Being Earnest Liaisons – Revamping a Librarian Liaison Program

Missy Laytham & Joanne Hélouvry - Loyola Notre Dame Library

The Project

- LNDL's liaison program, introduced in 2002, served primarily to support collection development.
- Two library managers were charged with evaluating the program, recommending changes, and developing an action plan to revamp the program.

A Research Project in 5 Parts

- Historical review of current program
- Literature review
- Two online surveys
- Individual interviews with librarian liaisons
- Individual interviews with faculty

Recommendations

Structure

- Co-coordinators for first year
- Group librarians to serve different departments/areas
- Regular meetings including formalized training program
- Formal committee on procedures for liaisons - checklists
- Program aligned with performance evaluation process
- Assessment of new program written from the start

New Faculty

- 18-month approach
- Extra care given - 6 interactions over 3 semesters
- Training for Librarian Liaisons
- Checklists

Faculty Assistance

- Policies on extent of librarian research assistance
- Explore research needs of faculty

Next Steps

- Library committee work
- Priority setting
- Calendar and timelines
- Sample materials created
- Training and marketing

Training

- Scripts
- Mentoring
- Structured Monthly Meetings
  - Rotating minutes secretary
  - 30 minutes of training time
  - 15-20 minutes of Q&A
- LibGuides Training

Functional Specialties

Differentiated functional specialties from liaison responsibilities to facilitate communication between liaisons and different aspects of library work. Most liaisons perform dual roles of functional specialist and liaison.

Checklists

Multiple checklists were created in order to guide liaisons through the liaison process.

- Semester by semester guide to duties as a liaison
- Group task guideline
- First year faculty checklist

Groupings

Liaisons grouped by area to facilitate interactions. Experienced liaisons grouped with less-experienced liaisons.

Next Steps

Phase I – In Process

- Developing individual skill sets
- Group work – regular liaison meetings by discipline
- Roll out new collection weeding program
- Look for opportunities to be on campus committees

Phase II

- Policies on extent of librarian research assistance
- Priority setting
- Calendar and timelines
- Sample materials created
- Training and marketing

Phase III

- Share collection analyses with deans and chairs
- Communicate library goals/issues to deans
- Varieties by phase—outreach and communication are key measures of Phase I success
- Individuals work against checklists
- Groups develop their own project lists