Research Guides Advisory Group

**Sponsors:**
Jill Parchuck
Allen Townsend

**Reports to:**
Council for Research Services and Collections (CRSC)

**Charge:**

The Research Guides Advisory Group develops and maintains user-centered and sustainable strategies and policies for Yale University Library's research guides. This includes but is not limited to: design and layout, content strategy, and discovery. The Advisory Group also plans and hosts instructional forums and workshops for research guide content creators. The Advisory Group reviews general research guide content and layout for alignment with the Library's branding and vision. Additionally, the Advisory Group also ensuring that general research guide content supports the research and operational goals of the Library and its staff. Finally, the Advisory Group assesses the configuration of the research guide content management system (CMS), recommends and implements policies to ensure the sustainability of managing and upgrading that system, and evaluates next generation research guide platforms and tools as necessary.

**Membership:**

The Research Guides Advisory Group will consist of no more than 6 members and include representatives from Arts, CSSSI, DASHRS, the Medical Library, and Special Collections. At least one representative should also be a member of the Reference, Instruction, and Outreach Committee. The staff person in Library IT responsible for the technical support of research guides will also belong to this group.

Responsibilities of members include:

- Communication and advocacy of the Advisory Group’s recommendations and projects
- Generation of meeting minutes summaries (rotating among the members monthly)

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1 “General guide content” refers to research guide organization, not specific text.
2 Currently Springshare's LibGuides
Research Guides Advisory Group

- Assist in the coordination of semi-annual updates and training sessions for research guide content creators
- Coordination and participation in upgrade and configuration testing of the research guides platform
- Monitoring the current research guide platform’s development roadmap with the vendor
- Serve as administrators in the research guides platform

Responsibilities of co-chairs include:

- Consultation on technical capabilities of the research guides service (Library IT)
- Contact and coordination with the research guides service vendor(s) (Library IT)
- Monitoring the current research guide platform’s development roadmap with the vendor
- Management of research guide content creator accounts and access
- Leadership of Advisory Group members in support of the research guides service
- Planning and dissemination of meeting agendas and minutes summaries
- Coordination of semi-annual updates and training sessions to research guide content creators
- Identifying and coordinating resources required for specific project work related to research guides

The co-chairs, with the approval of the Advisory Group sponsors, may also invite additional Library staff to attend Advisory Group meetings as members of a subcommittee or task force charged with a specific goal and deadline.

Members serve a 2-year appointment, which ends June 30th of the second fiscal year served.

Meetings:

The Advisory Group will meet monthly, unless major projects require more frequent meetings. Meeting minutes will be summarized and made available to the Library community.

Contact:

libraryresearchguides@yale.edu
Vision:
The Research Guides Advisory Group seeks to provide guidance and support for the research guides service within the larger set of services and programs offered by Yale University Library. In the next 2 to 3 years, the Advisory Group will define, assess and optimize the research guides service to achieve seamless integration with both the Library’s web space and its instruction and outreach programs.

As the Advisory Group attends to the public-facing aspects of the research guides service, it will also define, assess, and optimize policies, procedures, and system-side workflows to achieve sustainable operational support and content maintenance.

This vision statement takes inspiration and direction from the following vision statements and guiding principles for the Yale University Library system (emphasis added):

Vision:

• The library is a gateway to exceptional collections and continuously strives to enhance discovery, access, and use of the collections.

• Library services are intuitive, seamless, and driven by an evidence-based understanding of the disparate needs and research practices of our users.

Guiding Principles:

• We are one unified library system.

• We leverage technologies to provide the best services in the most effective and efficient manner.

• We assess what we do and how we do it to ensure operational effectiveness and quality service delivery.

• We are committed to creating an inviting and inclusive environment that enhances teaching, learning, research, innovation, and collaboration.

• We expect every staff member to be an ambassador for the library and for Yale.

Goals FY19:

• Establish a single point of contact for the Advisory Group to field questions and disseminate information regarding the research guides service

• Establish and publicize a review/update calendar and policy for research guide content
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- Hold library-wide update/training workshops semi-annually (per fiscal year)
- Continue to review and remediate deprecated or out of scope content in the LibGuides CMS (clean-up projects)
- Define and document the purpose of the research guides service
- Document and recommend a standard layout for all research guide types
- Define and document content scope for subject and how-to guides
- Review and document scope of course guides
- Develop best practices for creating WCAG 2.1-compliant content
- Review research guide landing page taxonomy and IA and recommend changes for user-centered redesign
- Investigate applications of unimplemented or only partially leveraged LibGuides features (ex. groups, LibCal integrations)
- Review and revise FY20 goals as needed

Goals FY20:
- Continue review of research guide landing page taxonomy and IA and recommend changes for user-centered redesign
- Identify, describe, and assess user paths for research guides discovery
- Identify, describe, and assess strategies for optimization of research guides discovery
- Recommend, document, and implement a content strategy for the research guides service
- Recommend, document, and implement policies, training, and workflows to support sustainable system and content maintenance
- Evaluate the research guides service look and feel for compliance with Yale University and Yale University Library brand identities
- Identify the Advisory Group’s goals for the next two fiscal years in consultation with the incoming co-chair