expressed in the Report of the Task Force on Student Life and Learning
- finding ways to demonstrate the advantages of information literacy for student achievement and competitive advantage.

Assessment

As the first edition of the plan observed in 2002, "Evaluation of instruction programs is a pressing topic among instruction librarians. There are as yet no clear recipes or standard approaches. Many evaluation tools (e.g., tests, quizzes, and perhaps evaluation of term paper bibliographies) used in undergraduate environments would probably not be appropriate for graduate students."

Valid assessment requires the use of controlled comparisons of similar groups or comparisons of pre-treatment and post-treatment results. The opportunities for setting up controlled comparisons and pre- and post-testing are severely limited in an environment where students are pressed for time or where the instruction is not part of a course-related or course-integrated format.

Instead, assessment of the business research workshops has sought a middle ground. For the last five years, evaluation has been based on students' self-reports elicited in Zoomerang surveys administered at the end of each term to all attendees (response rates range between 20-30%).

The surveys provide a sustainable way to gather information about how students have used information from the workshops, the level of relevance the students attribute to the workshops' content, and additional suggestions about format, timing and other workshop topics the students would find helpful.

As a result of student input, we have revised content on the industries workshop, introduced new content on patents and online searching, created online tutorials, and paid more attention to hard copy handouts. We plan to continue using the Zoomerang surveys, but we will also be attentive to other potentially scalable approaches to assessment as we learn about them. As noted above, faculty involvement in undergraduate instructional programming may provide opportunities to try different assessment strategies with this group.

Resource Requirements

Space

Almost all of Dewey's instructional sessions are offered in E53-220. This Athena classroom has excellent audio-visual equipment and well-functioning wireless connectivity. While somewhat spartan in its seating and furnishings, the room comfortably accommodates 15 people. The Athena stations are used for a small percentage of our programming, most notably Stata workshops and training. We are not able to use the Athena stations for business instruction because of their incompatibility with many business database platforms. Instead, Sloan students bring their wireless enabled laptops.

Despite the presence of this room in Dewey, space is one of our most pressing resource constraints. There is some "competition" with semester-long courses that also use the E53-220. While Dewey has first priority in reserving a predetermined set of days and hours each term, we are closed out of the classroom at many other times, thus limiting our flexibility in scheduling instruction sessions. As we expand our programming for instruction in data resources, knowledge management tools, and programming for undergraduates, we will likely need to reserve E53-220 for more substantial blocks of time.

DIRC is an as yet unexplored option for some of our programming, although it is not feasible for business research workshops because Sloan students' schedules do not allow for travel time across campus. Of necessity, though, DIRC will be required for any training we might do on EndNote citation management software because of the terms of the EndNote site license.

In the early stages of planning for the business research workshops, our requests to reserve classrooms in E51 were discouraged by Sloan administrators, who cited the heavy demand for reservations by student clubs and other activities. We may want to re-visit these discussions with Sloan and the MIT Schedules Office. Access to larger classrooms that can accommodate groups of 30-40 or more would allow us to present instruction more efficiently given our limited staff resources.

Technology

As noted above, we experience technical limitations in that the 20 Athena workstations in E53-220, while meeting current needs for Stata workshops, are not useful for instruction in business resources. As the 2002 plan envisioned, though, we have been able to leverage laptop and wireless technology to provide "hands-on" instruction to Sloan students in E53-220.

Laptops, however, have limitations in supporting future hands-on instruction related to data resources and services. Our technology resources are adequate at present but will present challenges as our programming expands to include instruction in additional, varied statistical packages and business resources.

Staffing

Dewey Librarians appear to have attained a delicate balance between teaching commitments and other responsibilities. Some instructional activities are typically clustered at peak times of the year, thus challenging our "balancing acts." Because we do juggle multiple responsibilities in reference, collections, system participation, and teaching, the expansion of instructional programs at Dewey will continue to proceed carefully and incrementally.

Conclusion and Preliminary Timeline

The next phase of instruction at Dewey will focus on continued development of programming for our graduate student user groups, development of appropriate and feasible opportunities for undergraduate instruction, development of online and e-learning opportunities for our user groups, and continued collaboration with librarians in other divisions to support interdisciplinary study and research where business and social science information are important components.

Summer 2007
- In conjunction with public service policies, investigate migration of existing tutorials to alternative media and plan a development process as appropriate
- Develop new content for business research workshops to pilot during the fall, including sessions on citation management software

Fall 2007
- Provide business research workshops and other instruction sessions
- Provide instruction on RefWorks and evaluative sessions on other citation management software
- Provide instruction in data resources to appropriate groups
- Pilot new business research workshop content as appropriate

Winter 2008
- Initiate discussions among Dewey librarians about information literacy content for undergraduate majors in management and social sciences
- Identify administrators and faculty whose course or program might provide a "touchstone" entrée for instruction for undergraduate majors in management or social science
- Develop content for undergraduate instructional opportunities based on faculty and librarian input

Spring 2008
- Provide business research workshops and other instruction sessions
- Provide instruction on RefWorks and evaluative sessions on other citation management software
- Provide instruction in data resources to appropriate groups
- Offer information literacy instruction for undergraduates through a "touchstone" course or courses, or via self-help modules