

Web Advisory Group

FINAL Minutes, meeting November 18, 2002

Attended by: Bill Brown , Ilan Eyman, Gail Ford (recorder), Kathleen Gallagher, Janet Garey, Gary Handman, John Kupersmith, James Lake, Jim Ronningen, Bruce Williams. **Guest:** Lynne Grigsby-Standfill **Absent:** Isabel Stirling

I. Minutes

- Minutes from November 4 were approved with minor correction
- WAG minutes are not published to allusers, nor are they archived. WAG will give staff periodic updates.

II. Meetings

From now through December 17, WAG will have one hour meetings.

Beginning in January, WAG will hold 1-1/2 hours from 1-2:30 on Mondays.

ACTION: Jill will check on/arrange for a room.

III. BLOG

WAG decided to try a BLOG.

ACTION: Gary will have a BLOG set up.

ACTION: Jill will invite Lynn Jones to our December 9 meeting to show us how it the software works.

IV. Phases of Site Development

Jill passed out the Phases of Website Development – WAG should give some thought to which of these (or perhaps if all of these) fall under WAG’s purview. Jill pointed out that “design” appears here as the third task in order of steps in Site Development. She noted that WAG might choose to develop subcommittees to perform some of this work, and that a WAG member could choose to serve on both WAG and a subcommittee (e.g., a design subcommittee) of their choice.

V. Cabinet-level questions of policy

Jill presented the following list of questions for WAG to discuss. The first question needs to be presented to Cabinet with a list of pros and cons and if possible a recommendation which Cabinet may or may not accept. The second questions must also go to the Cabinet as a short report.

- Does the library website represent the whole library or is it an aggregator of other websites?
- What will the WAG eventually produce? (First? Second? etc. . .)
- Why does this project need to be done? Does everyone agree?
- Is a uniform “look and feel” desirable? Even possible?
- What pages comprise the library website?
- Who are the users? Students, Faculty, Librarians, K-12, general public?
- Should the library web be directed to the lowest common denominator (novice user) or have multiple faces?
- Who is the primary audience? Student, Faculty, Librarian (e.g. “too much library jargon”)
- Is there a need for a “user-centered” design?
- What is the goal of the website? What do you want to accomplish with the site?
- Can users be grouped by roll or type, e.g. Student, Scholar, Librarian, K-12 or novice, savvy, expert?
- What are the pros and cons of interim solutions (too much change vs showing change)?
- What is the process for change?
- Are there timelines? What are they?
- Where do Procedures and Standards fit into the scheme of the WAG?

WAG began with the first question on the list (see discussion below.)

VI. Question: *Does the library website represent the whole library or is it an aggregator of other websites? Give the Pros and Cons of each.*

In discussion, the group rephrased this question to read *Should all Library web pages be made uniform (standardized?), or should the "Library-wide web" be considered to be an aggregator of sites (a home-page entry point with a very few top-level pages for library-wide information.)* In this context "uniform" might include uniformity of navigation; of terminology; of look and feel.

Several people spoke to the fact that full standardization of all library pages may not be logistically possible, nor even totally desirable. But there was a willingness to consider a model that included some standardization. WAG began discussing what elements in websites could be standardized or created with librarywide guidelines in mind.

A few pro's and con's along the spectrum were discussed:

Fully uniform page throughout site:

Pros: might make users happier to have a consistent look and feel; might be less costly to develop new sub-sites in the future if they adhered to a librarywide "template"

Cons: very expensive to "fight 60 battles"; very expensive to retroactively convert 10,000 pages to a standard template.

Note: moving to uniform pages perhaps could happen over time, starting with new pages, and implemented as pages are updated.

Aggregator:

Pros: allows for creativity throughout library; provides a distinct look and feel for subject specialties which may actually be appealing to the user.

Cons: expensive to bring up a new site; everyone building a new site ends up answering similar questions – sometimes with different answers; some expressed interest by web owners to have some guidelines for these "areas of grey".

The group outlined the following understanding of webpage development:

Content: developed locally to reflect specialty and user population. Might be usefully shaped through by Library-wide guidelines for terminology and elements to be covered (e.g. contact information; electronic resources, etc.) in different types of pages.

Wrapper: This includes issues like look and feel, navigation, what logos appear, etc. This also might benefit from librarywide standards for commonly faced questions and might include some sort of branding to help the user know they are "still at UCB". (one idea: "librarywide logo" that could be incorporated into specialty library designs.)