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Instruction librarians and instructional designers

A natural collaboration

At the University of North Carolina-Charlotte, instructional designers and research and instruction librarians have similar goals yet unique roles and distinct responsibilities. There are eight instructional designers at the Center for Teaching & Learning (CTL) who use learning theory and design knowledge to work with faculty to plan and create online courses. At the university's Atkins Library, 16 instruction librarians, including subject liaisons and first-year writing specialists, connect with faculty and students to further understanding of information literacy and research resources. Recognizing the groups' common goals of partnering with faculty in course development and creating high-quality online learning resources, group administrators have launched an initiative to introduce the designers and librarians to each other and to their work.

In the summer of 2018, the two groups met in the first of a series of opportunities to get to know each other and to better understand their professional roles. The goals of the collaboration were for the instructional designers and the instruction librarians to meet, to learn about each other's work and approaches to instruction, and to consider opportunities for connection and collaboration. The meeting attendees were assigned a pre-reading, "Comparisons and Collaborations between the Professions," a chapter in the book, *Librarians and Instructional De-signers: Collaboration and Innovation*.[1] After a series of introductions and an icebreaker, each group provided an overview of its roles. The instructional designers discussed their work with distance education development and instructional alignment, and the instruction librarians talked about information literacy, the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, and their instructional initiatives. The main activity for the session focused on an analysis of the instructional designers' planning materials for a course in progress and input from the instruction librarians for library involvement in that planning process. After sharing ideas among all of the group members, the meeting attendees considered next steps for the collaboration.

In response to prompts, the meeting participants provided feedback. Table 1 contains a sample of the responses.

Throughout the fall semester, members of the two groups met for lunch on a monthly basis to continue getting to know one another, to further understand their work, and

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to develop ideas for collaborating on both small initiatives and large projects.

As planning progressed for meetings between the two groups, it became increasingly clear that while the goals of the two groups were similar—well-designed instruction with clear learning objectives and opportunities for assessment—the form of that instruction differed. Instruction librarians collaborate with faculty members to teach one or more research and information literacy sessions in their classes, while the instructional designers partner with faculty to plan course design and delivery for courses. Leslee Shell, Steven Crawford, and Patricia Harris concur that, "library modules are different than the semester-long courses the instructional designers traditionally support."[2] This realization was instrumental in influencing the direction and design of the next group session.

The second meeting of the two groups occurred at the end of the Fall 2017 semester and focused on the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education.

The goals for the session were similar to those of the first meeting: 1) continue to learn about each other's approach to instruction, 2) discuss the ACRL Framework and practice applying it, and 3) find opportunities for connection. The pre-readings for the meeting were the ACRL Framework along with several short articles discussing the frames conceptually and practically.

After a short overview of the library's digital learning objects and its goals for integrating services and resources into the university's learning management system, Canvas, the group focused on the ACRL Framework, reviewing each of the six frames. The participants divided into teams comprised of both librarians and instructional designers, and each group was tasked with building a library instruction lesson plan based on one or more of the frames. Six posters were created, each focusing on one of the frames, its description, and associated knowledge practices. The posters were placed around the work space so that they could be easily accessed by the participants. The activity proved to be both timely and educational for all of the participants, as higher education organizations are continuing to emphasize the importance of information literacy in course content in the academic disciplines.[3] The groups shared their lesson plans and discussed potential next steps for this ongoing collaboration.

Once again, the meeting participants provided feedback in response to three prompts (see Table 2).

Table 1: Post-meeting feedback for summer meeting

One thing I learned	One question I have	One opportunity I see
Both of our groups value process and reflection	How can we better coordinate our efforts in supporting faculty?	Consultations with instructional designer & librarian @ same time in early phase of instructional design process
ID & Librarians have similar goals but also have specific goals unique to each role	Do we really understand the work each other does? Do faculty?	Work together to make the learning process as seamless as possible as courses transition online
Librarian Framework similar to QM standards of Course Alignment	How can instructional designers and librarians systematically work together?	Future collaboration to strengthen inquiry in student activities
Course alignment is a "back and forth" process, not linear. Similar to the research process	Strategies for getting past faculty "defensiveness"	Let's talk! We can work together on a course, or project.
Similar focus on learning objectives driving teaching and course design.	How can we integrate more formally into design process other than referral?	Meeting between librarians and instructional designers on syllabus to discuss what each can contribute to make the course better.

As a result of the meetings between these two groups, several instruction librarians initiated collaborative efforts with instructional designers and technical managers from CTL to introduce library services into the university's Canvas learning management system. Librarians were interested in developing a library presence in Canvas to meet and work with students at their point of need. Because CTL administers, develops, and provides training on Canvas, their buy-in and expertise were essential to making this happen. So, members of the two groups, having talked about library instruction during the group meetings, worked together to determine how to integrate library services and resources into the learning management system.

