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AUTHOR Pearson, Debra; Zillig, Brian; Lewandowski, Sharon

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ABSTRACT

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Libraries designed and implemented a fast and efficient method of transferring materials between and among the UNL campuses for users of the UNL Libraries. The prior array of services were difficult to use and did not serve all patron types. That system relied upon student workers to retrieve and deliver materials. The new system was intended to include delivery service to the new Beadle Center for Genetics and Bio-Materials Research facility as well as to all the branch libraries. A survey was conducted of features found in existing services. The new service was designed to offer delivery to all user types, and to provide two deliveries per day, instead of one, to several branch libraries. A new electronic patron request form was created. Implementation of the new service appears successful, with desired improvements for both library staff and patrons. InfoQuest request forms and user policy statements are appended. (Author/SWC)

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INFOQUEST: INFORMATION DELIVERY AT UNL

Debra Pearson

Brian Zillig

Sharon Lewandowski

UNL Libraries

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Lincoln, Nebraska

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ABSTRACT

University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Libraries designed and implemented a fast and efficient method of transferring materials between and among the UNL campuses for users of the UNL Libraries. The prior array of services was difficult to use and did not serve all patron types. That system relied upon student workers to retrieve and deliver materials. new system was intended to include delivery service to the new Beadle Center for Genetics and Bio-Materials Research facility. A survey was conducted of features found in existing services. The new service was designed to offer delivery to all user types, and to provide two deliveries per day, instead of one, to several branch libraries. A new electronic patron request form was created. Implementation of the new service appears successful, with desired improvements for both library staff and patrons.



INFOQUEST: INFORMATION DELIVERY AT UNL

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Libraries have always been interested in providing a quick, efficient method of transferring materials between and among the UNL campuses for faculty, graduate undergraduate students, staff and the occasional community user. While we have been interested in that, in reality, our system had been less than quick (sometimes taking up to 5 days to get things back and forth between Love and C.Y. Thompson, our East Campus branch) and not particularly efficient. Over the years, the UNL Libraries had joined together several. different systems and had managed to make it almost impossible for library staff or student workers to figure out which type of request went on what form. There were also gaps in service. For example, library staff could request materials for work-related projects, but not for personal or class needs, so occasionally we were called upon to make value judgments. We were also at the mercy of student workers, since the system used student runners to retrieve and deliver materials.



Towards the end of 1995, Access Program Group (APG), a standing committee in the libraries, was charged with the task of reviewing the various delivery services in place and identifying ways to meet several goals: 1) to decrease the amount of time in which certain requests were filled, 2) to determine processes used to fill requests could be combined so the procedure could become more invisible/seamless, and 3) to investigate the possibility of adding to, or expanding, existing services. We also wished consider devising some method of material delivery to the new Beadle Center for Genetics and Bio-Materials Research facility in our discussions. Delivery to the Beadle facility would prove logistically problematic since the Center is located on the edge of city campus and was not on an established library delivery route.

The committee decided to conduct surveys to ascertain what the feeling was among branches and units about the current parallel delivery systems. We included ILL branch material retrieval in the surveys, though that was not officially part of our charge.

As mentioned, the surveys were meant to gather information from the library staff about our services. Surveys were distributed via email and solicited information on the following services:



Library Express--(which was commonly known as Document Delivery), a faculty-only service which supplied photocopies, bound journals and books from any campus library. Turnaround time was usually about 48 hours.

Faculty Fax Express--a faculty-only service which supplied faxes from selected campus libraries in about 24 hours.

Beadle Center Delivery--a hybrid of Library Express and Faculty Fax Express which supplied photocopies and faxes, but not books, to faculty working in the Beadle Center. Turnaround time for Beadle service varied a great deal, depending on the source library and the type of material requested.

InterCampus request (ICR)--a service for all non-faculty patrons which delivered books and circulating bound periodicals between City and East Campus libraries. This service was described in circulation policies as requiring 1-5 days.

Branch delivery--the library's internal delivery system which moved materials to and from all campus library locations. Once-daily deliveries were made to all locations.

Interlibrary Loan lending--requests for materials from the UNL collection, including Love and all



branches. These requests were handled by either Library Express students or branch staff and were usually filled in less than 48 hours.

