Chapter 13
It's Not All Fun and Games:
A Games–Based Learning Project with Interdisciplinary Teams

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This chapter explores the design and development process for the iLOOK game, a grant-funded educational game about information literacy at a large public university. This case is presented through the eyes of Leslie Anderson, a young librarian who is passionate about the subject matter but lacks the technical skills and managerial experience to implement her vision. It describes the challenges and successes of coordinating the project across departments with varying cultures. The key players include: a library content team, a computer science programming lab group, a humanities undergraduate research group, and an expert on educational games. Enthusiastic about the potential of games to enhance undergraduate students' ability to access, evaluate, and use information, the partners began working on the grant with campus-wide support. However, they quickly ran into issues.

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

Morrill University is a large land grant institution created to serve the public with an emphasis on engineering and agriculture. The university is home to five libraries charged with meeting the academic needs of the students and faculty while promoting information literacy. The libraries are spread throughout the campus; among them the Peterson Library serves the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS), which is integral to supporting general education across all disciplines at Morrill. In this capacity, the library provides meeting spaces, reference services, classes, computer access, remote services and a wide variety of databases, books, journals, and other media. The Peterson Library enjoys a great deal of traffic, both on campus and online, as it serves a large proportion of students coming from the undergraduates and graduates in liberal arts and sciences and general undergraduate studies. The space is modern and welcoming with study areas, computer workstations, and meeting rooms that are in high demand. The library is well regarded as an important asset by the Morrill community and beyond the university.

   The faculty and staff of the Peterson Library are comprised of a diverse body of subject specialist librarians, managing administrators, database administrators, web administrators, and other library services personnel. Within the library system, there is a University Librarian that serves as the director of the entire system of libraries. The next tier of administrators includes the Academic Services Director who leads the Peterson Library and works in a fashion similar to an associate dean or department chair for the subject specialist librarians. See Figure 1 for an organizational chart.

   Regular meetings are generally between working groups and there are few opportunities for the entire faculty and staff of the library to meet. This leads to some disconnection outside of one's area of expertise. In the past there have been attempts

Figure 1. Morrill library system organizational chart
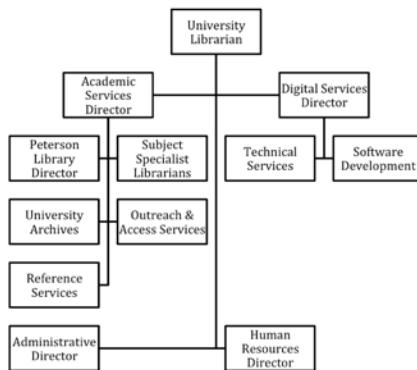
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