A Team-Based Service Model: Mann Library, Cornell University

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Abstract

In a time of transition, Mann Library found itself with 7 orphaned liaison departments on the heels of multiple discussions amongst the Mann liaison team about scaling services to accommodate liaison success and increasing patron demand. We learned that some liaisons would prefer to focus on research and some would prefer to focus on instruction, while many felt that outreach had become burdensome or a neglected part of their job responsibilities. The department heads began to think through other models that could support librarians, allow for more focus, and enable more consistency and standardization of our services. What was born of these though exercises is the team-based approach that we began piloting in August 2019.

By separating into teams of instruction or research support and removing outreach from individual librarian responsibilities, Mann librarians have been able to prioritize their functional areas of expertise that were increasing in demand and provide more time for innovative projects. We will begin assessment for the model in spring of 2020 but are also taking an iterative approach and course correcting as necessary as we implement these changes.

Established Challenges

• Non-standardized instruction and outreach
• New functional areas of expertise that require more staff time
• Different department needs led to imbalanced workload amongst liaisons
• Too many departments for our current staffing levels
• Tailored services (e.g. instruction sessions) have led to inefficient use of staff time since each customization requires significant upfront time investment

Liaison Discussions

Some liaisons...
Want to do but don’t have the capacity for...
Statement of needs for undergraduates... (information needs, instruction, etc.)
What we are over capacity on...
• Multiple liaison departments
• Instructional level instruction
• Undergraduate instruction that doesn’t meet information needs
• Event planning/organization/advertising/outreach

From prior discussions, we’ve learned...

Models Reviewed

UT Austin Engagement Teams

Team: Information Literacy

University of Guelph Functional Teams

Research Services
Teaching and Learning
Collection Strategies

University of California, Riverside

Research Services
Teaching and Learning
Collection Strategies

Team-Based Service Model 2019

Research Support & Instruction Comparison

Liaison Model 2012-2018

Outreach Service (presently offered)

Models Reviewed

Team-based approach for Info Lit, instruction, research consultation, etc.

Outreach Service (divided)

Team-based approach for Info Lit, instruction, research consultation, etc.

The Liaison Model...

Implementation Plan

Roadmap

Summer 2018

Fall 2018

Spring 2019

Fall 2019

Summer 2019

Fall 2020

Spring 2020

Fall 2021

Spring 2021

Phase I: Implementation

Library Assessment of Model

Follow-up group discussions

Phase II: Implementation

Team meetings to communicate team efforts

Library Assessment of Model

Team meetings to discuss logistics, "the how", frequent