

**Northland Pioneer College
Library Media Technology Advisory Board Minutes
Silver Creek Campus - January 16, 2009**

Present: Trudy Bender, NPC Head Librarian, LMT Adjunct Faculty
Geneva Durkee, Director, Navajo County Library District
Sherry French, Program Chair, LMT Adjunct Faculty
Wendy Kochheiser, Director, Show Low Public Library
Rose Kreher, Retired Librarian, Community Member, NPC Marketing
Judith Pepple, Director, Apache County Library District
Daniela Rovida, LMT Student, Employee Apache County Library Dist.
Wendy Skevington, Director, Holbrook Public Library

Call to Order/Welcome

Sherry French called the meeting to order. Copies of the minutes from the last Advisory Board meeting were provided for review. Sherry suggested that each member of the group introduce themselves and provide a brief update of happenings at their library.

- Trudy Bender stated that NPC libraries are considering a bookcart drill team for the next NPC convocation.
- Judith Pepple announced that Apache County Library District is constructing 4 new libraries, one each at Alpine, Round Valley, Concho, and St. Johns. They are also automating their system using Polaris in conjunction with the Gila County Library system.
- Wendy Kochheiser reported that Show Low Public Library is preparing to break ground on a new library building. Their statistics are up; over 700 customers visited the library the previous Tuesday. Show Low has 4 full-time employees and 3 part-time employees for a total FTE of 5.5.
- Wendy Skevington will complete her master's degree through the University of Arizona in May.
- Geneva Durkee is working on multiple LSTA grants for Navajo County libraries. She has established career centers in 5 of the larger libraries and is developing an employment-related addition to the web site that will include a new online resource for job-seekers. Navajo County libraries will be participating in the Arizona Centennial on Display project (2012) which will involve the installation of 40" LCD monitors in 6 libraries and 35" monitors in the remaining libraries. Also, Hopi library will receive a new bookmobile.

With the introductions complete, Sherry stated that there has not been an official advisory board for the Library Media Technology (LMT) program for many years. She suggested that the group present, with the exception of the student participant, be designated the official advisory board. Sherry also suggested that the advisory board should include a school librarian. Wendy Skevington made a motion to this effect which was seconded by Rose Kreher.

ACTION ITEM: Sherry will recruit a school library for the LMT Advisory Board.

Future of the Program

Sherry introduced the new American Library Association (ALA) and Western Council of State Libraries Library Support Staff Certification Program (LSSCP). This program, supported by grants from the Institute for Museum and Library Services, offers library paraprofessionals the opportunity to complete online courses and receive nationally recognized certification. The Northland LMT program was invited to participate in the Arizona trial. Sherry declined that offer as it would mean that existing courses need to be retrofitted to LSSCP guidelines.

Sherry reported that LMT faculty (currently Sherry French and Trudy Bender) have no interest in developing new courses as existing courses must be moved from the WebCT learning platform to either JICS or Moodle before the WebCT contract expires in June. This must be done on personal time, in addition to teaching, as LMT instructional activities are not part of the full-time employment contract Sherry and Trudy have with the College. Wendy Kochheiser commented that NPC has not fully supported the LMT program. Rose Kreher added that the LMT program suffered from the lack of a dedicated faculty.

Sherry mentioned that the Arizona Library Institute is another program that competes with the LMT program. Library Institute is sponsored by the Arizona Department of Libraries, Archives and Public Records. Each summer students attend classes for one week and earn credits toward certification through the Western Council of State Libraries.

Sherry next provided an overview of changes in compensation for LMT instructors. Due to changes in the way payment is calculated, instructors can anticipate a reduction in pay from 33% to 50%. This is significant as FTSE has been low. Sherry reported that LMT FTSE has been in the bottom 3 programs for several semesters.

Wendy Skevington commented that the NPC program does not provide students with the skills she needs in new employees. The program is geared more toward management, whereas she needs frontline staff who can conduct a reference interview, give a book talk and who have a professional demeanor. Sherry responded that the program covers these topics. Wendy Skevington added that the program should be more technician oriented and less management oriented. Geneva Durkee stated that she thought management had a place in the program as we still have many libraries in the area that are managed by paraprofessionals.

Wendy Kochheiser commented that it might help FTSE if more courses were transferable. At present only one course will transfer to other Arizona institutions. Sherry responded that there is no program that will accept these courses as library courses as the NAU bachelors program is in limbo. LMT courses will only transfer as electives.

Geneva stated that since Library Institute is popular, perhaps NPC should try intensive courses. Rose asked who would teach these courses. Sherry asked those present if they would be interested in teaching and all declined. She reported that she has canvassed all qualified local librarians and receives the same response. Busy schedules and poor compensation are cited as the reasons for not participating in the program.

