

LAUC-B 2008 Fall Assembly - Minutes
Tuesday, November 18, 2008
8:30 - 10:00 AM
Morrison Library

I. Welcome (Beth Dupuis, Associate University Librarian for Educational Initiatives and Director, Doe/Moffitt Libraries)

Assemblies encourage professional interaction and promote LAUC activities. Budget forecast is dim. The Library should take this opportunity to be creative, perform collaborative efforts and re-shape activities. New Directions is a step towards this, recognizing what tools are available, what other libraries are doing. The LAUC-B 2009 conference encourages us to think of users, think outside of our own units. Dramatic changes in next decade; we need to identify approaches and set goals. Economic crisis broadly necessitates ingenuitive decision-making, which will help us all. Please share your ideas of what can be done differently; encourage communication with supervisors, AUL's, councils, and colleagues.

II. Introduction of New LAUC-B Members

Char Booth, Doe/Moffitt Instructional Services
Marjorie Bryer, Bancroft
Laura Calverley, Engineering
Amy Croft, Bancroft
Sara Ferguson, Bancroft
Ellen Gilmore, Law
Anastasia Karel, Bancroft
Kendra Levine, Transportation Studies
Edna Lewis, Law
Dana Miller, Bancroft
Hilary Schiraldi, Business & Economics
John Shepard, Music
Sandy Tao, Biosciences
Elia Van Lith, Bancroft
David Uhlich, Bancroft

III. LAUC Statewide Fall Assembly at UCSF (December 3, 2008)

View the agenda and committee reports at <http://lauc2008fallassembly.wordpress.com/>
The program will focus on issues surrounding concepts of collaborative shared print and distributed collection and archiving models. The presenters are Constance Malpas (Program Officer, OCLC Research) and Roger Schonfeld (Manager of Research, Ithaka); moderated by Emily Stambaugh (Manager, Shared Print, CDL), Jake Nadal (Preservation Officer, UCLA), and Brian E.C. Schottlaender (Convener, University Librarians Group).

IV. LAUC-B Committee Reports

(View written reports online at <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/LAUC/minutes/>)

CAPA (M. Cochran): M. Cochran is outgoing Chair. James Eason, Chris Tarr, Manuel Erviti (incoming Chair), Gary Peete, Lynn Jones, Nick Robinson, (2007-08). New members 08-09: +Brian Quigley, Jane Rosario, Virginia Shih. (See online report for 2007-08 summary.)

Chair of Research (D. Rowan): I-Wei Wang, Marjorie Bryer, Susan Garbarino (LAUC Statewide Representative), Shayee Khanaka, Imadeldin Abuelgasim. This Friday is deadline for Townsend fellowship. (Nothing specific for librarians on the website; use the forms that are available for the Assistant Professor fellowship.) Contacts for questions: 3-6229 Teresa; Rachel 3-0882. Re-working the schedule so that the turnaround time isn't as brief next year.

LAUC research grants – deadline Jan 9, 2009.

Mentorship TF (D. Jan): Lucia Diamond, Susana Hinojosa, Heather Pena, and Saima Fazli. Task Force report submitted to ExComm last week. Once confirmed, the report will be posted to the LAUC-B website and will be submitted to the Berkeley Initiative for Leadership and Diversity (BILD) project.

V. Chair's Report (Corliss Lee)

Introduction of the LAUC-B Executive Committee: A. Barone, M. Phillips, P. Atwood, J. Nelson, D. Eifler, L. Ngo, S. Petrites, M. Cochran (outgoing *ex officio*), and M. Erviti (incoming, *ex officio*).

Standard business of LAUC-B – CAPA, professional development events, mentoring, Townsend Fellow, LAUC Research Grant, travel funds, LAUC Statewide committees, Academic Library Senate Committee, meeting with the UL, four assemblies a year (2 by LAUC-B and 2 for the Affiliated libraries), a conference every two years, meeting with other LAUC Chairs, the Distinguished Librarians Award every two years – are all active and going to plan.. Recent activities include: diversity, recruitment, and retention; mentoring, New Directions, etc. The LAUC-B website will soon be moved to a new platform. In addition, a LAUC-B blog is now live (see <http://blogs.lib.berkeley.edu/laucb.php>) and ExComm intends to populate a wiki with procedural information for chairs and officers.

