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Libraries



Improving Teaching and Learning through Instructional Partnerships:

Building Librarian Relationships with One-on-one, In-depth Conversations

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Overview

- UW-Madison and Library Instruction Program
- Instructional Partnerships Program
- How the Program works
- Tools
- What we learned: benefits and challenges
- How this could work in your library



UW-Madison Academic Programs

Program Type	Number of Programs
Undergraduate Majors	134
Master's Degree Programs	153
Doctoral Programs	114
Courses Offered	4,378





UW-Madison Students



Student Type	Number of Students
Undergraduate	28,999
Graduate	8,860
Professional	2,563
Special	1,619
Total (Fall 2007)	42,401



Library and Information Literacy Instruction @ UW-Madison

- 21 participating libraries
- Teach 2,300+ sessions to 31,500+ users.
- 125 affiliated staff members
- Classes for diverse audiences



Instruction-Related Professional Development

- Library & Information Literacy Instruction (LILI) programs:
 - Monthly forum
 - Annual retreat
 - Annual banquet
- Campus teaching and learning events





Questions

- What kinds of professional development programs related to teaching do you participate in?
- How do you work on improving your teaching?



Why Another LILI Professional Development Program?


- Need to continually improve teaching
- Need for one-on-one discussions about specifics of teaching
- Need to improve teaching to improve learning with emphasis on assessment
- No formal evaluation of librarians' teaching



Program Goals

- Improve teaching and student learning.
- Encourage one-on-one, in-depth discussions.
- Facilitate reflection about teaching and development of teaching skills.
- Provide opportunities to receive and give feedback and learn from one other.
- Build supportive relationships and strengthen community.



Comments from Jon and Kelli about their partnership. 



Program Development

- Spring-Summer 2007:
 - Review of literature and similar programs
 - Creation of Program structure and tool kit
- Fall 2007:
 - Pilot Program with working group members
- December 2007:
 - Registration by campus librarians
 - Orientation workshop
- Spring 2008:
 - Launch of the Program



Program Characteristics

- Voluntary
- Flexible and self-directed
- Focus on development, not evaluation
- Reflective self-assessment
- Relationship of equals, not mentoring
- Mutually supportive, non-threatening



Program Structure

- Pairing of librarians based on similar goals, interests, and schedules.
- Option to choose partner.
- Partners participate in self-directed activities of:
 - Reflection
 - Discussion
 - Observation



Partner Roles

- Partners trade off in two roles:
 - Instructor:
 - Librarian whose goals are the focus of reflection, discussion, observation.
 - Facilitator:
 - Librarian who facilitates instructor's reflection and observes and gives feedback on the instructor's teaching.



Reflection

- Reflection with partners and on own.
- Partners ask questions to facilitate reflection of their partners.
- Questions for thinking about strengths and areas of improvement, goals, class planning, debriefing a class, etc.



Discussion

- Partners discuss goals, classes, aspects of classes, etc.
- Face-to-face, phone, or e-mail.
- Before and after class with or without observation.



Observation

- Partners observe and provide feedback on partners' teaching and classes.
- Feedback based on recorded observable behavior related to partners' goals
- Example observation methods:
 - Scripting
 - Verbatim log
 - Checklist for behaviors



Selecting Instructional Goals

- **By yourself**, think about instructional goals or focus areas you might want to work on.
- Refer to “Activity Worksheet” and “Instructional Focus Areas” handouts.



Selecting Instructional Goals

- **With your neighbor**, talk about instructional goals/focus areas you might want to work on.
- Refer to “Activity Worksheet” and “Instructional Focus Areas” handouts.



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Partner Conversations

- Discuss with your neighbor:
 - What's wrong with this conversation?
 - How might the conversation be improved?



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Best Practices

- Schedule partner conversations soon after instruction.
- Start with instructor's reflection before giving feedback.
- Focus feedback on partner's goals or focus areas.
- Base feedback on observable behavior. Be descriptive, not evaluative.

Brinko 1993



Program Schedule

Early December	Registration
Mid-December	Orientation Workshop
January	Initial Planning Meeting
January-March	Partner Activities/Instruction
April	Partner Reports
May	Wrap-up Lunch



Program Participants

- 19 participants representing 5 campus libraries:
 - Engineering
 - Health Sciences
 - Humanities & Social Sciences
 - Life Sciences
 - Undergraduate (College Library)
 - Instruction Program
- Partnered with librarians in different libraries.



Sample Instructional Goals

- Presentation skills
- Pacing and transitions
- Student engagement and active learning
- Classroom assessment techniques
- Use of clickers and technologies
- Connecting with students



Sample Activities

Date	Time (hours)	Activity
12.18.2007	2	workshop
01.24.2008	1	initial meeting
02.12.2008	2	observation of partner class & discussion
02.27.2008	1	discussion of my class observed by partner
	2	communication, reflection, report writing
05.29.2008	2	wrap-up lunch
	10 hours total	



Program Benefits

- Fun!
- Time for reflection on and discussion of teaching
- Specific feedback on teaching
- Support in working on teaching skills
- Exchange of ideas and techniques
- Getting to know colleagues
- Learning about instruction in campus libraries



Comment from Participant

“Just the act of discussing my teaching style with another librarian was helpful. It solidified where I know why I do what I do as well as pointed to places in my teaching of which I am not conscious.”



Comment from Participant

“This format forces you to make your evaluations in a quantifiable manner, which could actually lead to change. By focusing on specifics a little at a time, this program can make us better at what we do.”



Program Challenges

- Coordinating schedules
- Unexpected circumstances:
 - snow storms
 - no attendees at workshop
 - lighter class load



Tools

- Web Site:
 - <http://tinyurl.com/457jzb>
- Tools
 - Activity Worksheet
 - Observation Worksheet, etc.



Discussion & Questions

- How could instructional partnerships work in your library, on your campus, etc.?
- Other questions



Resources

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