

Research support: a US experience by Sunette Steynberg

Overview

- Embedded librarian/Outreach/liaison
 - 4 examples
- User needs
- Other services for researchers
- A new mindset and implementation thereof

The model of embedded librarianship is an effective means of applying the knowledge and skills of librarians towards the information challenges of the digital age. Embedded librarianship takes a librarian out of the context of the traditional library and places him or her in an “on-site” setting or situation that enables close coordination and collaboration with researchers or teaching faculty.

The Inside Higher Education News of 9 Jun 2010 reported that ‘the staff of the Johns Hopkins medical library is leaving the building -- and setting up camp everywhere else.’

Information desks are being manned by students.

Megan Sapp Nelson - EPICS

EPICS: Projects of at least one-year in duration are intended to solve real problems that are defined in consultation with "customers" from not-for-profit community and education organizations.

Charlotte Erdmann – IP and patent specialist

Purdue is a repository library for patents and trademarks. This means that they have access to PubWest (the US search engine for patents and trademarks). They do not only assist the students and personnel of Purdue university, but also anybody from the community that would like to search patents.

- Corn and soybean competition.
- Lecture on searching patents and trademarks
- Assist students in searches

One should create an environment for invention and creation. Students are the future inventors and need to know what to do with their innovative ideas. Students need to believe that their country needs their ideas to build the country and keep it effective. They also need to believe that they truly can make a difference.

UC Davis Humanities dept.

The librarians in this department are very skilled and qualified. Their subject knowledge is excellent. Most of them have a PhD and several degrees in a variety of disciplines. They are also involved in research projects.

- Social networking: blogs for reading lists and bibliographies; Facebook for research questions and communication

They all have very informative and well maintained subject guides. The development and maintenance of subject guides. Subject Guides identify the best article databases for each academic subject area. General and multidisciplinary databases are also listed here.

Hal Kirkwood – Second Life

Hal Kirkwood also forms part of a team that is investigating Second life. Purdue has their own island, which they bought with funding for this project. This island is populated by several buildings, amongst them a restaurant and the library. The restaurant was used for simulations of research on how people reacted when they had to wait too long for their food or their check. In the library they placed some of their digital pictures of their institutional repository which one could look at. Especially their Hospitality department takes part in this project.

Hal himself would very much like to also use this space for information literacy training, but do not quite know how yet. At any moment of the day there are 60 – 80 thousand people on second life. Even NASA and IBM have islands there. Texas university apparently has a different island for every department.

After he has shown me how things are being built and populated, I thought that this would make an excellent tool for our Architecture and structural engineering students to experiment with.

Hilda Kriel

- Embedding virtually is mainly through the Learning Management system (Clickup) and we should not miss the opportunity to embed our services into the new Blackboard.
- Virtual embedding can also be through social networks – meet the students where they are..

User needs

Reassigning of spaces

Students were asked about their assignments and how they needed to work on it. It was determined that they needed to work in groups a lot and then needed to present their work in a presentation. Lesser used books were sent to a storage facility and spaces were created where students could work in groups. There is also a room where students can practice and get help with their presentation skills. This help is provided by post graduate students or other personnel. The library do not provide all services; but they do provide the learning spaces where needed.

How to get student input

Have a student advisory group and listen to their suggestions.

Use a whiteboard with marker in the library for ideas. This might be similar to the current graffiti wall in the renovated space in the Merensky.

Have a suggestion box where students can put in their suggestions on how to make the library space more useful to their needs.

Other services for researchers

Faculty members are allowed to order a book from any of the libraries and it will be delivered to them. This is a service that I thought the UP Library services could easily invest in and buy a great deal of goodwill in this manner. This was a question of change management. Statistics has shown that the University of Illinois Libraries shelved 9 000 books in 1997. In 2009 less than 1 000 volumes had to be shelved. The shelving personnel then did the delivering of books.

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