

Chapter 10

California State University, East Bay

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At California State University, East Bay, reference is one component of a comprehensive instructional program in information literacy. Based on this approach, the focus of reference is on teachable moments on a just-in-time basis rather than a means by which users, primarily students, are simply provided with answers to their questions. This chapter provides a description of the role of reference within that context and describes the various services offered.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CHAPTER

The reader will view reference as one component in an overall instructional program in information literacy, a program that includes credit courses, one- or two-time instructional sessions, reference, individual consultations, and other teaching opportunities.

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

In the State of California, there are three systems of higher education which are regulated by various state laws and managed through Boards of Trustees and their respective Chancellors. The University of California System (UC) has ten

(10) campuses, the California State University System (CSU) has twenty-three (23), and the California Community Colleges System (CCC) has one hundred and twelve (112). While the UC system is known for research and the CCC focuses on the first two years and the Associate degree, the CSU is considered the system that prepares the workforce of California, providing four-year undergraduate and masters' level degrees. It is currently beginning to offer practical doctorate degrees, such as the Ed. D. and DPN (Nursing). According to CSU's home page, "The CSU is a leader in high-quality, accessible, student-focused higher education. With 23 campuses, almost 433,000 students, and 44,000 faculty and staff, we are the largest, the most diverse, and one of the most affordable university systems in the country" (California State University, 2010).

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While California State University, East Bay (CSUEB) is part of a large system, part of the larger state, and periodically chafes at the rules, regulations, mandates, and various strictures placed upon it, each campus enjoys some autonomy and behaves, on occasion, more like a member of a “federation” than a “system.” The effect on reference from day to day appears to be minimal, but, in fact, the thrust of its overall instructional program is affected by system mandates which will be discussed throughout the chapter.

Each CSU is charged with serving the citizens of its local counties, which, for CSUEB, means Alameda and Contra Costa Counties in the Eastern portion of the San Francisco Bay Area. The university accepts students from other regions of the state and nation, as well as international students. The CSUEB student body, according to the latest available fall head count (2012), consists of residents of the regions shown in Table 1.

Other details about the breakdown of the CSUEB student body (ethnicity, gender, etc.) can be found in the *Overall Headcount Enrollment Profile*.

To serve the university community, the University Libraries offer two physical library locations, one in Hayward (Alameda County), where the main campus of the university is located, and a small branch in Concord (Contra Costa County) at CSUEB’s satellite campus. While the university also offers an Oakland Center in the City of Oakland and teaches in various smaller locations around the Bay Area, those students’ library needs

are served through the library’s Web site or by contacting the library through other means. Of greater significance is the Online Campus, which the university considers another “campus” of equal value. As the greatest growth is occurring in the Online Campus, it is possible that this campus will become more important in time than the physical campus at Concord.

Librarians in the CSU system are faculty with all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of faculty. They are also part of the California Faculty Association, the faculty union for the CSU. There are currently twelve tenured or tenure-track librarians. Until 2012, there were only nine; however, the library was authorized to hire three additional librarians who joined CSUEB in summer 2012. In 2013, another position was approved. Librarians participate in basic duties: reference, teaching, collection development, and liaison with assigned departments, as well as being responsible for the usual research and publication requirements of faculty and service on campus-wide committees and in the wider community. In addition, some librarians are assigned to special duties, such as systems, archives, or one-time projects.

At this time, the library is also in a position to hire lecturers (fully-qualified librarians hired on a part-time contractual basis) to assist with the reference and teaching responsibilities of the information literacy program. This varies from quarter to quarter (the university is currently on the quarter system, although expected to convert to semesters in the near future), but generally ranges between three to five individuals representing two to three FTE. Summer is usually slower, but with vacations and some librarians on ten month contracts, the need for lecturers does not necessarily diminish at that time.

Staffing is equally tight. Thirteen staff members are assigned to access services, technical services, and media resources and reserves, one to administration, one part-time to archives, and one to Concord. In addition, the library includes a Learning Commons, staffed by three persons

Table 1. Where CSUEB students come from

Region	Population
Alameda County	5,952
Contra Costa County	2,263
Other California Counties	4,388
Other States	165
Other countries	1,083
Total	13,851

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