

InULA Revitalization Committee Report

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Pres. Charlotte Hess charged the Ad Hoc InULA Revitalization Committee with 1) discussing and proposing ideas for the future direction of InULA; 2) recommending priorities for short and long-term goals for the organization; and 3) recommending structural changes in the organization to better achieve InULA's goals.

This report summarizes the Committee's discussions and recommendations. The Committee took as its starting point the ideas generated around six areas (InULA's purpose, committee reorganization, fundraising, communication/networking, research, meetings/functions) discussed at the InULA Open Forum on March 3, 1992. The Committee's view is that the two highest priority areas for the InULA Board's attention are: InULA's purpose and its funding base.

With so many demands on librarians in a time of constant change, budgetary woes, and downsizing, InULA must show its centrality to I.U. librarians or else continue to lose ground. For InULA to succeed at revitalization, it must again become a proactive risk-taking group.

I. PURPOSE/MISSION

Purpose

The major librarians' professional organizations exist to promote both libraries and the profession of librarianship (although their names reflect concern only for the former), and their membership is a mix of institutions, librarians, and other interested persons. At the state level, the Indiana Library Federation follows the same model.

InULA's name, on the other hand, clearly announced that its "raison d'etre" is librarians. Participants at last year's Open Forum urged that InULA focus on the librarians part of its name, not on the institutional qualifier. InULA is the logical organizational place for librarians to freely discuss and exchange ideas without having an institutional agenda driving the process. The Committee also feels that InULA has a role to play in providing I.U. librarians with activities that foster a sense of community and fun.

The present statement of purposes in the InULA Constitution does not mention librarians. Its first purpose refers to library service. (See attached "Finding a Mission for InULA.")

Recommendation to the Board:

The Committee recommends that the Constitution Committee draft changes in InULA's purposes to:

- 1) focus on librarians, not libraries or library service.
- 2) reflect InULA's role in facilitating interaction and communication among IU librarians at different campuses and at different career stages;
- 3) provide opportunities for IU librarians to expand their professional and personal horizons;
- 4) promote academic librarianship in the University and local communities.

Goals/Vision

As noted in "Finding a Mission for InULA," the new statement of mission/purpose needs to be followed by a set of goals and objectives. Some possible goals are suggested. Without these, it is likely that InULA will lack continuity in its aims and will keep its fuzzy image with many librarians.

The Committee also feels that InULA needs a galvanizing issue. Originally, the issues that drove InULA were the securing of faculty status and the creation of a vehicle for librarians to communicate with the administration.

The Committee spend much of its time this year looking at faculty status as it concerns academic librarians today. We invited Andrea Singer to talk with us about ACRL "Standards for Faculty Status for College and University Librarians" (C&RL, May 1992); discussed how "faculty status" of librarians within the IU system (and among extra-system librarians) varies. The Committee urged the Board to make faculty status the focus of an upcoming InULA Notes. (Andrea's article, "Compensation for Ten-Month Faculty Appointments," appears in the April 1993 InULA Notes.)

Certainly a renewed focus on faculty status dovetails with the Libraries's 1992 "Refocusing our Vision" document.

As academic appointees, librarians are entitled to the same opportunities and privileges as "teaching" faculty with an equivalent compensation package and support for professional development, research, and creative activities.

Recommendation to the Board:

- 1) The Committee recommends that from a newly focused statement of purposes in its Constitution, the Board go on to develop short and long-term goals and objectives using the suggestions in "Finding a Mission for InULA."
- 2) The Committee recommends focus on professional status as InULA's primary short-term goal; this issue embraces InULA's "traditional" areas of providing support for professional development and research.

3) The Committee recommends that InULA foster the career development of new (untenured) and prospective (SLIS students) academic librarians through informal mentoring and by more promotion of state, regional, and national organizations and I.U. librarians' roles in them.

Other possible ideas to pursue:

- 1) Continuing to develop a broader and more far-reaching vision of InULA;
- 2) Using the appointment of the Dean of Faculties as an opportunity to establish a relationship with this Dean conducive to gaining support for the ACRL Standards.
- 3) Working to make InULA a full partner in planning for Librarians' Day;
- 4) Having a goal of one InULA activity a year at a campus other than Bloomington;
- 5) Establishing more connections between I.U. librarians and SLIS faculty and students through: sponsorship of SLIS Convocation programs on the culture and demands of academic librarianship; participation in all SLIS orientation sessions; publicizing of InULA activities through SLIS channels; linkage to the SLIS chapter of Beta Phi Mu.

II. FUNDRAISING

Much of the Revitalization Committee strongly recommends that InULA give high priority to creating a task force or ad hoc committee for long-range financial planning. This committee should:

- 1) set clear priorities for fundraising and spending based on InULA's goals and objectives;
- 2) seek ways to actively involve tenured and untenured librarians, SLIS students, and retired librarians in fundraising;
- 3) review InULA's ByLaws regarding the committees (Book Sale and Program and Social) that have responsibility for InULA's present fundraising activities (the book sale and the auction).

