LTC15D056

Title:	**ISD/Library: Update on online reading lists project: Reading Online**
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Issue:

Reading Online is an ISD Library project which aims to provide online access to more core and recommended reading. This paper highlights progress to date including benefits to the academic community. Priorities for the next year are also discussed. Advice would be appreciated on how to further increase academic use of the service and how to grow the number of online lists.

Recommendations:

To maximise the institutional benefit from the Reading Online reading list initiative, we ask LTC to consider, and ideally endorse, the following:

1) **The provision of all reading lists to the Library should be mandatory to help ensure provision of core texts and a consistent student experience across schools and disciplines.**

2) **The use of the Talis reading online software should be the 'tool of choice' for schools to provide reading lists through Blackboard, when it is pedagogically appropriate to do so, especially for core modules with large cohorts.**

Equality and Diversity

Equality and diversity issues are considered for all aspects of Library services. An Equality Impact Assessment is currently being drafted.

1) **Background & Rationale**

Reading Online, UEA's online reading list service, is based around the Talis Aspire Reading List and Digital Content software tools used in over 70 UK academic institutions. The project has made strong progress in assembling a critical mass of both reading lists and scanned chapters. This has led to a confident launch of the service to students in late September 2015.

Since launch, usage has been strong and risen steadily. The majority of users have come directly from Blackboard, demonstrating the value of the link between the two systems.

Month	Visits	Unique visitors	Page views	Referrals from Blackboard
Sep-2015	7,989	4,450	57,424	5,151
Oct-2015	14,170	6,777	66,546	10,972

Through the project, ISD is working actively to provide a much higher proportion of core reading material embedded directly into the Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment. We see well-presented online reading materials as a way to populate Blackboard with valuable content and drive up usage amongst both students and academics.

Key drivers for this are improved student experience and engagement (responding directly to requests in the ISD 2013 and 2014 surveys), better likelihood of students finding the resources we have purchased for them, the potential for a higher proportion of embedded digital content in the VLE and, by implication, greater use of Blackboard sites in teaching and learning.

2) Benefits and value

The following benefits are emphasised to counter concerns around possible 'spoon-feeding':

- There are benefits for the less able student by making it easier to find and access evaluated, recommended resources, avoiding the increasingly pervasive practice of 'just Googling it'

- There are benefits for the more able student by making it possible to direct them to databases and train them to use other search strategies to extend their research.

- There are benefits for all students because the software allows academics to add clear annotations for suggested use of sources and further reading.

3) Summary of progress against original project objectives and benefits delivered to academic community

The project has made strong progress against its original objectives. As such, the Library is confident in having launched a live service for student use.

1. **Technical integration.** The system is now fully live and operational. Academic staff signing into the system will automatically gain list editor / creator rights. It is also fully integrated with Blackboard enabling lists to be directly embedded into Blackboard sites.

2. **Digitisation service migration.** In September 2015 the library digitisation service moved to Talis Aspire. Over 800 scans are now being managed and distributed with the new software. From 2016/17 *the service will become the only means to request chapter scans from the library*. Anyone with an online reading list can use that to make their own requests and should benefit from a much quicker turnaround in delivering copyright compliant scanned content.

3. **Workflow for Reading List processing.** The Library has developed a workflow and used it to make significant in-roads into entering lists on the system, aiming to prioritise Semester 1 and first year modules. Mechanisms are also in place to track progress by school and faculty and we have also collaborated with Waterstones in sharing information on lists and core reading.

4. **Creation of Exemplar Backboard sites.** Several such sites were created early in the project by library staff for the purposes of demonstrations to academic colleagues. They have been used to successfully demonstrate capabilities of the software to a wide audience. The service is also being used by high profile distance learning focused projects such as Health Online and the MA in Crime Fiction.

5. **Sizeable proportion of content in system.** The Library now has had sight of over 800 reading lists. 300 of these are new lists gained via active promotion of the service. This represents a valuable mass of information but is still an estimated 51% of taught modules for undergraduates and 32% of taught postgraduate modules. These lists have been obtained on a promotional / goodwill model. Other approaches may have to be considered if LTC wishes this percentage is to greatly increase. Funds are only available for temporary staff to enter lists for 2015/16 Semester 2. After then, the project will have to move to an academic-led mode of list entry and maintenance, with library efforts focusing on training academic colleagues and on ensuring core modules affecting large numbers of undergraduates are covered.

4) Go live of service in September 2015

Over 2015, the service has been demonstrated and discussed in all schools at UEA. The service has been live and accessible to academic staff since June, and discoverable via the library website. It launched to students in September 2015 with a publicity video and promotional store in the library. Future communications targeting students and academics are planned through the remainder of the academic year. All communications acknowledge the fact that the library does not yet have a 100% coverage of Reading Lists. This is being handled in a positive way asking students to provide contact details of academics so that the library can follow up on their behalf.

5) Structure of project for 2015/16

The project will run for a second year. It will follow a similar format as before with separate strands for internal workflows and academic engagement. 2015/16 will focus on encouraging academic take-up of the service and ensuring high coverage of core undergraduate modules.

Project objectives are currently under review by the project board, but will aim to tackle the following key issues:

i.   **Increasing the number of academic users editing and creating the lists**. The project will review best practice at other sites and consider how to encourage and support UEA academic users in editing and creating lists. This will lead to a revised communications plan, training workshops and more online training and support material.

ii. **Growing the number of lists in the system.** The project board recommends that submission of reading lists to the Library is mandatory. The project will continue to encourage submission via the Talis system, and support academics or their administrators entering and editing lists on the system. Whilst the implementation of Talis Reading Online is still in a project phase, some limited funds have been identified for Library temporary staff to enter 2015/16 Semester 2 lists (until end of March 2016).

iii. **Increasing the volume of scanned chapters available to students.** In a similar fashion, efforts to provide more scans will focus on core and recommended reading for core undergraduate modules, and on requests made by academics using the 'request a scan' functionality in the Talis software.

iv. **Publicising the service to students –** The project will use formal and informal means to promote the service, include use of UEA web presence, Blackboard, face-to-face stands and seeking feedback and input from students via SSLCs.