5/27/2008
2:00 p.m.
Meeting Minutes
Educational Portal Committee
Council of University of Arkansas Research Libraries (CUARL)
Members present: Elizabeth McKee (UAF), Paula Reaves (UAM), Dan Puckett (UAF), Jan Dickinson (UAFS), Cassy Dominick (UAF)

Prior to the meeting Elizabeth McKee sent an agenda, a draft of the menu bar content titled “Welcome to the Portal…”, and a list of examples of CUARL keywords for the database to all committee members. Copies were also available at the meeting. The speaker phone was used to communicate with Paula and Jan during the meeting as we did not have any committee members at the Little Rock Access grid. The agenda for the meeting included a review of the portal design, criteria for portal entries, a discussion of the mission and ways to receive feedback, discussion of the site design and index structure using Subjects and Teacher Zone entries, the possibility of adding a Student Zone, keywords, and plans to promote the site.

Elizabeth reviewed the updated portal that Beth Juhl designed for CUARL, explaining the components still under development. Beth has expanded the view area for “description” on the template which will make entering the descriptive phrases there easier to read and review. More space in the keyword area, and even a little more in the “description” area would be helpful the committee thought. We will not be able to have the major subject and zone categories display on the template. The committee discussed how the title should appear on the homepage and those present felt “CUARL K-12 Education Portal” would be the best title if space allows. We agreed that if the area was too crowded that “CUARL K-12 Portal” could suffice, but we were hesitant to have the title leave off the “K-12” part since we are not charged with covering higher education specifically with this portal. The committee discussed the difficulty in selecting subject areas and the reason to not “over assign” them, causing too much duplication through the site. Members of the committee will put subject headings in the keyword lists first, with initial capital letters (not important to the database, just to distinguish that they are categories) as Elizabeth explained that Beth has told us the search engine will not retrieve from the subject categories unless we have those words also listed in the keyword area. None of the sites we have found seem to warrant the category under Teacher Zone for “Copyright and Fair Use” and all of the sites seem to offer “Free Materials”, so the members agreed to request that those two subject headings be dropped. They can be used as keywords instead if needed. A “Teaching Tips” area was considered for the Teacher Zone, but it was decided “Professional Development” was sufficient to cover that idea.

The committee discussed the value of adding a Student Zone and considered the categories that would best describe the content we’ve seen in the sites selected so far. Those present selected the following as the choices that seemed best for this new subject group:

Books to Read
Careers/Continuing Your Education
Competitions/Contests
Camps/ Summer Programs
Games/Activities
Reference Resources
- Study abroad
- Videos/Audios

During the course of the meeting Internship were also suggested, but members felt use of it as a keyword may be enough. “Other Educational Entertainment” was deleted and “/Audios” added instead.

Jan Dickinson mentioned a program called WATC that could be added to the portal. It allows high school students to take college courses concurrently. She will e-mail the link to other committee members. The members discussed AETN United Video Streaming, which provides over 10,000 educational videos free to Arkansas teachers. It requires registration and a password, as well as a teacher id number and an LEA number. The videos include lesson plans and handouts for students.

To receive feedback, members favored the creation of a central e-mail and a comments form for messages that could be forwarded to the person that put the site on the portal or could be referred to the portal committee for discussion as needed.

Jan has volunteered to prepare a promotional flier again. Committee members will pursue promotional ideas for the next meeting.

The meeting concluded at 3:35. The next meeting will be June 18th, Wednesday, 2:00pm.