

Faculty-Librarian Collaborations

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What's a librarian doing at a 2yc Geoscience Workshop? Unlike you, I don't grade hundreds of pages every semester; don't hustle to prep for six or more lectures a week, and don't navigate daily challenges from administration and students. I am a geoscience educator in the broadest sense of the term. You might also call me an 'embedded librarian' in the science departments of a 4yc. There I collaborate with faculty, students, and other librarians to support their teaching and learning. Years ago that job was very collection-oriented. Now we focus on instruction and resources. Collaboration is the keyword. Just this week, the American College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Research Planning and Review Committee listed collaboration as one of the Top Ten trends in academic libraries. (*June 2010 College & Research Libraries News vol. 71 no. 6 286*)

What does that mean for you? You teach heavy course loads to a diverse student population, incorporate distance learning, and design assignments that are relevant and engaging. Collaboration should make your work easier and more efficient; it should provide a sense of support and connection for you, the faculty member and it should enhance the experience of your students at every level. How does faculty-librarian collaboration work at your 2yc?

In our institution librarians work with faculty to provide instruction related to specific assignments, prepare course guides, and ensure that faculty and students have the resources they need. Faculty-Librarian collaborations can also reach beyond the home campus. As the numbers of community college transfers into our university increased, I became more aware of our 2yc colleagues. When Thomas Nelson Community College opened a new branch in our area, I arranged a tour for our library staff. Seeing their limited resources, I worked with the TNCC geology instructor and his librarian to indentify key resources for purchase. I was also able to provide new and gently used books and maps for their young collection. Some of those resources were kept on high-profile display in the new library, a promotion of sorts for the geology department!

Collaborations can bust isolation, enhance limited resources of time and materials, and help us keep up with technology and the changing challenges of connecting with our students, whether they are part of the Greatest Generation, Boomers, Gen X, Millenials, or Net Gen.

During the workshop I look forward to hearing how you work with your campus librarians. I would like to use a web-based program, College Guides, to organize links from each of you. Together we can determine the categories: e.g. Web Resources, Online Instruction, Field Trips. I look forward to learning from you as well as offering the expertise of a subject-specialist from the library world. Collaboration: it makes all of us work just a little bit smarter!