Librarians as learning partners: reflective teaching in university libraries

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What value do librarians add to the student learning process?
Potential areas of collaboration

- Information literacy
- Assessment strategies
- Collaborative teaching
- Academic integrity
- Reflective teachers?
STIL was originally designed and developed by the University of Western Australia Library’s Teaching and Learning Team. UWA Reference Librarians presented the STIL program at a meeting of CARCIT in May 2003. As a result of the interest shown by other WA University Libraries, the STIL Advisory Group was formed to collaboratively develop and maintain STIL. The STIL Advisory Group has a membership of librarians from the University of Western Australia, Curtin University of Technology, Murdoch University, ECU and the University of Notre Dame.

This outcomes based framework is structured to enable reference librarians to develop skills for teaching information literacy.

How it works

- Select the desired outcome
- Use the supplied learning resources to develop your skills
- Select a method to demonstrate to yourself the achievement of the outcome

There are four stages to the framework:

- Laying the Foundation
- Preparation for Information Literacy Sessions
- Delivering Information Literacy Sessions
- Evaluation of Information Literacy Sessions
| Reference Librarians can implement learning theory in Information Literacy class outlines at a basic level. | CATL 2003, “Getting active with active learning”, Issues of Teaching and Learning, vol. 9, no. 1.  
Durnin, P. (ed.) 2002, Information Literacy Programs: Successes and Challenges, Haworth, New York. | Modify an existing class outline to include opportunities for alternative learning styles.  
Ask for peer comments [PDF; 62K] eg. identify a reference librarian with a different learning profile and discuss how they would vary your class outline.  
Write three ideas that you could use to vary your class outlines to suit other learning styles. |
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| Reference Librarians can employ outcomes based learning techniques in the development of teaching material. | CATL. A basic guide to writing student learning outcome statements.  
Bloom’s Taxonomy: a description of the language and categories used in outcomes based statements. | Modify an existing class outline employing outcomes based statements.  
Use storyboarding to plan a new course or redesign an existing course online. |
| Reference Librarians can use storyboarding to plan and develop courses. | University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Storyboarding to success: how to begin building your online course. [DOC; 55KB]  
University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Storyboarding to success worksheet. | Ask for structured peer feedback. [PDF; 62K]  
Structured feedback using video observation by an expert. |
| Reference Librarians have good presentation skills for Information Literacy sessions. | McNamara, C. Basics of Presentation Skills (mapnp.org).  
| Reference Librarians develop a Professional Development Portfolio | Bunker, A. The Teaching and Learning Portfolio at ECU, Edith Cowan University, Western Australia. | |
Librarians as reflective teachers

1. Contextual Information
   • Clearly describes the span of duties and the specific responsibilities undertaken
   • Identifies the key roles and responsibilities which have been made, and where priorities have been directed.
   • Describes the university staff who are supported and their needs
   • Describes the types of students with whom you interact, and the ways they are supported, programs supported
   • Outlines current stage of development of partnerships with faculties
   • Outlines the pressures and challenges which need to be met.
Librarians as reflective teachers

2. The Teaching Environment

• Outlines teaching strategies used, and why.
  Demonstrates theoretical framework
• Provides examples of these methods in practice.
• Provides evidence of teaching outcomes:
  – comments from participants;
  – assignments analyses;
  – client feedback
  – peer reviews
  – work samples
• Achievements are well documented
• Focus on reflective process and learning.
Librarians as reflective teachers

3. Teaching Related Professional Activity

• Describes teaching contributions made – within or beyond the University.
• Evidence of teaching scholarship e.g. ANTLER project
• Contribution to research / development of field
Project benefits

- Librarians
- Educators
- Students
- University
- Innovation
Project Benefits: Librarians

• I found portfolios to be a good way of documenting evidence of change. When compiling a portfolio it forced me to consider how I had developed as a teacher. Its also a good way of aligning librarians with common academic practice.

• Organising a portfolio I found a useful process in identifying what my teaching philosophy and achievements have been, but as far as ever having to use it or show it to anyone else has yet to happen... so I am yet to know of its worth.

• I found the original exercise of putting together a portfolio as an example for one of the T&L training sessions and then updating it very worthwhile. A this stage of my career it’s probably way to late to start but I still found the reflection on practice helpful and garnered a real sense of achievement as I collected samples of my work.
Implications and possibilities

• Recognition of the potential role of the librarian
• Encouragement of teaching reflection
• Stimulation of innovation and collaboration
• Learning partnerships