Surveys were sent to pertinent staff in Love and all the branch libraries, except Archives and Special Collections which houses a non-circulating collection. Access Program Group wanted to confirm whether staff members had a consistent understanding of what was offered by each delivery service and how each worked. We felt it was possible that, over time, the disparate nature of all the delivery options might have created inconsistencies in understanding and implementation.

The surveys also gathered information on numbers of requests filled, how requests were received, the mechanics of each service, turnaround times, staffing (including back-up), and how statistics were kept. Comments were solicited about quality of service.

When the responses came in, it was to the credit of the staff that overall understanding of services was remarkably consistent. Procedurally, however, it was apparent that there was redundancy in the services offered.

That confirmed, Access Program Group felt it had some leeway to scrutinize all patron delivery options, and make them more efficient and streamlined.



The first thing we did was to compile all the survey responses and create charts that described each service in a consistent way. The charts included a description, the population served, how requests were generated, the mechanics of each service, average turnaround, cost to patron, and staffing required. From the comments section of the surveys we were also able to glean the most useful features of each service as well as the limitations. The surveys had included a section on how services might be improved, and our comparison of delivery options made the improvements seem fairly obvious.

We discovered that we offered the greatest range of services to faculty and were offering much less to UNL staff, graduate students, and undergrads--perhaps we needed to increase our patron range. We found some turnaround times slower than we would have liked-perhaps we needed to find a way to move materials more and to "level the playing field" standardizing the turnaround time for all services. Beadle Center service was limited to faculty orders for photocopies and faxes, with no provision made for other patrons nor for requests for books--perhaps we needed to offer more complete service to this non-library We also wondered if we had too many forms to site.



keep track of--each service had its own request form and its own procedures. Connected to all of the above, we could see that library staffing was inconsistent--some services were organized in a centralized way through Interlibrary Loan and others handled individually in each branch.

Though improvements were needed, we also discovered features we did not want to change. All of our services were, and are, free of charge to all patrons; we already had equipment like photocopiers and fax machines in place in our busiest branches; and we offered a good range of services including lending, photocopying, faxing.

Next, we needed to identify some short term goals that would address these issues. The goals we identified were these: 1) improve our intercampus system by cutting down the turnaround time and notifying patrons when materials were ready to be picked up, something that was not being done at Love Library; 2) offer similar services and turnaround to time to different populations; 3) design a universal delivery form that was available in paper and electronically; and, 4) provide twice daily delivery service to both campuses and the Beadle Center.



As the committee devised methods to meet each goal, we wanted to make sure that each part worked on its own before we put it all together for the final test. We thought incremental change would be better than dropping a new system into a slot before we knew it would work. We didn't want to follow the Denver Airport Model: opening the service and then discovering some fatal design flaws.

In order to take advantage of as much expertise as possible in our system, we decided that each APG member should chair or co-chair a sub-committee that would work on one or more of the short term goals. The committees involved all levels of staff from branches and from Love. We asked that the committees keep in mind that we were striving to provide valueadded customer service; that decisions regarding delivery options should be made at the lowest possible level; that our solutions be proactive rather than reactive; creative rather than proscribed.

We had updates from the APG members/committee chairs at our meetings. We re-negotiated deadlines and found that we all couldn't work on our charges at the same time. For example, until we decided what services to offer which populations, we could not do much toward designing the form; until we found out where in the



Beadle Center our delivery person could drop off and pick up materials, we could not design a delivery route. Eventually, though, we were ready to begin. Next, this paper will discuss how successful we were at reaching our goals.

The first change made was to the frequency of our existing delivery runs. It seemed that some of our short term goals might hinge, in part, on the way we handled materials internally. We selected several of the busiest branch locations as a jumping off point to receive two deliveries per day instead of just one. Since these were the branches where most campus-to-campus requests were handled, our first short term goal was met almost immediately by making that single change. The noticeable improvement in turnaround time for ICRs benefited undergraduates and graduate students greatly.

The change to the delivery system also helped us achieve another goal. Once the twice-daily delivery to selected locations was decided upon, we decided to build in a trip to the Beadle Center. We met with Beadle Center office staff to establish how materials would get handled. Those details addressed, a daily trip to the Beadle Center was incorporated into the delivery system and another short term goal was met.



