

**Task Force to Assess Access to Electronic Literature
Report
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This Task Force arises from Goal VI, Strategic Direction 2, Objective 2.2 of the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences 2008-14 Strategic Plan.

Charge:

- Assess the adequacy of access to electronic literature by students at their experiential placements;
- Assess the adequacy of access to electronic literature by full-time faculty sited in various places in the State;
- Assess the adequacy of access to electronic literature by affiliate faculty across the State;
- Develop a plan to address any inadequacies identified in the assessments.

All faculty, staff, and currently enrolled students at Purdue University-West Lafayette have access to the Libraries resources either on campus or remotely. Remote access requires an initial log in with a valid Purdue Career Account (PCA) through the Purdue University Libraries (PUL) proxy server. Preceptors gain access when they complete the first year of service to the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences and are offered affiliate faculty status from the School.

Faculty, staff, graduate students, preceptors, and 4th year professional students were emailed a link to an online survey in November. The first question established remote use of the Libraries electronic resources. Approximately half of the respondents had not used the resources. The majority of these responses were from preceptors (96%). The second question asked for reasons why the resources had not been used; multiple selections could be made:

- 50% indicated they did not have a PCA and are presumed to be in the first year of service and have not been offered or accepted affiliate faculty status.
- 48% responded that they have similar electronic resources through the employer.
- 40% have access to print resources.
- 12% indicated that they delegate information gathering to the students.

The survey respondents who indicated that they have used the PUL electronic resources have experienced the following problems:

- Unable to connect to a website or resource
- Unable to log in
- Simultaneous user limit exceeded

Connection problems can be the result of temporary problems at the publisher/vendor website. Also, since access is based on internet protocol (IP) address recognition, if remote users do not start at the PUL website proxy server, they will be denied access. Simultaneous user limits exist for several databases that have substantial fees associated with each user "seat." Turn-aways occur most frequently during the late afternoon hours; avoiding these times will decrease the number of incidents a user may have.

A number of connection problems occur when a remote user is attempting access from a healthcare facility or hospital or from any institution that maintains a firewall as part of the internal information technology (IT) system. Students completing rotations at hospitals are encouraged to utilize the local resources first. The Libraries IT department has worked with some of these facilities, but the problem frequently is not something that the Libraries or the University IT can resolve. The Libraries IT department has a potential solution which requires ITaP to re-boot a specific server – a seemingly easy solution, but since it is a major server hosting multiple applications, scheduling a time with minimal disruption is extremely problematic.

Electronic resources, in particular the electronic journals database, are being used. Not surprisingly, access to more journals online is highly desirable. Users can request articles not available at PUL through the interlibrary loan service. Receipt of these articles is via a valid Purdue email address.

Users are utilizing the variety of assistance available to them through the Libraries. They also request assistance from the PharmD candidates and the preceptors.

Based on the results and the comments provided at the end of the survey, the assessment of access to the Purdue University Libraries electronic resources can be summarized very simply: those who have access, want more resources; those who do not have access, want it. The task force members agreed to the following recommendations:

- The School should continue to promote access to preceptors as encouragement to accept the affiliate faculty status offered after the first year.
- The Office of Experiential Learning should provide or continue to provide access instruction/training to affiliate faculty preceptors through the regional experiential coordinators.
- Create a "remote access" website for the experiential program with appropriate instructions, links, contacts, etc. Vicki Killion, Head of the Health and Life Sciences Division of the Libraries will provide content. (Anticipated completion by Spring 2010 semester end)
- The Libraries will continue to lobby the University for funding to increase available resources and access.
- Vicki Killion will continue to work with the Libraries IT department and ITaP to provide a solution that may decrease the problems encountered when trying to access from a healthcare facility.