Intra-District Loans: Making Better Use of Shared Resources

Amigos Fellowship Final Report
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Submitted by

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Summary of Project Activities

Overview

This fact-finding project gathered information from Phoenix College (PC) students about their knowledge of the intra-District loan (IDL) system and about the extent to which they are using the IDL option while collecting books for their research papers. The "request title" option is available in the online catalog record for all titles, whether owned by Phoenix College, or our nine sister colleges in the Maricopa Community College District (MCCD). The process was designed so that students could request a title from any of our sister colleges and have it delivered to PC within 3-4 business days.

Prior to beginning this project, anecdotal evidence suggested that our students did not understand the system and/or found the delay in getting the book to PC unsuited to their needs. After completing the research, the librarians have received several suggestions from our students for improvements in the IDL system. This information will be used when customizing the interface of our new integrated library system, and when compiling a plan of action to promote intra-District loans that will lead to an increase in the use of this service.

The Fellowship enhanced each of the four librarian's professional development through improving their research methodology and survey skills, and increased their knowledge and understanding of student use of this valuable, yet underutilized, service. The project also met the purpose and mission of Amigos in that the focus of the research was the improvement of student's use of technology to increase access to library resources, as well as resource sharing among a group of libraries in a network.

Strategy

The librarians conducted 100 pre- and post-tests, completed 8 focus groups, collected 25 satisfaction surveys and added a four-minute segment explaining IDLs to all bibliographic instruction sessions (132 in fall 2003).

In the tests, the librarians requested answers to pre-set questions formulated to assess the students' existing knowledge and their gained knowledge after receiving information about the IDL system. These pre- and post-tests [Appendices 1(a) & 2(a)] were administered during regular library instruction sessions. The focus groups [Appendix 3(a)], with 4-5 participants per session, lasted twenty minutes and the librarians incorporated an element of instruction in how to access intra-District loans. The satisfaction surveys [Appendix 4(a)] were gathered from 25 students who had received IDLs and were administered when the student collected the loaned book at PC.

Phoenix College has a diverse student population and students representing multiple diversities were surveyed and interviewed. This was achieved by collecting data at different times of the day and by surveying students in classes from various departments on our campus.

Evaluation Statement

Research Results

The results of the pre-test [Appendix 1(b)] were a cause of great concern to the librarians, as they showed that 85% of our respondents did not know what intra-District loans were and that 95% had never used the system. Furthermore, only 3% knew the correct number of colleges in our District. However, the results of the post-test [Appendix 2(b)], after the students had been told about the IDL system and how MCCD is organized, showed the numbers were reversed. The most important statistic in the post-test results is that 80% of the students said that they will use the IDL system in the future.

Results from the focus groups show that students want librarians to provide more information about IDL, both online and during library instruction sessions [Appendix 3(b)]. Several students found various aspects of the IDL procedures to be confusing and requested changes. However, it was gratifying to find that most agreed that the book collection at PC met their needs. Participants also used their local public library and Arizona Sate University libraries, primarily due to convenience of location rather than dissatisfaction with our book collection.

The satisfaction surveys [Appendix 4(b)] showed that 64% of students who used the IDL system relied on a librarian to learn about that option. The vast majority of users who had received a book from another of our sister libraries were satisfied with the IDL system and 100% stated that they would use the system again.

Plan of Action

As a result of being awarded this generous Fellowship from Amigos, we have been able to assess the level of knowledge among out students regarding intra-District loans. While

the initial results were a cause for concern, this research project indicates that our students will use the system if we make some basic changes to procedures, provide more information, and promote the system.

In spring semester 2004 the librarians at PC will add an explanation of the IDL system to library instruction sessions, improve the online information and IDL interface as we prepare our new Dynix library system, and (continue to?) promote the IDL service to our library users. We anticipate a vast increase in use of IDLs, and we gratefully acknowledge Amigos' contribution to this success.