This expanded delivery service stayed in place while we began work on our other goals. We next examined the need to expand service to a greater range of patron populations. We were already aware that many staff people on campus ordered materials under the name of the faculty member for whom they worked. It was very possible we could formalize a service we were inadvertently offering. The decision was made to offer the same services to faculty and staff.

Once that decision was made, it became apparent that we might be able to consolidate all our services into one. In that way we could expand our offerings incrementally to different populations rather than creating a new service with a new name and a new form every time we wanted to make an enhancement.

Here hinged the solution to our last two short term goals: to offer similar services to different populations and to design a universal form that would be available both in paper and on the web. How would we change our old system into a new one? There would need to be a transition from the old infrastructure to the new.

The linch-pin of the old library delivery system at UNL was a small group of student runners managed from the Interlibrary Loan office. This runner system



originated in 1987 and was created as a low-cost solution to a growing need for providing inter-campus delivery of library materials to UNL faculty, from one branch library to another. In 1987 there was one telefax machine in the UNL Libraries, and that unit was located at the main library. E-mail was not yet available. The library considered having students drive a vehicle between East Campus and City Campus, but this was rejected because of insurance and liability costs. Due to these considerations, a decision was made to rely on buses for transportation between UNL's City and East campuses.

During the academic school year, a campus shuttle transported the library runners to and from each campus. In the summers, since there was no shuttle service, the runners had to rely on the Lincoln city bus system.

While the runner system permitted the UNL Libraries to provide this helpful new service, there were a number of problems that were encountered. weight of materials in backpacks purchased to carry library materials was sometimes problematic, especially if the runners had to carry several books and bound periodicals, in addition to photocopied articles. There were occasions when items could not be



transported until the next runner's trip, which resulted in a slowdown of work. During the summer, the bus schedules were not always conducive to efficient travel. For example, if a student missed the bus, as occasionally happened, he/she had to wait an hour or more until the next bus arrived. As a publicly-funded institution, we were uncomfortable about the expense of paying a runner to wait in a bus shelter. Even at rock-bottom work-study rates, that represented a problem.

Another serious limitation of the runner service was the difficulty of hiring a student to work the desired hours which, naturally, needed to correspond to the bus schedule. Finally, the system was vulnerable to runner-absences. If a runner called in sick who was, for example, responsible for the entire east campus afternoon route, that portion of the system halted. We learned to develop backup procedures in order to respond to these problems, and, as more fax machines were added, we relied on faxing to relieve the bottle-necks. When APG decided to examine the runner system, it was apparent that it had serious limitations that needed to be addressed.

As discussion of a new, expanded delivery service progressed, it became clear that there were advantages



to dismantling the old system and replacing it with a decentralized, more responsive and robust arrangement. According to the new plan, the work formerly done by the runners would be transferred to students in the branch libraries involved in processing intra-campus transactions.

At this point, the committee began to discuss how to fund the student workers involved in the new service. Previously, when the system was centralized, all of the funding was centralized as well. With the new system, the available funds would need to be reallocated among the branch libraries. In the end, it was decided that the Branch Services office would receive the funds and distribute them accordingly.

As discussion of the need for a new service, with an expanded clientele, progressed, Access Program Group formed a small sub-committee of branch and other staff to plan a new electronic form. The previous form was a crude paper document which was duplicated on a museum-quality mimeograph machine. One of our first goals was to bring our technology up to date, where possible, and design a new form to be mounted on the World-Wide-Web. The form that was created took advantage of the hypertext ability to point and click and to guide users through a number of options, depending on their status.



The final form, which has a low-tech paper counterpart for those without electronic access, appeared in November of 1996 and has worked well so far. Of particular note is the copyright notice, which we include on all requests for photocopied material. On the web request form, users certify that, by submitting the request, they have "read and understood the copyright statement included." On the paper version of the same form, the copyright notice is photocopied onto the back, along with instructions on how to complete it.

We finally got to the place where all the services were integrated enough that the five old ones no longer existed. Then came the most troublesome task of all-what to name the new entity we had created. After some discussion, and inspired by name of the "RefQuest" service at another library, we called it InfoQuest.