The next LAUC-B conference will take place on October 23, 2009 at the Clark Kerr campus. The title is: “Student Library Users: Delivery what they need – the way they want it.” Visit the website for regular updates and suggested readings:

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/LAUC/2009conference/>

VI. Questions and Announcements

None

VII. Guest Speaker: Professor Jenna Burrell, School of Information (UCB)

ABSTRACT:

A Cross-Cultural Perspective on the Concept of Information: Insights from Rural Uganda

With the rapid spread of the Internet and mobile phones into developing regions there is great interest in the possibility for a global Information Revolution that will provide answers, options, and opportunities to the rural poor in areas of the Global South. This talk will focus on some of the practical challenges of making this possibility a reality. Beyond the well acknowledged issues of technology access and language literacy, my recent fieldwork in Uganda raised questions about whether a coherent concept of "information" exists cross-culturally. Rural Ugandans generally expected assistance to come from a human source as 'advice' and 'encouragement' rather than delivered in the impersonal format of 'information.' The main challenge to providing information services to rural Ugandans in turn rested upon whether the information delivered was not just relevant, but also whether it was trustworthy and actionable. Whether information is actionable related to what capital and what social connections were required to make use of it, something the rural poor often have very little of. Following from such insights I will describe a system I hope to install in the near future - a toll-free phone hotline for rural Ugandans connected to an information mediator who can provide personalized assistance. This project will allow us to begin to capture information needs from the flow of everyday life in these rural areas.

BRIEF NOTES:

(Also see a LAUC-B blog posting, which includes a link to Professor Burrell's PowerPoint presentation, at <http://blogs.lib.berkeley.edu/laucb.php/2008/12/05/lauc-b-fall-assembly-professor-jenna-bur> .)

Exclusively working in Sub-Saharan Africa since her PhD. No word for "information" in Uganda. "Information" was interpreted by interview subjects as "news" and "news" was interpreted as various needs (schools, health, market prices for fish, etc. Mobile phone usage is huge; will this become an information seeking device? Negotiating sharing and usage of the mobile phone; how it makes an impact on daily life. 50 informal interviews during two 4 month trips in 4 rural villages. Mobile phones in Uganda: 125k subscriptions added per month in 2006-07. Phone services and equipment is a business venture for small-scale entrepreneurs. Value to rural Ugandans: a) maintaining connections within existing social network; b) coordinating trade/business activities; c) saving money on transport (can relate simple messages to others via mobile phone vs. getting in a taxi to a destination to speak in person). Demand was severely underestimated.

Unrealized potential: could the phone become an information delivery device? Literacy issues are a large challenge (numerous local dialects).

Information to fulfill needs is expected to come in the form of advice, likely from a person. They cannot easily articulate information needs, and it is not perceived as an explicit priority. Information could be useful, but must be actionable. For example, what amount of money is required to act on some information?

Proposal to extend the utility of the phone: Advice Hotline with live person on the other end. Utilizes educated intermediaries to gain access to information resources. Comparing information sources; see questionbox.org, a project of the Open Mind NGO. (Project already performed in India)

Q&A:

Cell phone towers: telecommunications is deregulated; a lot of competition from foreign companies/investors.

Percentage of population can read/write? Very low, depends upon village. Education ranges from 1st grade level through high school.

Her initial interest: Always interested in Africa. Working at Intel ... took some of these information ideas and decided to apply toward PhD studies.

Cell phones as a method of increasing status: More pragmatic; status was not identified as a driving force.

Text messaging: Not utilized much. Soccer scores are popular deliverables.

Models of phones: Nokia brick phones, slightly outdated. Cheapest Nokia phone is the most popular: durable and affordable.

Key information in these villages: radios, no newspaper services, bicycles were main method of transport and, thus, sharing information. Motorbikes are common; not many cars.

Usage by age: Mostly under 40 (mostly adults, 20-40; not many teenagers); almost exclusively men.

Libraries in Uganda: University libraries, but not sure if there are public libraries. Internet cafes are funded by NGO's and have some form of impromptu library (not professionally staffed).

High percentage of income is being spent on mobile phones and services. Can purchase as little as 2 minutes of airtime (for approx. \$0.50).

Use of information (and mobile phones) for anti-governmental activities: Power dynamics ... fish traders: supply and demand questions, as well as market value information.

Has use of language/speech changed due to short conversations? Not really, but they speak fast. Sometimes just checking in, not necessarily a lot of content. Very formal greetings in person, but they don't do this on the phone. Lots of health questions via phone.