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Intra-District Loans

Pre-Orientation Questionnaire

1. **What are intra-District loans?**

   _____

   _____

2. **Have you used this service in the past?**

   Yes _____

   No _____

3. **How do you request an intra-District loan?**

   _____

   _____

4. **How many days does the item take to arrive at Phoenix College Library?**

   _____

5. **How many colleges are there in the Maricopa Community College District?**

   _____

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Intra-District Loans

Results of Pre-Orientation Questionnaire

6. What are intra-District loans?

Knew	**15%**
Partly correct	**12%**
Didn't know	**73%**

7. Have you used this service in the past?

Yes   5%

No   95%

8. How do you request an intra-District loan?

Knew	**2%**
Partly correct	**8%**
Didn't know	**90%**

9. How many days does the item take to arrive at Phoenix College Library?

3-4 (correct)	**7%**
Less than 3-4	**6%**
More than 3-4	**11%**
No idea	**76%**

10. How many colleges are there in the Maricopa Community College District?

10 (correct)	**3%**
Less than 10	**34%**
More than 10	**14%**
No idea	**49%**

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Intra-District Loans

Post-Orientation Questionnaire

11. What are intra-District loans?

_____

_____

12. Will you use this service in the future?

Yes _____

No _____

13. How do you request an intra-District loan?

_____

_____

14. How many days does the item take to arrive at Phoenix College Library?

_____

15. How many colleges are there in the Maricopa Community College District?

_____

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Intra-District Loans

Results of Post-Orientation Questionnaire

16. What are intra-District loans?

Knew	**81%**
Partly correct	**10%**
Didn't know	**9%**

17. Will you use this service in the future?

Yes   80%

No   20%

18. How do you request an intra-District loan?

Knew	**50%**
Partly correct	**32%**
Didn't know	**18%**

19. How many days does the item take to arrive at Phoenix College Library?

3-4 (correct	**74%**
Less than 3-4	**5%**
More than 3-4	**12%**
No idea	**9%**

20. How many colleges are there in the Maricopa Community College District?

10 (correct)	**73%**
Less than 10	**8%**
More than 10	**8%**
No idea	**11%**

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Intra-District Loans

Focus Group Outline

Current Knowledge

- **What are intra-District loans?**
    - o **If students know, go to next question.**
    - o **If students do <u>not</u> know, go to Demonstration.**
    - o **If mix of students, first finish questions with the "know-ers", and then go to Demonstration.**

- **Where does the book come from?**
- **Will other District libraries send videos to Phoenix College (PC) for you?**
- **Have you used this service in the past?**
    - o **If yes, go to "Past Use" question.**
    - o **If no, ask why? Then, go to Demonstration.**

Past Use

- **Did you find the service useful?**
- **Did the books arrive soon enough?**
- **Would you use the intra-District loan system in the future?**
    - o **If not, why not?**

Demonstration – **During the demonstration, ask questions of the students, i.e. What would you do next? Are the online instructions clear? We are demonstrating to elicit comments from the students.**

- **Reset default to "all locations"**
- **Search for book: *The Death Penalty: An American History***
- **Not at PC, "Request Title"**
- **What number should be inserted?**
- **Type in fake number (1234567890111). Ask students what the error message means to them. Explain the need to validate College ID cards. Library computer system may prevent student from proceeding if there are fines owing.**

- **Ask students – Do they think books may be requested from off-campus? What is their reasoning for their answers?**
- **Login, explain screen. Ask students where do they think they should come to pick up the item.**
- **Emphasize need to read "successfully submitted" screen, as may not be successful.**
- **Length of time to arrive at PC, usually 3-4 business days. Ask students how will they know when the item is ready to be picked up.**
- **Search for video: *Evita: The Story of Eva Peron.***
- **At PVC, but "Available/Non Request – Ask students what this means to them?**
- **Request that students read the screen for availability.**
- **Explain that the system will let a library user place the request, but that they will not get the video.**

Concluding General Questions

- **Does the book collection at PC meet your current needs?**
- **Do you use other libraries? What for?**
- **Is there anything else you'd like to tell me?**

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Intra-District Loans

Focus Group Notes

We conducted eight focus groups, with 4-5 students per group. We took diversity into account by ensuring that we included a late start class, as these classes usually include older students who work at full-time jobs. The focus group participants included students representing diversities based on race, ethnicity, and age, as well as disability.