Does InfoQuest work? Yes, if anecdotal evidence is any indication. Requests seem to be increasing on a weekly basis. We are encouraging users to use the electronic form rather than the paper one. Overall, patrons seem to be well pleased with the service. Staff who work with it seem to be pleased as well. We discovered the joys of faxing and can move the paper forms around the system very quickly, which means that



we rarely need the 72-hour turnaround time that we gave ourselves.

There have been a few problems. We still do not have a statistical process firmly in place, but should have by July, 1997. We had a few glitches with the electronic form, but those seem to have been ironed out. We have not created a way that users do not have to re-enter all their patron information each time, but we are working on it. While the form functions well for patrons using Netscape Navigator, or Internet Explorer, they do not work as well on Lynx, a text-only browser. Lynx is considerably clumsier and difficult to use, since point-and-click does not work.

A lower-tech issue is that we have had to remind library staff that our delivery person's primary job is the delivery of library items; not running computers to repair shops or picking up the papers of retired faculty.

APG is currently developing plans to evaluate the InfoQuest program. While these plans are still in the formative stage, we do plan to examine several areas of interest: First, we wish to perform a cost analysis of some type so that we can determine the overall cost of providing the service. Second, we wish to derive a per-unit cost of delivering an average item to a user.



Third, we hope to investigate the cost of the actual time that staff and student-workers spend actually doing InfoQuest. It is our hope to find that the service is a cost-effective way to provide a high-quality delivery service to library users. We have not overlooked the reactions of the users themselves, and plan to develop some form of user-satisfaction survey instrument to help us gauge the impact of the service from the user's perspective.

We have some longer term ideas such as looking at creating a separate administrative unit that provides delivery service exclusive of ILL. If the need for intracampus delivery continues to grow as a result of budget cuts and serial cancellations, we might need to consider staff members who have 100% of their time assigned to delivery services, instead of working these activities into an already full schedule, as is currently the case. Another upcoming development that will impact delivery services is the much anticipated central storage unit that the UNL libraries are in the early stages of planning.

We are also interested in considering expanding delivery to offices and initiating fee based services such as retrieval and copying. An interesting sidedevelopment of the surveys that were done early on



involves ILL. APG and ILL are considering looking into using the InfoQuest model to decentralize our ILL lending processes. We feel this is the next logical step in speeding up our turnaround time in our service to other libraries besides our own. We will, of course, continue to monitor InfoQuest and make adjustments as needed. We all have a real feeling of accomplishment knowing that we were able to pull a number of disparate parts together and create an eminently workable system that was an improvement for both library staff and patrons.



INFOQUEST FACULTY/STAFF REQUEST FORM

Only for items that have a status of "AVAILABLE" in IRIS

OFFICE USE ONLY Date
Time
Initials
No. of pages

To consider your request, we need the following information: Faculty Staff	
By submitting the following request, I certify that I have read and unc	derstood the copyright statement included.
Name Dep	partment
Campus address Car	mpus zip
	nail (optional)
ID #U22 (Located on your	UNL ID card)
□ Book □ A	rticle
Holding location (check only * Please note: Fax services ava	
ARCHitecture* (2-0665) CYThompson* (2-7005)BIOLogical Sciences* (2-0225) ENGineeRing* (2-0663)CHEMistry* (2-0225) GEOLogy	LAW* (2-8260) MUSIC LOVE* (2-5131) PHYSics MATHematics
UNL Call Number	
Book or Journal Title	
Author/Editor	
Article Title	
Vol Number/Month Year Edit #'s	ition Page
It will expedite your request if full bibliographic information is	supplied.
DELIVERY OPTIONS	
Pick book/article up at Library (see Campus mail (article only) Article delivered to this fax number Deliver to the Beadle Center	
Request could not be filled because:	
This form available via the UNL Libraries Home Page (http://www.unl.edu/lo	vers/infoques html) CIRC 4/97



