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Evolution of Instruction: Collaborating Across Campus & Community

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Introduction

The University of Iowa Pomerantz Business Library has developed a strong instruction program that supports the Tippie College of Business curriculum. Recently, through meetings and networking, librarians have worked to build new relationships and collaborative teaching partnerships across campus. As a result, the business librarians are now teaching more sessions outside the business building. They are teaching at the Colleges of Law & Engineering; meeting with students at residence Halls and in seminars; presenting to community members; working with the UI Career Center; and training UI Research Foundation interns. With these collaborative initiatives, the business librarians have aligned with the strategic plans of the University of Iowa Libraries, the Tippie College of Business, and the University of Iowa. All three emphasize collaboration across campus and outreach to community members.

College of Law

In the Spring of 2013 the new Associate Director of the UI Law Library arranged an introductory meeting with the new Head of the Business Library. As a result of this meeting, a librarian was invited to guest lecture in a 2013 American Advanced Legal Research class. Since that time, a librarian has presented business research strategies in two additional law classes: Fall 2014 - Advanced Legal Research class in Foreign, Comparative, and International Law and Spring 2015 - Business and Tax Research. The classroom collaborations have led to increased contact between the UI business librarians and UI law librarians. There has also been collection development discussions between the two groups.

Living Learning Communities (LLCs)

In 2010 we began working with the LLCs – First Year Engagement Program. In 2014 when a second Librarian was hired, she was able to reach out to and further engage with this group. She attended monthly meetings for both the BizHawks and Personal Impact LLCs, and held events for both. The BizHawks were welcomed into the Business Library and introduced to library services, in a fun environment that included food and games. A librarian was also able to teach one session of the Leadership seminar course, which Personal Impact students were registered in. This class introduced students to library services and basic library research, while incorporating active learning activities.

Pomerantz Career Center

Librarians reached out to the Career Center through email in 2014 and the two soon started working together. We have teamed up to make career center staff more aware of the resources that are available to them and the students they meet with. This has focused mostly on company information resources. A future joint session is being planned for students that should help them prepare for the career fair and learn how to research participating companies. This collaboration has had financial benefit as well, as the Business Library and Career Center joined together to do some cost sharing in order to bring Vault.com to students and University community members.

UI Research Foundation

A collaboration with the University of Iowa Research Foundation (UIRF) started in 2007 when a business librarian was invited to present a day and half workshop to research interns. In preparation for the workshop, the business librarian worked with the research intern supervisor to choose workshop content. One of the goals of the workshop was to demonstrate the importance and value of business research skills. Since 2007, business librarians have met with the UIRF group many times. From 2007-2010 we did yearly day and half workshops. In 2013 it was a two hour session, in 2014 a one hour session, and in 2015 – 2 two hour sessions.

Summary

Collaborating with departments across campus has enabled the business librarians to teach business information literacy skills to non-business students and also increase the visibility of business library services. Reaching out beyond the business library has been challenging, yet quite successful. Some of the challenges that were encountered were related to time and staffing. More time and staffing are needed to design new content for an instruction session/program, to meet with new collaborative partners, and to accommodate the additional instruction sessions and activities. Overall, providing instruction across campus has been successful. The collaborations have led to additional instruction sessions, reference consults, and collection development opportunities. One of the greatest benefits is that librarians now have more opportunities to engage with campus populations that were not otherwise being served by the Pomerantz Business Library.