Recommended Engagement Model for OSULP

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August 28, 2014

Table of Contents

Background

The OSULP faculty librarians involved with the Engagement Project uncovered a wealth of information and developed insightful observations. I compiled these from the wiki) into a document covering the six working groups with a summary of trends and possible approaches to rethinking our engagement model (https://wiki.library.oregonstate.edu/confluence/display/RTC/Campus+Engagement+Project+FY14.

In addition to the groups' descriptions of the colleges and program, they identified cross-cutting themes.

- Relationships are important.
- Some library faculty have haphazard or too wide a range of engagement expectations.
- Colleges are increasing their focus on preparing students for the world rather than a continued existence in academia.
- Teaching and learning are going asynchronous.
- The division structure of OSU Colleges does not resonate consistently across campus.
- There is incredible variety among the colleges in terms of the teaching versus research focus.
- Additional faculty lines are needed to effectively engage with the OSU campus.

I have read about the liaison 'issue' fairly broadly, but not exhaustively. Some observations reinforce the themes above and others stretch our thinking.

- Moniz, Henry and Eshleman aptly provide sound guidance on a practical level for librarians in an engagement setting. They conclude with a very strong statement about relationships: "…the importance of relationship building…is essential for success. The role of initiating, building, and maintaining relationships with the academic sphere continues to grow as a focus for the librarian of today…This transforms patrons into people and makes library usage personal." (Moniz, Henry, and Eshleman 2014)

- Kenney encourages a perspective of support for scholars and what the library does to promote academic productivity. She suggests a prerequisite for the above is "to ensure that one or more liaisons are assigned to each academic (and administrative) department that affects research, teaching, and learning goals." (Kenney 2014)
- The ARL Report, *New Roles for New Times*, makes a strong case for a collaborative approach with three primary roles – advocate, consultant and expert (Jaguszewski and Williams 2013). While some institutions are implementing this approach, there is little evaluation of how it is working.
- Cramer et al. compiled a variety of useful case studies and possible models in their investigation at University of North Carolina Greensboro (Cramer et al. 2012). Similar to OSU, they wanted to move away from a collections focus to more engagement. They recommended further consideration of team model within a liaisons department where the librarians are organized around subjects and share expertise. They found the University of Guelph functional team model intriguing but unproven.
- Much of the writing on embedded librarianship focuses on instruction (Schulte 2012). While validating our teaching, deep immersion consistently across the OSU curriculum is impossible given the student population and the number of faculty librarians.
- Shumaker and Talley surveyed staff of special libraries (Shumaker and Talley 2009). Their list of recommended actions for library managers is useful:
  - Hire library staff who can build relationships;
  - Enable them to learn about the organization and it people;
  - Let them identify the needed services and then provide them;
  - Build manager level alliances with the university managers;
  - Encourage the librarians to rely on central library staff for help and expertise;
  - Promote the services provided and evaluate them.

I have also had conversations with interested librarians and managers. Given all of this, I suggest the following model.

Engagement Model

Each college and identified program would have at least one primary library contact. This faculty member would be responsible for monitoring the college or program at a fairly high level, looking at trends in curriculum and research, attending college and departmental events as relevant to gain insight, and identifying where the expertise and resources of the OSULP can be most effective. This person would not be expected to provide all of the library services needed (i.e., instruction, research support, collection services, data management, digital publishing). Rather, she would use other expertise in the OSULP to provide direct services or collaborate on development.

One of the most important roles for the Primary Contact will be to connect the colleges and program to the OSULP expertise areas: Scholarly Communication, Research Data Services, Digital Publishing and Dissemination, Collections and Information Resources, Library Experience and Access, and Information Literacy. Each of these areas would have an Expert Lead to work with the Primary Contacts. These may be a department head or another designee. As opportunities and needs are identified by the Primary Contacts, they work with the Expert Leads to identify and allocate resources for the delivery of services and development of projects.

Existing relationships could continue or be handed off as appropriate. For example, given my long history with the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, I could continue this relationship or work more closely with the Primary Contact to make sure that current approaches were appropriate and sustainable. Each relationship has unique aspects; consequently, library faculty members will assess how to handle these as the new model is implemented.

Existing position descriptions would need to be revised to address new college and program level assignments and integrate a broader suite of engagement expertise. Careful attention should be paid to

outlining the expectations of Primary Contacts and Expert Leads. Suggestions for language are attached. Expectations and broad measure of success have been suggested. These should be addressed in annual agreements.

Gaps in coverage and support for services were revealed as I worked on populating the proposed model. OSULP Administration is working to address the need for additional library faculty members. There is also a need for an instructional support position that contributes to the ongoing teaching effort of the OSULP by maintaining course pages and resources, providing technical support for the creation and maintenance of tutorials as well as other tasks that might arise.

The proposed model depends on agreement among department heads to support broader inclusion of all library faculty in engagement strategies. One article in particular about engagement at the university level helps frame this last requirement, especially if you insert library where appropriate. "To thrive in the 21st century, higher education [the library] must adopt new approaches in order to move engagement from the margin to the mainstream of its research, teaching and service." (Fitzgerald et al. 2012) All faculty need to be engaged across the spectrum of our services as Primary Contacts, Expert Leads or providers of services in areas of their expertise.

Proposed Engagement Model

Primary Contacts
The Colleges' and Programs' Primary Contacts serve as the major contact for faculty, staff and student, monitors trends in curriculum and research, attends relevant college, departmental and program events to gain insight, and identifies how OSULP expertise and resources can be most effectively used. They promote OSULP expertise and collaborate with the Expert Leads to integrate and leverage that expertise throughout the OSU Community. The Primary Contacts meet monthly within their appropriate clusters (color coded) to discuss issues, trends, needed resources and strategies. Once a quarter, each cluster presents at the monthly RTC meetings as a means of sharing strategies, challenges and ideas. The Primary Contacts collaborate in clusters, communicate among the clusters and work with the Expert Leads to tap into resources – people, expertise, ideas, funding.

Expert Leads
The Expert Leads provide the Primary Contacts with focused expertise. As opportunities and needs are identified by the Primary Contacts, they work with the Expert Leads and their Expert Lead Supports to identify and allocate resources for the delivery of services and development of projects. The Expert Lead Supports serve as the first line of support and are not the only experts that will be called upon to assist. The Expert Leads manage resources and assist in identifying and setting priorities for use of resources. The Expert Lead or one of experts meet quarterly with each cluster of Primary Contacts to stay apprised of emerging needs and ongoing demands for OSULP services and expertise. This regular input assists the Expert Leads with the setting of priorities in terms of resources.

Gray Family Chair
As this position rotates every three years, whoever holds the position will support the Engagement Model depending on expertise and interest. The person is welcome to attend the cluster and RTC meetings to embed their expertise and experience into the OSULP enterprise.