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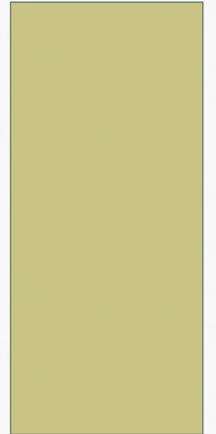
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IMPLEMENTING A PERSONAL LIBRARIAN PROGRAM

BY ROSLYN GRANDY



IDEAL MODEL

- Librarian is embedded in an introductory course (that has a research component) and visits 2-3 times during the semester
- Librarian puts faces with names and builds relationships via repeated visits
- Librarian maintains contact with that section of students throughout their academic career
- Professor allows librarian/writing tutors to view final research product and evaluate effectiveness of help provided
- Other data points analyzed include grades, persistence to graduation, number of interactions with librarians, workshop attendance, etc.

PERSONAL LIBRARIANS AT CNR: TWO MODELS

- School of Arts and Sciences – limited outreach
 - Every incoming freshman 2016-2017 was assigned a personal librarian
- School of New Resources – (Mentoring, Undergraduate Research, and Augmented Libraries (MURAL) program) – intensive outreach
 - Half of all incoming freshmen were assigned a personal librarian and a writing tutor
 - Treatment and control groups were necessary due to study requirements of FIPSE grants
 - Some students became jealous when they heard that their friends had personal librarians but they did not
 - Library orientation and services were available to each group, but only half got the personal outreach from librarians

MURAL PROGRAM

- MURAL initiative started in freshman year
- Involved intense outreach for 1 year and continued outreach throughout academic career
- Effectiveness of the MURAL program was measured through several data points:
 - Incoming writing samples
 - Writing samples for each seminar course (Life Arts Project)
 - SAILS test at beginning and end of academic year
 - Number of interaction with librarian and writing specialist recorded
 - Number of workshops attended recorded
 - Grades
 - Cumulative credits

RESULTS

- **2016-2017 – 52 SAS students, 2 students responded**
- **2015-2018 – 63 MURAL students, 14 students responded**
- **Study has found no differences between those who received outreach from personal librarians vs. those who didn't**
- **BUT, students who met with MURAL staff regardless of condition were more likely to be retained and have a higher number of cumulative credits earned than students who did not meet with MURAL staff**

TYPES OF QUESTIONS ANSWERED

- How do I get my textbooks?
- Is there someone who can review my resume?
- How can I help my daughter deal with passing of a relative?
- Can I bring my child to the pumpkin decorating event at the library?
- How can I find international students at the college to take a survey for my primary research?
- Where can I find sources on how fear and anxiety affect decision-making and productivity at work?

WAYS TO REACH OUT

- **Email – school and personal**
 - **Inbox items tend to get lost, so send reminders**
- **Print a letter and hand-deliver it in a class or to campus mailbox**
- **Call for appointment reminders/missed appointment**
- **Speak at orientations**
- **Ask professor to remind students to get help**

WHAT TO SAY WHEN REACHING OUT

- **Acknowledge the stressful nature of college classes/the research process**
- **Let them know about upcoming events and workshops at the library**
- **Highlight new resources, important LibGuides, ebooks, etc.**
- **Mention specific class projects and ways you can assist**
- **Remind them of other support services available on campus**

WHAT TO SAY IN THE WELCOME LETTER

- I am happy to let you know that as part of a new college-wide initiative, I will be serving as your personal librarian!
- You can meet with me in person or virtually.
- I can help with:
 - Narrowing a topic, choosing sources, searching for scholarly articles, using sources ethically, and managing citations
- The library offers:
 - Books, articles, interlibrary loan, workshops, library instruction, group study rooms, technology, and 24/7 access to academic librarians
- Our friendly, knowledgeable, and student-centered library staff is dedicated to clearing the haze that many students face when too much (or not enough) information creates a barrier to success.
- We can refer you to academic tutors and other departments at the college.
- Business card or contact info

LETTER TO INCOMING STUDENTS – IN ORIENTATION PACKET



The College of New Rochelle

Dear New Student,

Congratulations on starting the next phase of your academic career! After your first week, you may be feeling overwhelmed by textbooks, syllabi, and assignments. But at The College of New Rochelle, we're focused on you and your academic success. I am happy to let you know that as part of a new college-wide initiative, I have been assigned as your personal librarian!

You can make appointments to meet with me in person or virtually to sharpen your skills in various aspects of the research process, such as:

- Narrowing a topic
- Choosing sources
- Searching for scholarly articles
- Using sources ethically
- Managing citations

Gill Library offers a wide variety of resources and services such as general and specialized databases, an online catalog, interlibrary loan, workshops, library instruction, and 24/7 access to academic librarians. Our friendly, knowledgeable, and student-centered library staff is dedicated to clearing the haze that many students face when too much (or not enough) information creates a barrier to success.

Consider me as member of your support team who together with the staff in the Gill Library Learning Commons will make sure that you have access to tutors who can help you with grammar, sentence structure, and formatting. These mentoring roles are designed to equip you with everything you need to improve your communication and research abilities.

Here is the URL for the Library's homepage: library.cnr.edu If you have any questions about signing up for workshops or tutoring, reserving a group study room, getting research help, or other library services, stop by, call, or email me! I can also direct you to the right person if you have questions regarding financial aid, advisement, counseling services, or other CNR matters. I look forward to seeing you around campus this year!

Sincerely,

Roslyn Grandy



FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS

- “Thank you very much! I picked up three of the books you mentioned yesterday. Your list empowers me to continue writing!”
- “Thank you for the information and for creating a positive experience as a first semester student!”
- “It does look frightening being in an academic library, but the guidance you gave me yesterday gave me the courage to go in today and borrow a book.”
- “I’m emailing to thank you again for your support in my first semester. I finished with a 4.0. I have 2 tough classes this semester, so you’ll certainly be hearing from me again!”

FURTHER READING

- Conor, E. (2016). Your personal librarian: Connecting first-year students to the library at Reed College. *OLA Quarterly*, 22(3), 26-28.
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- Yale University Library. (2018). *About the personal librarian program*. Retrieved from <https://web.library.yale.edu/pl>