

**ALL-SIS Faculty Services Committee  
AALL 2007 Roundtable  
New Orleans, LA  
July 16, 2007**

The 2007 ALL-SIS Faculty Services Committee Roundtable was coordinated by Margaret Schilt and Marianne Alcorn, the 2006/2007 Co-Chairs.

Before beginning, Margaret Schilt gave a brief wrapup of Committee activities during the year, citing the May 2007 listserv discussion on copyright issues. A summary of that discussion is posted on the Faculty Services Committee website.

Marianne Alcorn commented on the December 2006 listserv discussion on boundaries in faculty services, noting that the topic really seemed to hit a nerve – there were many postings sharing of ideas on where the problem areas are and how to gracefully set policies and draw lines in faculty services. She also passed on to the group the glowing comments from the ALL-SIS Committee chair, Suzanne Thorpe, from the ALL-SIS breakfast business meeting on July 15.

**Beginning presentations**

The roundtable began with short presentations on three topics. Adeen Postar spoke about outreach to new faculty, “new” including anyone new to the law school, be they visiting faculty, adjuncts or new full-time permanent faculty. Marianne Alcorn contributed her thoughts on setting boundaries for the “obsessive” reference librarian, and Margaret Schilt addressed the question or whether we should deliver information and resources or train the faculty to become more self-sufficient in their research.

**Small groups**

The 35 attendees broke up into three groups to share experiences and ideas on the topics. The speaker on the topic moderated the discussion and posted the ideas generated on a flip chart, for reporting to the wider group.

**Reporting to the larger group: from the flip charts.....**

The **New Faculty** group:

Definition of “new faculty”:

- Anyone new to the Law School
- Tenure track or not
- Administration, clinic, visiting
- People who have changed roles
- Lateral moves

Law Library Journal article by Sheri Lewis about creating a profile of information about faculty, to keep records of preferences and research interests

Liaison assignments: pair a newer faculty member with an experienced librarian  
Outreach bagel brunches

Take on a new professor for the first semester and then move on

Contacts with new professors:

- During interview – director of law library/faculty services librarian
- Mentor meetings
- Orientation involvement
- Cultivate relationship with dean
- Work-in-progress/ law professor presentations
- Continual email/other contact
- Be creative
- New acquisitions list, possibly organized by topic

The **Obsessive Reference Librarian** group:

1. Importance of setting expectations
2. Communicate about deadlines early on
3. Communicate in person
4. Interim/status reports
5. Management support
6. Clear guidelines about what services we offer and discussing at the outset what the librarians need
7. We don't get paid enough to obsess

Problem areas:

1. Pros and cons of the electronic tether
2. Time constraints
3. Personal habits, interests, curiosities
4. Unclear/uncertain guidelines to faculty
5. Rush request syndrome

The **Do We Train or Do We Provide** group:

Importance of personal working relationship

Training allows self-sufficiency, while “provide” caters to the least common denominator, in terms of technological competence

May be a generational change – younger faculty want to know how to do it themselves, because they are more computer-savvy to begin with

Can train and provide at the same time – send the PDF with a couple lines of where you found it

What is our role? Is it to teach the faculty? Or to do what they want us to do...

Providing is doing what they need; however, often by the time they ask they've already wasted time trying to find something themselves

Research assistance is often cited in recruiting faculty – argues for providing

But does the provision model just turn us into a document delivery service?

Email: faculty want a slave

How frequently will a particular issue come up? If it's the kind of task that comes up routinely, it might be worth the time and effort to get the professor up to speed – save him/her time in the long run

Also, training enables the professor to browse. The faculty know their research topics and needs better than we do and will be more effective in browsing themselves rather than delegating that task to librarians

We try to make up for this by the faculty liaison model of provision of services – so the faculty member has a librarian who is familiar with his/her research

Joanne Dugan, chair of the Committee for 2007/2008, ([jdugan@ubalt.edu](mailto:jdugan@ubalt.edu)), concluded the roundtable by asking for ideas for activities for the Committee in the upcoming year and topics for listserv discussions.

Thanks to all who attended for making this a useful and productive discussion!