Other ideas to pursue:

- 1) a year-round fundraising activity to ensure that InULA has the money to support its goals and objectives;
- 2) marketing InULA to vendors who might be enticed to contribute to a particular activity or to donate needed equipment (such as laptop computers for research);
- 3) identifying and targeting former InULA members for fundraising;
- 4) working toward establishing an InULA foundation.

III. OFFICERS & COMMITTEES

The Committee recommends that InULA make some structural changes so that InULA can improve its ability to be proactive and its ability to maintain continuity in direction from year-to-year.

Recommendations to the Board:

1) Officers:

a) InULA should amend the Constitution, Article IV, Sec. 1., to include an official role for its Past-President; the person taking on the position of President-Elect would make a 3-yr. commitment to the organization.

The Past President might have the role of being primarily concerned with strategic planning. He/she would seem in an ideal position to keep InULA's revisioning process going.

b) The Past President for 1993-94 should be asked to head an ad hoc committee to develop a strategic plan for fundraising.

Possible idea to pursue:

Board Meetings: The Committee suggests that Board meet in executive session after Committee reports to facilitate decisionmaking; working with the larger group of committee heads and board to achieve action is often unwieldy.

2) Standing Committees in InULA's ByLaws

a) Book Sale Committee (ByLaws Sec. 6A)

The book sale should be evaluated by an ad hoc committee that looks at InULA's annual and ongoing fundraising needs.

b) Continuing Education Committee (ByLaws, Sec. 6B)

The Continuing Ed. Committee should be replaced by a Professional Development Committee, whose charge would include the support and promotion of research; planning of continuing education activities; and active cooperation with other groups in developing and publicizing professional development opportunities.

In InULA's present structure there is no committee with responsibility for research, and there is sometimes confusion as to what falls to Cont. Ed. and what to Program and Social.

c) The National Library Week Committee (ByLaws, Sec. 6C)

This committee should be abolished in the InULA Constitution. Its focus is on the institution, not the librarian.

Possible ideas to pursue:

InULA might at some point want a committee for community service and community awareness. During the year, the Committee discussed promoting the image of academic librarians and providing community service opportunities through such activities as InULA participation in the VITAL Bowl and the WTIU fundraising drive.

d) Program and Social Committee (ByLaws, Sec. 6C)

The Committee strongly recommends:

1) that the fundraising responsibility in the Program and Social Committee's charge be part of an ad hoc fundraising committee's review;

2) that this committee be encouraged to do more to celebrate librarians' achievements in a high profile way. Suggested mechanisms include holding special receptions, giving awards, and making recognition of research and service part of the spring meeting. We need to celebrate ourselves (without having to wait for retirement).

3) that the Program Committee have responsibility for InULA's participation in Librarians' Day.

The Revitalization Committee applauds this year's Program Committee for its innovative InULA Cuisine Club.

e) Publications Committee (ByLaws, Sec. 6E)

Consider renaming the Publications Committee to better reflect its enlarged responsibility for electronic methods of communication. One suggestion is to rename it the Communications Committee.

3) Appointment Process for Committee Chairs (ByLaws, Art. III, Sec. 2),

In the present ByLaws the Executive Board has responsibility for appointing standing committee chairpersons and members within the first month of the membership year. New chairs are to be chosen from the previous year's committees.

The reality is that with this process InULA becomes an organization that functions only 8 months of the year--Oct. through May--at best. The Committee recommends that committee chairs have responsibility for selecting their replacements from their current committees (with approval by the new Board at its initial meeting).

The Committee also recommends that the Board consider two-year standing committee appointments with overlapping terms for members.

4) Committee Effectiveness

Recommendation to the Board:

Current committee chairs should write handbooks for use by future committee chairs and members.

These handbooks should reflect how each committee's work serves InULA's mission, goals, and objectives, and how each meshes with the other committees.

Misc. Idea to pursue:

Appointing an ad hoc committee to develop an InULA logo. There is an InULA that is a perennial plant.

Questions for the Board to pursue:

1. Are these the committees that InULA needs?
2. How important is achieving campus diversity in committee leadership and membership?
3. How problematic are overlapping charges to committees?

IV. Membership

Membership Recruitment, Involvement and Retention

The first focus of the Revitalization Committee was on membership, as suggestions made to and accepted by the Board could be implemented for the fall membership drive. The Committee asked the At-Large Representatives to join them in a brainstorming session. Suggestions to hold a fall membership event away from the Libraries and to redesign the membership brochure to include more information on InULA were carried out creatively and energetically by the InULA At-Large Representatives.

InULA's membership challenge is not only to recruit new members but to retain long-time members. If InULA is going to be proactive and risk-taking, and the Committee feels this is essential to its revitalization, then InULA must have participation from librarians at all stages of their careers.

