Collaboration amongst (L)IS Schools in South Africa

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Overview

- Introduction
- RETIG of LIASA
- SAQA
- LIS programmes in SA
  - Model
  - Typical content
    - Undergraduate
    - Extensions
- Teaching collaboration
- Masters initiative
- Research collaboration
- Conclusion
Introduction

- 12 (L)IS schools
- New names and realignment
- Articulation of LIS schools and academic programmes
- Limited training in Library Science
- Expansion of broader Information Science and other topics
- Information literacy
RETIG

- Opportunity for educators to meet on a regular basis
  - At LIASA conference
  - At host universities

- Issues
  - Teaching model
  - Typical content and focus
  - Funding
  - Challenges and opportunities
  - General networking

- Niche areas
SAQA

- South African Qualifications Authority
- Unit standards
  - Compiled by mostly LIS faculty
  - Standardisation of course content
  - Minimum standards
  - Very slow process
- Checks and balances
  - SGB vs ETQA
- NQF levels
  - Currently standards only for some paraprofessionals
Teaching model

- Two models:
  - Undergraduate 3 or 4 year degree in LIS
  - General first degree followed by postgraduate diploma
- Followed by
  - Honours
  - Masters (coursework or research)
  - DPhil / PhD
Typical content

- Information and knowledge management
- Information seeking, searching and retrieval
- Knowledge organization and representation
- Management
- User studies
- Information literacy
- ICTs
- Ethical, legal and economic aspects of information
- The information / knowledge society and globalisation
- Besides other academic courses
Extensions

- Within (L)IS programmes
  - Focus on (Information and) Knowledge Management
  - Computer trouble shooting skills
  - Multimedia and web development
  - Media and Publishing Studies
  - ICTs
  - Records management
  - Archival studies

- As new programmes
  - Multimedia
  - Publishing studies
  - Archival studies
Challenges

- Student numbers
- Career opportunities
- Status and salaries of LIS professionals
- Funding of LIS schools
- Technology infrastructures at LIS schools
- Lack of funding for public libraries
Opportunities

- Perceived needs of the country / the developing world
- Industry requirements
- Indigenous knowledge
- Opportunities for (relevant) research
- Continuing education for LIS workers / professionals
- Continuing education for faculty members
- Information & development (society/poverty)
Collaboration

- Very little at the formal teaching level
  - Guest lecturers on *ad hoc* basis
  - Module presentation
- Slightly more at post-graduate level
- External examiners / moderation
  - At all exit level modules
    - Final year undergraduate
    - Post graduate
- External evaluation / peer review
Reasons for lack of collaboration

- Staff have their own teaching programmes
- Different programmes
- Different content / focus within programmes
- Development of niche areas / local expertise
- Logistical problems
- IT support
- Funding
- Competitive edge
- General lack of inter-university cooperation
Possible solutions

- Guest lectures through IT support
  - Video-conferencing
  - WebCT, listservers, etc.
  - Requires more bandwidth and working infrastructures
- Co-presented modules
  - Full or partial module
  - Technology support
  - Student interaction
  - Requires champion AND efficient IT support
Masters initiative

- International collaboration between
  - UWM and UP
  - Various other USA (L)IS schools
- Coursework Masters aimed at library managers in Africa
- Lectures in SA and USA
- Fully funded programme
- Grant-writing stage
Content

- Management concepts and techniques for library leaders
- Leadership in libraries and information organisations
- E-trends in the library and information business
- Global perspectives on the information and knowledge society
- Knowledge management
- Mini-dissertation
Research collaboration

- Individual researchers on an *ad hoc* basis
  - Co-authored papers
  - Statistics in Prof Ocholla's presentation
  - Staff at Masters / doctoral level
- Very few large inter-university projects in (L)IS
  - Nature of the research?
  - Funding?
Conclusion

- Limited collaboration at teaching level
  - No single curriculum
  - Individuals on an *ad hoc* basis
- Limited collaboration at research level
  - Individual researchers
- Much room for improvement!
Thank you!

Questions?
Comments?