We found that:

- Few students knew about the system, or had used it in the past
- Most found the *Request Title* to be confusing
- Suggested alternative wording included *Send Book, Request Book,* and *Get this Book*
- Most participants believed they should use their SS#, rather than their student ID to request the book.
- Only one student knew that an overdue book, or library fines stopped them using the system
- Being able to pick the item up at another library did not appear to be important
- No participant knew the correct number of days (3-4) that a book took to arrive
- Two participants wanted email notification when the item arrived
- Few knew that we phoned them when the book was available
- Nearly all students found the ability to submit a request for a video that cannot be loaned via intra-District loans to be confusing
- Most participants agreed that the book collection at PC met their needs
- Some used PPL's Central, Cholla, and Yucca branches, as well as ASU Hayden

Recommendations

- Provide clearer online instructions at all stages of the process
- Tell students that videos sometimes cannot be requested
- Indicate length of time the process takes both in instructional sessions and via online instructions
- Use online HELP as a means of explaining the system
- Re-word *Request Title*
- Publicize the system to increase usage

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Intra-District Loans

Satisfaction Survey

21. **How did you learn about intra-District loans, i.e. using <u>Request Title</u> to get books from other Maricopa Community College Libraries? (Check all that apply.)**

    From a librarian in class

    Noticed <u>Request Title</u> in the Library Catalog

    From a librarian at the reference desk

    Don't remember

    Other (Explain)

22. **Why did you use the intra-District loan service? (Check all that apply.)**

    PC Library did not have *any* books on my topic

    Books at PC Library were checked out or missing

    PC Library did not have *enough* books on my topic

    PC Library did not have *the specific book*

    Other (Explain)

23. **On a scale from 1-5 (5 being the most satisfied), rate your level of satisfaction with the following stages of the intra-District loan process. (Circle a number.)**

    Placing the online request using <u>Request Title</u>

    Length of time for the book(s) to arrive

    Notification that the book(s) have arrived

24. Would you use this service again? (Circle one answer.)

     Yes

     Maybe

     No

Please place your completed questionnaire in the Suggestion Box at the Circulation Desk. Thank you!

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Intra-District Loans

Satisfaction Survey: Results

We collected twenty-five surveys.

25. How did you learn about intra-District loans, i.e. using <u>Request Title</u> to get books from other Maricopa Community College Libraries? (Check all that apply.)

Response	Number	Percentage
From a librarian in class	**6**	**21%**
Noticed <u>Request Title</u> in the Library Catalog	**7**	**25%**
From a librarian at the reference desk	**12**	**43%**
Don't remember	**0**	**0%**
Other (Explain	**3**	**11%**
Total	**28***	**100%**

* Three students gave multiple responses.

26. Why did you use the intra-District loan service? (Check all that apply.)

Response	Number	Percentage
PC Library did not have *any* books on my topic	**5**	**17%**
Books at PC Library were checked out or missing	**7**	**24%**
PC Library did not have *enough* books on my topic	**5**	**17%**
PC Library did not have *the specific book*	**8**	**28%**
Other (Explain)	**4**	**14%**
Total	**29***	**100%**

* Four students gave multiple responses.

27. On a scale from 1-5 (5 being the most satisfied), rate your level of satisfaction with the following stages of the intra-District loan process. (Circle a number.)

Response	1	2	3	4	5
Placing the online request using <u>Request Title</u>	0/0%	0/0%	2/9%	4/17%	17/74%
Length of time for the book(s) to arrive	0/%	3/13%	2/9%	4/17%	14/60%
Notification that the book(s) have arrived	3/13%	0/0%	2/9%	1/4%	17/74%
Total*	3/13%	3/13%	6/27%	9/38%	48/208%

* Some students did not give responses to all questions.

28. Would you use this service again? (Circle one answer.)

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	25	100%
Maybe	0	0%
No	0	0%

Please place your completed questionnaire in the Suggestion Box at the Circulation Desk. Thank you!