

# Single Service Desk

## Position Description Framework

### **Introduction to the Framework**

In response to the library's changing environment, in FY12 the ULS convened a User Services Task Force (USTF) to develop a new model for user services and produce a set of strategic options for the overall ULS FY13 plan. Over the course of the fall 2011 term, this group conducted a strategic options analysis that included review of university and ULS planning documents, small group discussions, readings, presentations, a Future Search conference, and separate presentations by colleagues from the University of Minnesota and Syracuse University.

Upon completion of phase 1 of this process, the task force identified four main objectives that are pertinent to the construction of this framework: user-centered services in Hillman Library; the Hillman Library ground floor redesign; the development of a library liaison model; and the necessity of highlighting and building our collections. During phase 2 of this process, the USTF created two transition teams to carry out implementation tasks. One team, the Position Description Framework team, was charged with developing two frameworks: one for library liaisons and one for staff at a single service desk. While there are separate frameworks for these positions, librarians and staff in this area will interact closely.

The single point of service desk provides a host of services including: traditional circulation and reserve activities, help in finding books and articles, and assistance in using information technology for ebooks and in the collaborative work areas in the library. Through this single point of service, staff members will also ensure that in-depth questions, problems or projects are appropriately referred to library liaisons.

### **Intent**

This document is designed to provide an outline of the areas of responsibility for staff at the new 'single service desk.' Duties within this framework include traditional library skills (circulation, reserves, intra and inter library loan, basic reference and information skills) and other workplace and technology skills consistent with a user-centered public services environment. This framework is not exhaustive. As jobs evolve in this new environment departments and/or individuals may need to revise or expand these guidelines, and appropriate training will be provided.

### **Competencies**

The single point of service will be for many the public face of the University Library System. It is critical that the staff at the desk be welcoming and respectful. A review of the list of competencies attached to the Library III classification that has been developed by the ULS for use in developing job descriptions and reviewing staff performance. These competencies must be considered in the formulation of job descriptions and goals for staff members at the single service desk. Competencies for a Library III

position include: approachability, decision quality, functional/technical skills, interpersonal communication, planning, problem solving, service orientation, and time management.

### **Roles and Responsibilities for the Single Service Desk**

Included here are roles and responsibilities that may--depending on the mix of assignments for a particular individual—appear in a job description of a person working at a single service desk.

#### **“Ask Us” Services**

- Provide high quality ready reference and directional reference service on demand, typically at a walk-in desk or via email, chat, phone, or other virtual reference tool
- Understand and refer requests for customized or expert reference and research services to appropriate liaison librarians or other ULS libraries
- Possess skilled catalog searching skills, both PITTcat Plus and staff catalog views
- Provide basic guidance and instruction in searching the catalog and selecting pertinent high-use scholarly databases
- Know the content and assist users in navigating the ULS web pages, providing guidance in requesting items through relevant services: Get It, EZ-Borrow, Interlibrary Loan, etc.
- Be able to provide basic group instructional sessions utilizing a prepared script
- Be able to locate items using Library of Congress standard subject headings and classification system
- Acquire and maintain a basic knowledge of locations/content/policies of collections across the ULS to assist users in obtaining appropriate research material efficiently. (e.g., various Hillman collections, departmental libraries, regional campus libraries, archives, special collections, D-Scribe Digital Collections, etc.)
- Be able to refer users to instruction programs and other services as needed

#### **Content /Collections (Circulation, Reserves, Collection Locations)**

- Provide excellent customer service to all users of the single service desk
- Understand and be able to articulate and explain circulation/reserve policies
- Know and be able to perform standard circulation functions (check in, check out, renew, holds, know loan periods, be able to accept fines, etc.)
- Troubleshoot routine problems with circulation (fine disputes, late returns, lost and damaged materials, etc.) while maintaining a positive attitude.
- Effectively use patron-related functions in Voyager
- Know and be able to perform standard reserve functions
- Know the locations of collections, including storage
- Understand ULS digital collections and how to access them
- Be able to troubleshoot routine e-access problems particularly for off campus access; e.g., S-remote
- Understand and be able to explain storage policies and practices
- Basic understanding of materials workflows (on order, missing, rush, etc.)
- Understand how to refer circulation/reserves questions or problems and to whom

#### **Communications and Interpersonal Skills**

- Assess and deal with problems involving patrons in an effective and positive fashion
- Develop and maintain a strong service orientation dedicated to providing excellent customer service at the desk
- Know and follow policy for handling security issues and reporting incidents
- Basic knowledge of local equipment, facilities, staff, and emergency procedures
- Work with liaison librarians to provide a collaborative, team-focused working environment at the service desk and in the library commons

### **Leadership and Teamwork**

- Contribute to the goals and strategic initiatives of the libraries through active participation in the annual strategic planning cycle, revision of existing policies, appropriate ULS groups and meetings
- Display positive drive and purpose in interactions with colleagues; collaboratively contribute to carry out the mission of the ULS to support teaching, learning, and research at the University
- Maintain current awareness of trends and developments in knowledge commons; seek continuous improvements in professional skills and competencies
- Value diversity and difference; strive to be open-minded and adaptable in thought and actions