Library course reserves in MEDICOL

This document is intended to provide some background on UBC Library's new course reserves system, as well as tips on how it can best be leveraged as new readings are designated in the course of curriculum renewal.

Introduction

During the spring of 2014, UBC Library launched its custom-built course reserves application, known as LOCR (Library Online Course Reserves). LOCR allows instructors and their designates to easily add articles, books, web links, and media resources to an online list associated with a course. Requests are automatically triaged to the right department: library course reserves staff for print materials, copyright staff for digitization requests and acquisitions staff for new book requests. Benefits include:

- Easily reuse reading lists from previous years
- Manage course readings in a copyright-compliant environment
- Create groups of readings by assigning tags
- Assign special release dates to readings
- Make e-journal articles or e-book chapters available to students almost instantaneously if desired. (For web links and physical items, there may be a small delay.)
- Monitor student use of readings (note that this feature only measures 'clicks' in LOCR, and some students may be obtaining a given reading via Google or the Library's website)
- Easily create links to Library-licensed materials such as e-journal articles: LOCR automatically adds the EZproxy prefix when needed, allowing access for off-campus users.

Elsewhere at UBC, instructors (or a designate such as a TA) are using LOCR to manage course readings themselves. However, some special procedures are required to meet the needs of the distributed medical program, such as communication of print book requirements to UNBC, University of Victoria and UBC Okanagan libraries, as well as addition of direct links to the print books located at the distributed sites, so students can find them locally. Unlike a history or economics course that would typically have only one instructor, the medical program is a highly collaborative venture, with many faculty (some of whom are clinical faculty or based at a distributed site) having responsibility for different portions of each course (weeks, modules, blocks). LOCR consumes data from UBC's Student Information System (SIS); this is how it knows about courses, sections, instructors and registered students. The SIS does not contain the names of all the individuals who might be associated with an MD program course as instructors. For these and other reasons, we have developed a model where program staff are able to designate readings for MD program courses on behalf of faculty and instructors. Should a faculty member wish to manage reading lists in LOCR directly, please contact the Library as indicated below – it's no problem to add them to LOCR. Requests for readings need only be made once in LOCR; we have developed a behind-the-scenes process for communicating requirements to the distributed site libraries.

Process

As your team identifies readings for use in the coming academic year, they can be designated in LOCR and assigned appropriate tags (such as weeks, modules) or special release dates, which will help students to easily access them at the right time. If you would like to reuse any readings that were designated for a previous course, please contact the Library – we can copy past readings into a new course shell if needed. It's very straightforward to search for and

designate readings in LOCR. LOCR searches relevant UBC collections; results can then be associated with a course – very little typing is required. In the event that a reading not owned by the Library is required, the Library will do its best to obtain it, online if at all possible. *Please note that all online UBC Library materials may be accessed by UBC students, staff and faculty with a valid CWL or library barcode/PIN from any location, included distributed medical program sites.*

Best practices

LOCR was used for the first time in the medical program during the 2014/15 academic year. As noted above, we are able to track the number of times students click on readings in LOCR. While this isn't necessarily an entirely accurate measure of the usage of a particular reading, we have noticed some patterns within the medical program as well as at UBC more generally. To encourage greater student usage of designated readings, you may wish to consider the following:

- **Limit number of readings**: Some courses choose to designate 2 or 3 carefully-chosen online readings for each week, which seems to contribute to stronger usage.
- **Designate readings as 'required' when appropriate**: LOCR provides the option to check a 'required reading' box when inputting readings. This helps students to know which readings are really key and also helps us to keep track of essential readings for curriculum management purposes.
- **Consider other media**: Links to videos, animation, images and other media can be included in LOCR.
- **Use LOCR to recommend background readings**, and designate them as such: Textbooks can be a great source for background readings. The libraries purchase all books required for student purchase (and any others you designate in LOCR). If your course uses one or more key books, please include them. The Library will do its best to obtain an online copy, and print will also be available for students to borrow at the university libraries.
- **Use tags to organize readings**: Readings in LOCR can be tagged with the name of a week or module, or any special designations (e.g. "mid-term review", "student project"). Notes to students can also be added to individual readings, if you wish to highlight an important aspect or use for a reading.
- **Use release dates:** Special release dates can be added to readings, in case they need to be kept hidden during the first part of a case.
- **Refer to readings in class**: This is the most important of all! Many more students seek out readings if they are mentioned in class.

Support

Through our 2014-15 pilot, VFMP program assistants and managers are able to designate readings for all medical program courses. We plan to offer training at distributed sites during the fall of 2015, in preparation for the Winter 2016 term. If a staff member at a distributed site urgently needs access to LOCR, please contact the Library. Please do not hesitate to contact the Library with any other questions you might have about LOCR, course readings, availability of online library resources, etc.

Kristina McDavid
MD Undergraduate Librarian
Woodward Library, UBC
604-822-3393 / kristina.mcdavid@ubc.ca