Working with the CTL technical team manager, instructional librarians were also able to develop a "librarian" role in Canvas with specific permissions so that faculty could add a librarian to their online courses. This customized role allows faculty to include librarians in courses without having to add them as an instructor with full rights to course permissions. The librarian instead has the ability to perform specific functions within Canvas. For example, the librarian can moderate a discussion among students in a class but does not have permission to edit

grades. During the first year since the development of the librarian role, faculty have added instructional librarians to 124 courses in this capacity.

To further integrate the library resources into Canvas, instruction librarians and instructional designers have worked together to implement the LibGuides LTI (learning tools interoperability) in the learning management system. LTI allows Canvas users to access a customized LibGuide through a link in their courses. The expertise and support of the instructional designers and tech manager at CTL were integral to making this happen. The two groups are currently collaborating to promote faculty use of library videos and tutorials in their Canvas courses. In an effort to increase awareness and usage of these resources, instruction librarians have partnered with an instructional designer to outline and document the process for incorporating this content. The groups also highlighted this initiative in training and educational opportunities for faculty this fall.

Instructional designers have increasingly reached out to librarians to support or partner on initiatives and have expanded their use and referrals to the library's Makerspace, Visualization Lab, and EZ Video Studio. In particular, they have worked with library colleagues to reserve and host activities and meetings in the Visualization Lab. They have

Table 2: Post-meeting feedback for fall meeting

One thing I learned	One opportunity I see	One strategy for continuing to engage
Our work is 100% connected and we should be working together closely	The values shared between the groups allow for continual collaboration	Learning how instructional designers do a consultation with faculty members. What are their priorities and/or objectives
CTL people are good at defining, organizing, and documenting the learning process!	A partnership creating full lesson plans or mini courses together	Observe instructional development project/course at library
That we think alike when planning for instruction	Collaborating between the two groups to help instructors incorporate more learning sessions for the students with the librarians	Continue collaborative/active learning get-togethers
I learned: the ARCL framework is a great benchmark to improve literacy and meta-cognition	More collaboration with expanding on different activities and methods	Continue sessions like these to strengthen instructional roles
Continue collaborative/active learning get-togethers	Collaboration during faculty consultation on course/topic design	Continued peer observation

also begun referring faculty to use the EZ Video Studio in course development. Finally, they are reaching out more to instruction librarians as they work with faculty to design and develop online courses. In particular, they are now regularly consulting with librarians about locating and using high-quality OER and library-sourced content. One of CTL's high-priority projects, an adaptive learning program for general education math, has an OER dimension and the Engineering/STEM librarian has been a part of planning meetings for that program.

Anecdotally, the authors have observed that their team members are reaching out to each other in event planning and with general questions with more frequency than before the meetings. As this collaboration continues to develop, the instructional designers will elaborate on their process for online course design so that the librarians have a clearer understanding of their work. The partnership between the two groups will continue both formally and informally to meet the goals established at the onset of the project—networking, an understanding and appreciation of each group's work, and opportunities for connection and collaboration. The fact that there are numerous methods for achieving these goals guarantees a long and lasting association.

Notes

1. Joe Eshleman, Richard Moniz, Karen Mann, and Kristen Eshleman, "Comparisons and Collaborations between the Professions," in *Librarians and Instructional Designers: Collaboration and Innovation* (Chicago: ALA Editions, 2016).

2. Leslee Shell, Steven Crawford, and Patricia Harris, "Aided and Embedded: The Team Approach to Instructional Design," *Journal of Library & Information Services in Distance Learning* 7, no. 1-2 (2013): 143–155, https://doi.org/10.1080/1533290X.2012.705627.

3. Kimberly Mullins, "Good IDEA: Instructional Design Model for Integrating Information Literacy," *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 40, no. 3-4 (May 2014): 339–349, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2014.04.012. ✏

("'Drops of Diversity,'" cont. from page 610)

"Big Read" across the Hampton Roads region. The book selected by the NEA Big Read: Hampton Roads was *Citizen: An American Lyric* by Claudia Rankine, which focuses on issues around race.[3] Hofheimer Library seized this opportunity to partner with faculty again, and the library director moderated a panel of faculty from a variety of disciplines who reflected on the book. Thanks to panelists offering their students extra credit or incorporating the book into their course, this was another well-attended event. In addition, the library's Faculty-Staff Book Club also chose to read the book and attend the author event hosted by another university in the area.

Future directions

Although the Hofheimer Library Diversity Team is currently only using the newsletter internally, the director is considering the possibility of sharing the "Drops of Diversity" site more broadly. VWU's Center for the Study of Religious Freedom has expressed interest in having access to the site and possibly authoring content. What's more, the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities (VCIC) has opened a location on the Virginia Wesleyan campus, and the library is interested in exploring how they may learn and partner with this organization. As part of the campus partnership, VCIC will provide training sessions for VWU each year. The library and the Center for the Study of Religious Freedom will partner this summer on engaging VCIC to offer training sessions for VWU faculty, staff, and students on topics that are of greatest