Rose Kreher asked the group if students with an LMT degree or certificate came to them for employment, would they look favorably on them. Wendy Kochheiser replied, "Yes, but not if they expect to get paid for it." Geneva asked how graduates were being placed - are they finding work? Daniela stated that she was able to find a job with Apache County. In her opinion, she would not have been hired without the cataloging course she had completed at NPC. Judith Pepple agreed that they took this course into consideration as it was taught by Trudy and her skills are highly respected.

Rose brought up the fact that, in a poor economy, libraries tend to suffer and positions are cut. Daniela commented that several of the other students in her courses were already working in library positions. Trudy added that one of her students works at Lower Greasewood School. This student was placed in the school library without any training and really needs help. Rose reminded the group that one of the reasons for moving the courses online was to reach students in remote locations such as this but that the program still needs a dedicated faculty member.

Moving back to Rose's question, Geneva stated that she would look favorably on graduates of the LMT program. Judith added that knowing something about libraries (from the program) opens the door but that they, in Apache County, do not look for a degree. They look for personality characteristics such as a sense of service, willingness to cooperate and character. Sherry asked if they would look more favorably on people with an ALA, Western States, or Arizona Library Institute certification to which Judith responded no. Sherry asked for clarification. "Would a housewife down the street have an equal chance of being hired as someone with a degree or certification?" The response was yes, if the housewife had the characteristics that these library managers look for.

Rose reminded the group that ALA and the Western Council of State Libraries receive their funding from the federal government whereas the LMT program is funded by NPC, and NPC is facing major budget cuts. Trudy said that perhaps prospective library employees do not need a degree but instead simply need specific courses. She suggested that the LMT program might set up 199 courses that are responsive to community needs (e.g., cataloging).

Wendy Skevington commented that ALA has put the library community in this position with the view that the only degree that matters is the Master's degree, remarking the "Everybody else is just everybody else." The City of Holbrook does not have the money to pay salaries for employees with degrees. If she has to choose between one adult with a degree and five students without, she will hire five students and train them herself. The local library community survives independent of the NPC program. Administrators are not willing to pay extra for employees with degrees. As an example, she cited all-volunteer libraries where the volunteers take workshops rather than courses.

Daniela stated that she would like to see the LMT program continue although it was obvious that there was not much support for the program in the community. Rose added that the free library system as we know it may no longer be a reality for this day and age.

Judith stated that she did not think that the library professionals in the community had the right to ask instructors to work for what NPC can pay. She added that they, in the Apache County

Library system, are so busy that they have little time to focus on training. They have attempted to get people together for training and this does not work. One-on-one training is best, particularly with technology involved. In terms of those looking for a job, they ask, "What is the library like on a typical day?" If the applicant can answer that question with relative accuracy and/or understanding, that person moves forward in the hiring process. Some standardization (referring to the ALA training program) does not make sense. Each community should maintain a distinct personality that reflects the people who live and work there.

Sherry told the group that the NPC LMT program should help meet local library needs. What do they need in terms of training and education? Daniela commented that she would be very sorry to see the program end as she feels she has found her place and she would like to complete her degree.

Sherry then provided a PowerPoint presentation highlighting elements from several of the NPC Library Media Technician online courses currently in use.

Geneva stated that she would hate to see the program die. Sherry asked if this is simply because it has been around for so long or if it truly serves the community. Wendy Kochheiser stated that she thought it was time for the program to end particularly as there is little or no support from NPC. Wendy Skevington concurred although she suggested that NPC might continue individual courses such as cataloging. Geneva commented that she did not think that Advisory Board members have had enough time to consider this decision and that it was wonderful to have a means of training in the area although Arizona Library Institute might be just as good.

Sherry asked the group if NPC was doing students a disservice by inviting them to complete a degree that has no respect in the field. Judith stated that Apache County Library District currently had one open position, that of Round Valley Library Manager which is a Library Specialist 1 position. She said that this is about the only advanced position they have. As an administrator, she does not have the ability to offer a variety of positions (e.g., entry level to specialists). She cannot adjust position titles and requirements so it does not really matter if a person has a degree. They start out in the same positions as those without a degree. Judith added that even though the Library District is respected by the Apache County Board of Supervisors, the Board is unlikely to increase the budget so that she can hire persons with a degree when she can hire individuals without a degree who can do the job.

Sherry remarked that several of the individuals in the group had schedule issues and needed to leave. She thanked the group for their honesty and time away from busy schedules. Sherry will continue with the LMT program review to see where that leads. The LMT Advisory Board will meet as needed to assist with the program review.

ACTION ITEM: Sherry will continue with the LMT program review.