

**Resource Sharing Code Task Force
Report to the CARLI Board of Directors
March 14, 2008**

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Task Force Charge Background

The Resource Sharing Task Force has been charged to, "...consider the benefits, issues and options in creating a common set of policies pertaining to the loan periods, and potentially other policies, that apply to resource sharing transactions initiated in I-Share (Voyager) between the I-Share participant institutions."

The timeline set for this task force in its charge states, "An overview of the Task Forces recommendations will be provided to the CARLI Board of Directors for their March 2008 meeting. A complete report, including any changes to the I-Share Resource Sharing Code, will be provided to the CARLI Board in time for it to be an action item at their May 2008 meeting. Any policy changes should go into effect in mid- to late summer 2008, on a date to be determined. It is expected that the Task Force's work would be completed in late summer 2008, unless the Board recommends a change to its timeline."

This document constitutes the March 2008 overview report and is submitted to the Board for their action. Subject to Board approval of this report, the Task Force will continue its work and will propose recommended changes to the I-Share Resource Sharing Code to the Board for action at the May 2008 meeting.

Summary of the Issue

I-Share libraries have always been allowed to set their own circulation policies that apply not only to loans of their materials to their own patrons, but also to resource sharing transactions ("Universal Borrowing" or "UB") where an I-Share library's materials are lent to a borrower that is affiliated with another I-Share library. Voyager's Universal Borrowing component randomly selects an owning library that will be targeted as the lender. There is currently no option in Universal Borrowing (UB) to change the randomization process, and randomization does have several positive aspects in terms of lender load leveling. However, the combination of a diverse array of UB policies across I-Share, and Voyager's randomly selected lending libraries, presents I-Share users with a diverse and seemingly random set of circulation policies for materials that they have requested by one process.

Maximum Access/Minimum Barriers

At its first meeting, the RSTF adopted a vision/value statement intended to summarize the fundamental goals of our project. The group unanimously and enthusiastically endorsed, "Maximum Access/Minimum Barriers" as that statement. This concise phrase has informed our decisions and helped us build consensus on the policy recommendations we have made up to this

point. In terms of “minimizing barriers” it should be pointed out that the Task Force is not solely focusing on the durations of loan periods and renewal terms, but rather is assigning the highest level of importance to establishing policies that are explainable and more consistent in order to breakdown barriers of confusion and frustration with the UB service.

Local Circulation and Universal Borrowing

It is possible to configure Voyager so that libraries can share a set of UB policies while still retaining autonomy over their local circulation policies (i.e., I-Share libraries’ loans of their own materials to patrons affiliated with their institution.) The recommendations of the RSTF focus on Universal Borrowing. Whether an I-Share library chooses to adopt similar or different policies for their local circulation will remain the prerogative of each I-Share library and is outside the scope of this report.

Recommendations

So far, the RSTF has reviewed and agreed on UB policy recommendations in several areas including loan periods, the number of renewals allowed, and some points at which a patron’s UB privileges would become blocked due to having reached a threshold value in a problem condition (such as the number of UB items they have overdue.) There are more potential options for common policies such as UB overdue notice schedules, thresholds for “claimed returns”, etc, but we have started our work by tackling the values that are most familiar and commonly encountered. We intend to move on to a review of the remaining policies, based on the Board’s response to our work so far.

The policies for which we have made I-Share UB recommendations are summarized in the grid on the next page. As you review the recommendations grid, please keep these important points in mind:

1. These values apply to UB activity **ONLY**. They do not apply to or count local circulation activity that the patron has with the library of the institution they are affiliated with.
2. Threshold counters tally current activity only. Historical activity that has been cleared (overdues, lost items, etc.) by returning, paying fees, etc., do NOT factor in the count.
3. UB threshold counters tally activity in aggregate from all I-Share libraries, excluding the patron’s “home” library. A threshold will be reached when a borrower reaches that total in any combination of I-Share libraries. For example, a UB overdue threshold of 25 could be reached by a patron having 5 items overdue from each of 5 I-Share libraries, or any other combination that would total 25, but any items overdue from their “home” library would not factor into this UB threshold count.
4. I-Share libraries have, and will retain, autonomy over which items in their collections are and are not UB eligible, just as they determine which items circulate or do not.
5. Most I-Share libraries have categories of patrons that are not afforded UB privileges. These may be people with temporary or tenuous affiliations with the institution. These recommendations do not change those patrons’ UB privileges.
6. The Task Force strongly recommends that any policies adopted under this effort, be re-evaluated in a year or so to assess how well they are working.

Resource Sharing Task Force UB Policy Recommendations

In accord with our vision statement, “Maximum Access/Minimum Barriers” the RSTF is recommending the policies shown in the grid below. In most cases, we favor a common set of UB policies for all borrowers. We have however, recommended a more generous renewal policy for patrons other than undergraduates who are more likely to be doing research that requires or benefits from longer access to library materials.

POLICY	Undergrads	All Other UB Eligible Patrons	Notes
Initial UB loan period	4 weeks	4 weeks	
Number of times a UB item may be renewed	2	4	
Maximum number of UB requests at one time (assuming no other block conditions)	no limit	no limit	
Maximum number of UB charges at one time (assuming no other block conditions)	no limit	no limit	
Email courtesy notice (warning of impending due date) is sent	7 days before due date	7 days before due date	
Renewals extend the loan time from (renewal date or due date)	due date	due date	
Maximum UB items overdue before the patron is blocked in UB	25	25	
Maximum UB items overdue AND RECALLED before the patron is blocked in UB	1	1	
Number of days overdue at which a UB item is declared lost by Voyager	30	30	
Maximum UB items lost before the patron is blocked in UB	3	3	Hope to reduce to 1 in the future*

Next Steps

If the CARLI Board endorses the work done so far by the RSTF, the Task Force will continue to work through the potential areas for consolidating UB policies and present those recommendations along with a revised draft of the I-Share Resource Sharing Code to the Board at its May 2008 meeting.

CARLI is also working with ExLibris to get a quote for programming services to have the relevant values reset across I-Share to assure a consistent and timely implementation across the consortium.