“These Are Not Your Students”

How Service Orientation Doomed a Library Instruction Assessment Project and What it Took to Bring it Back to Life

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Overview

- Spring 2014
  - Reference & Instruction @ UNH Library
- Summer 2014
  - FITSI
  - Information Literacy module
- Fall 2014
  - Service orientation and saying no
- 2018
No Judgment – No Blame
I arrived at UNH in March
Instruction Librarian

- Look at library instruction programmatically
- Plan and deliver assessment
- Collect and analyze statistics
- Participate in foundational level instruction
- Work at the Reference Desk
Reference Unit

- 4 generalist librarians + me
  - First new unit member in 20 years
- All faculty w/student assistants
- Reference Desk service
  - 62.5 hrs/week
  - 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.
  - Faculty shifts = 10-12+ hrs/week
- Reference statistics = sampling
Instruction Program

• Bibliographic Instruction
  • Lecture / demo
  • Tools-based
  • 5+ interfaces in 50 or 80 minutes
• No ACRL Info Lit Standards
• No online learning objects
• Instruction statistics = Word doc
Instruction Program, cont.

- Foundational level
  - ENGL 401: First-year Composition
    - + ENGL 401A, ESL, bridge
    - One session in the library
    - 120 sections/year + follow ups
    - 2200 students/year
  - 70% of all instruction = 400 level

- Other
  - Catch as catch can, no scaffolding
Instruction Assessment

NONE


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Challenging Environment

- **Library**
  - Department skeptical of my position/title
  - Schedules and workflows supported the status quo

- **Campus**
  - No IL outcomes in Gen Ed program
  - No culture of assessment

- **Entrepreneurial**
Revise ENGL 401 Session

- Flipped learning environment
- Deliver content online
- Lecture -> Active learning
  - Increase student engagement
  - Increase info retention
- Pre- & post-test for assessment
- Reduce or eliminate follow-ups
- Less labor-intensive; more sustainable
Key Project Stakeholders

- Reference colleagues
  - Keep it as hands-off as possible
- First-year Comp Coordinator
  - Keep it as hands-off as possible
- ENGL 401 instructors
  - Keep it as hands-off as possible
- Students
  - K.I.S.S.
Make Friends and Influence People

• Investigated campus T&L support
  • Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning (CETL)
• Met other potential partners
  • Academic Technology
  • Writing Program/Writing Center
Summer 2014

- With CETL:
  - Collaborate to develop IL module
- With Academic Technology:
  - FITSI = Faculty Instructional Technology Summer Institute
  - First-year Comp Coordinator!
How I Built an IL Module

• FITSI
  • Narrated PPT and multimedia best practices (CETL)
  • Met & discussed with First-year Comp Coord

• CETL = IRB

• CETL puts module in Blackboard

• ENGL 401 instructors assign module before library session
  • Pre-test
IL Module, cont.

- Hands-on library session = active learning
- CETL delivers post-test 3 weeks out
- CETL assists with data analysis
- CETL: Reusable & refer-able
  - Scientifically sound
- My research agenda
Win! Win! Win!
Fall 2014

• Module ready & with CETL
• Half of my sessions would run with module, half traditionally
• Needed permission to put module in instructors’ Blackboard classes
  • First-year Comp Coordinator
First-year Comp Coordinator

- “I didn’t understand.”
- “You cannot work with the ENGL 401 instructors.”
- “You cannot give homework to English students.”
- “You cannot assess English students.”
- “These are our students.”
“These are not your students.”
Further Fallout

• Discussion between CETL Director and First-year Comp Coord failed.
• First-year Comp Coord went to Library Dean.
• CETL Director shut down project.
• Project went into “mothballs.”
Revelations

- Library’s relationship with English was not collaborative
  - Service relationship
- Without a culture of assessment, assessment is scary
  - Change would be incremental
- No other irons in the fire
Service Orientation

• Reference had started relationship with English in 2000.
• We had said “yes.”
  • And kept saying, “yes.”
• Customer service model
• Fear of rejection
Saying Yes

• Builds political capital
• Erodes recognition of expertise and operational activities
  • Desk coverage
  • Instruction room space
  • Lesson planning
• Sets precedent
Service Relationships

- Can lead to isolation
- Unhealthy
  - Library had lost ownership of its own program
- Erode peer relationships
  - Can lead to being taken advantage of
  - Staff-faculty relationships become even more difficult
- Can make program changes difficult
Learn to Say No

- Set boundaries
- Protect our integrity
- Teach others
- Find solutions for both parties
We’re Not the Only Ones

What Happened Next?

- Colleagues retired in June 2016
  - Subject librarians + staff
  - New desk staffing
  - First-year Instruction Librarian (FYI)
- More communication with English Comp
  - Focus group
  - Regular meetings
- New Service: First-year Research Drop-in Sessions
2018

- No ENGL follow-up sessions -> Drop Ins
  - Could save 25-30% time
- Redesigned LibGuide with more tutorial elements
  - Credo InfoLit Modules
- More players: History, FIRE, HHS
- Foundational + upper level classes
Culture of Assessment

• NEASC Self-study report due 2019
  • Student Learning Outcomes
  • SLO assessments in majors
• CETL -> CEITL
  • Steering Committee membership
• Impact of the Library?
Lessons Learned

• Set and keep boundaries
• Develop and nurture multiple collaborations
• Communicate better
• Stay flexible
• Save everything
• Be patient
Related Resources


Thank you!