INFOQUEST GRADUATE STUDENT REQUEST FORM

OFFICE USE ONLY
Date
Time
Initials

Only for items that have a status of "AVAILABLE" in IRIS

LOAN ONLY

Name		Department		
Address		•		
Phone				
ID #U 22 (Located on your UNL ID card)				
]	Holding location (che	ck only one)		
ARCHitecture BIOLogical Sciences CHEMistry	CYThompson ENGineeRing GEOLogy	LAW LOVE MATHema	MUSIC PHYSics	
UNL Call Number				
Book or Journal Title				
Author/Editor				
Article Title			10000	
Vol Number/Month			Page	
#'s				
It will expedite your request if full	bibliographic informa	ation is supplied.	•	
DELIVERY OPTIONS				
Pick book up at	Library (see lo	ocation list above)		
Dequest could not be filled because				
Request could not be filled because	·			



CIRC 4/97

This form available via the UNL Libraries Home Page (http://www.unl.edu/lovers/infoques.html)

INFOQUEST UNDERGRAD STUDENT REQUEST FORM

OFFICE USE ONLY Date	
Time	
Initials	
 -	

Only for items that have a status of "AVAILABLE" in IRIS

INTERCAMPUS LOAN ONLY

Name			Major		
AddressPhone			Zip code		
			E-mail (option	E-mail (optional)	
ID #U					
	Holdin	g location (che	eck only one)		
Book or Jo Author/Edi	If you are on east campus, you may order from: ARCHitecture BIOLogical Sciences CHEMistry ENGineeRing GEOLogy LOVE MATHematics MUSIC PHYSics Number Durnal Title		ENG LAW	hompson ineeRing	
	e Number/Month		Edition	Page #'s	
	dite your request if full bibliog	raphic informa	ntion is supplied.		
DELIVERY	<u> </u>				
Pick book ı	up at	_ Library.	·		
Request co	uld not be filled because:				
This form ava	nilable via the UNL Libraries Home l	Page (http://www.i	ınl.edu/lovers/infoques.	.html) CIRC 4/97	



INFOQUEST COMMUNITY USER REQUEST FORM

Only for items that have a status of "AVAILABLE" in IRIS

OFFICE USE ONLY Date
Time
Initials

INTERCAMPUS LOAN ONLY

Name	
Address	Zip code
Phone	E-mail (optional)
ID #U	22 (Located on your IRIS ID card)
Holding	location (check only one)
If you are on east campus, you may order from: ARCHitecture BIOLogical Sciences CHEMistry ENGineeRing GEOLogy LOVE MATHematics MUSIC PHYSics UNL Call Number	If you are on city campus, you may order from: CYThompson ENGineeRing LAW
Book Title	
Author/Editor	
Vol. Year Edition It will expedite your request if full bibliogra	
DELIVERY	
Pick book up at I	Library.
Request could not be filled because:	
This form available via the UNL Libraries Home Pa	age (http://www.unl.edu/lovers/infoques.html) CIRC 4/97



FACULTY/STAFF INFOQUEST POLICY STATEMENT

This service is for the delivery of UNL library materials to UNL faculty and staff for their research. Copies of journal articles are delivered via campus mail or fax. Books will be delivered to the UNL library of your choice.

Requests can be initiated online via the UNL Libraries Home Page (http://www.unl.edu/lovers/infoques.html), by fax, or in person at the circulation desk of any UNL library.

Requests are typically satisfied in 1 to 3 working days. Please assist us in maintaining relatively quick service by observing the following procedural guidelines:

- 1. This service is for items which the UNL Libraries own and are available for checkout. Refer to IRIS, the University Libraries online catalog, to determine if UNL owns the item.
 - a. If "AVAILABLE" displays in the status column, delivery should take 1-3 working days.
 - b. If a due date displays in the status column, you may recall most items via the UNL Libraries Home Page or in person at a library's circulation desk. The recall form is available as an option on the Libraries Home Page (http://www.unl.edu/lovers/home.html) under services.
- 2. Only one request per order form will be accepted.
- 3. Each request must include the requestor's name, department (please do not abbreviate), UNL ID number, and campus address and zip code.
- 4. Incomplete or incorrect citations will slow down your request or may require the request to be returned unfilled.
- 5. Requests are handled as they are received. However, a large number of requests from one person will be interspersed with other requests.
- 6. While our expectation is delivery within 1-3 working days, completion of requests cannot be guaranteed by a set date, nor can progress reports be provided.