Recommendations to the Board:

Constitution

- 1) The Constitution (Art. III, Membership) should be amended to specifically mention SLIS students and I.U. library support staff in the Friends category.

Fall Membership Drive

- 1) InULA calendar for the upcoming academic year should be set in time for the fall membership brochure;
- 2) To increase InULA's profile, the fall membership drive should be publicized in FOCUS and IUL NEWS.
- 3) The membership brochure should state InULA's mission and goals;
- 4) Membership packets with copies of InULA Notes (and a cover letter from the InULA President and the Dean of Libraries) should go to regional and extra-system administrators to make them more aware of the InULA (and perhaps more supportive);
- 5) SLIS students and faculty and IUL staff should be recruited as Associate Members and Friends in the fall membership campaign;
- 6) The At-Large Representatives should continue to sponsor a fall membership social event at a non-library site; the occasion should be used to introduce new members, new InULA officers and committee chairs, and to recruit committee volunteers. (If the Committee chairs are already in place, names of volunteers can go directly to chairs.)

Ideas to pursue:

- 1) Soliciting a statement of support by Dean Neal for the membership brochure;
- 2) Making personal contact with potential new members and lapsed members
- 3) Considering InULA's role in acknowledging members' times of joy and sorrow--birth of babies, death of family members--with cards and/or flowers. Should this be part of the charge to the At-Large Representatives? (If the Board reworks the InULA purpose to include fostering of community, then this might be a goal worth funding and figuring out how to implement);
- 4) Making membership and committee recruitment a part of the fall and spring meetings;
- 5) Having an InULA spokesperson speak at IUL faculty/staff orientation sessions and SLIS student orientation sessions;

V. Research Support

InULA's funding of research has long been a priority for the organization, and this activity seems to have continuing support from the membership (as shown by comments at the Open Forum). IUL's 1992 "Refocusing Our Vision" document states a commitment to "enhance the role of librarians as active contributors to the research programs of the university."

But, the reality is that librarians face many barriers to research:

- unequal funding opportunities;
- varying opportunities/funding for travel & research leave;
- time for research built into the job;
- IU Kokomo, every other Friday for research
- IUPUI, 18hrs. every 3 mos. for prof. dev.;
- lack of resources (request for InULA to purchase laptops that could be loaned out);
- lack of communication on research
- need for travel bonuses to conferences.

In InULA's present structure there is no group with ongoing responsibility for research promotion and support.

Recommendations

- 1) Funding of research should continue to be one of InULA's highest priority goals;
- 2) An ad hoc fundraising committee should explore InULA's allocation of funds for research support. Does the auction provide stable funding for research? Should research funding be limited to what is raised at the auction?
- 3) Making support and promotion of research part of the charge of a new Professional Development Committee (that would replace Cont. Ed.).

This committee would publicize InULA's research fund, work with the Ad Hoc Fundraising Committee, report on InULA's research awards to the membership, make connections with the IULFC Research Committee, work with the Publications (Communications?) Committee to promote the exchange of research information on the InULA Listserv, and work with the Program Committee if it is determined that a research award will be given.

The Board might want to maintain its role in awarding the grants.

VI. InULA Communication

The Committee did not have time to discuss communication in any depth. This is not to diminish its importance. Communication to members at various campuses so that all feel a part of the organization may be one of InULA's biggest long-term challenges.

InULA Notes: The Committee discussed various issues regarding this publication, including its frequency; whether there should be an electronic version, or alternating print and electronic versions with different purposes (one might be highlighting personal and practical issues, such as tips on making presentations, profiles of librarians, and instructions for a successful poster session; and one might be for research reports and discussion of major issues, such as faculty status); and single topic issues that would be announced and contributions sought through the Listserv.

The InULA Board needs to decide which of its goals InULA Notes can most effectively support.

InULA Listserv/Electronic Discussion Forum: The addition of the InULA Listserv this spring provides new opportunities for far-flung InULA members to connect. The biggest short-term challenge for the Board and the Publications Committee is to help the listserv succeed.

Recommendations to the Board:

- 1) Subscription to the Listserv should be an automatic part of membership limited to membership;
- 2) Description of the listserv should go to new members: its scope (what to use it for); how to subscribe, unsubscribe, put on vacation hold;

Ideas to pursue:

- 1) Linking with the IULFC Research Committee and a future InULA research committee or subcommittee to promote research exchange on the Listserv.
- 2) Evaluating whether InULA is best served by maintaining a national listserv or a more limited Indiana University mailserv.
- 3) Looking at whether access by associate members and friends is an issue.

VII. Summary Statement

IUL's 1992 "Refocusing Our Vision" says "that faculty and staff of the Libraries will achieve positions of leadership and influence at the University and in the profession with expanding achievements in the areas of teaching/information literacy, scholarly communication, and information resources/technology." A revitalized InULA can ensure that librarians don't burn out along the way.