WARNING CONCERNING COPYRIGHT

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted materials. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a photocopy order, if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.



CIRC 4/97

GRADUATE-STUDENT INFOQUEST POLICY STATEMENT

This service is for the delivery of circulating UNL library books and bound journals to UNL graduate students for their research. Items will be delivered to the UNL library of your choice.

Requests can be initiated online via the UNL Libraries Home Page (http://www.unl.edu/lovers/infoques.html), by fax, or in person at the circulation desk of any UNL library.

Requests are typically satisfied in 1 to 3 working days. Please assist us in maintaining relatively quick service by observing the following procedural guidelines:

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 - a. If "AVAILABLE" displays in the status column, delivery should take 1-3 working days.
 - b. If a due date displays in the status column, you may recall most items via the UNL Libraries Home Page or in person at a library's circulation desk. The recall form is available as an option on the Libraries Home Page (http://www.unl.edu/lovers/home.html) under services.
- 2. Only one request per order form will be accepted.
- 3. Each request must include the requestor's name, department (please do not abbreviate), UNL ID number, and address.
- 4. Incomplete or incorrect citations will slow down your request or may require the request to be returned unfilled.
- 5. Requests are handled as they are received. However, a large number of requests from one person will be interspersed with other requests.
- 6. While our expectation is delivery within 1-3 working days, completion of requests cannot be guaranteed by a set date, nor can progress reports be provided.



25

UNDERGRADUATE-STUDENT INFOQUEST POLICY STATEMENT

This service is for the delivery of circulating UNL library books and bound journals to UNL undergraduate students for their research. Items can be delivered from CYT, LAW and Engineering to any city campus library. Items from any city campus library can be delivered to CYT, LAW, and Engineering.

Requests can be initiated online via the UNL Libraries Home Page (http://www.unl.edu/lovers/infoques.html), by fax, or in person at the circulation desk of any UNL library.

Requests are typically satisfied in 1 to 3 working days. Please assist us in maintaining relatively quick service by observing the following procedural guidelines:

- 1. This service is for items which the UNL Libraries own and are available for checkout. Refer to IRIS, the University Libraries online catalog, to determine if UNL owns the item.
 - a. If "AVAILABLE" displays in the status column, delivery should take 1-3 working days.
 - b. If a due date displays in the status column, you may recall most items via the UNL Libraries Home Page or in person at a library's circulation desk. The recall form is available as an option on the Libraries Home Page (http://www.unl.edu/lovers/home.html) under services.
- 2. Only one request per order form will be accepted.
- 3. Each request must include the requestor's name, UNL ID number, and address.
- 4. Incomplete or incorrect citations will slow down your request or may require the request to be returned unfilled.
- 5. Requests are handled as they are received. However, a large number of requests from one person will be interspersed with other requests.
- 6. While our expectation is delivery within 1-3 working days, completion of requests cannot be guaranteed by a set date, nor can progress reports be provided.



COMMUNITY-USER INFOQUEST POLICY STATEMENT

This service is for the delivery of circulating UNL library books to users who are NOT UNL students or employees. Items can be delivered from CYT, LAW and Engineering to any city campus library. Items from any city campus library can be delivered to CYT, LAW, and Engineering.

Requests can be initiated online via the UNL Libraries Home Page (http://www.unl.edu/lovers/infoques.html), by fax, or in person at the circulation desk of any UNL library.

Requests are typically satisfied in 1 to 3 working days. Please assist us in maintaining relatively quick service by observing the following procedural guidelines:

- 1. This service is for items which the UNL Libraries own and are available for checkout. Refer to IRIS, the University Libraries online catalog, to determine if UNL owns the item.
 - a. If "AVAILABLE" displays in the status column, delivery should take 1-3 working days.
 - b. If a due date displays in the status column, you may recall most items via the UNL Libraries Home Page or in person at a library's circulation desk. The recall form is available as an option on the Libraries Home Page (http://www.unl.edu/lovers/home.html) under services.
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- 3. Each request must include the requestor's name, IRIS ID number, and address.
- 4. Incomplete or incorrect citations will slow down your request or may require the request to be returned unfilled.
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