4-24-2018

Making the Most of Student Workers: Creative Approaches to Staffing

Kathleen Spring
Linfield College, kspring@linfield.edu

Recommended Citation

Making the Most of Student Workers: Creative Approaches to Staffing

Kathleen Spring
Associate Professor, Linfield College
Collections Management Librarian/DigitalCommons Coordinator

bepress Webinar
April 22, 2018

Agenda

- Institutional background & IR fast facts
- Staffing overview
- Student roles in the IR
- Practical considerations (e.g., sharing files, quality control)
- Q&A

Image courtesy of Laura Davis.
Used with permission.

Linfield College

4-year private liberal arts college

3 campuses (McMinnville, Portland, Division of Online and Continuing Education)

2,282 students

Member of Orbis Cascade Alliance

Notes for Slide 3

Linfield College is a small, private liberal arts college, founded in 1858, with its main campus in McMinnville, Oregon, right in the heart of wine country. We have a campus in Portland which houses our nursing program, and we also have a Division of Online & Continuing Education to deliver our distance ed programs. Together, all three campuses have a total enrollment of just under 2300, with a little more than 1600 students on the Mac campus. The college has a historical affiliation with the American Baptists.

DigitalCommons@Linfield

Launched in August 2010

Nearly 7,100 works in the IR; about 85,100 downloads in FY 16-17

Faculty, staff, student scholarship/creative works, plus history of the college

Signature high-use collections include Oregon Wine History Archive, Dory Project, Linfield Magazine, Student Symposium

Notes for Slide 4

We launched our IR in 2010. We're now closing in on 400,000 total downloads and are on track to equal or exceed our downloads from FY16-17. DC@L has a significant amount of image content and streaming media content, which isn't reflected in download counts in the same way as more traditional IR content like papers, so we use a wide range of metrics in assessing impact and reach. Our focus over the years has definitely been on highlighting as much student work as possible, and we've been able to do that through a number of collections, one of which (the annual Student Symposium) has become a signature high-use collection for us, accounting for 20% of all full-text downloads during the last fiscal year.

Jereld R. Nicholson Library

Image courtesy of Daniel Hurst.
© Daniel Hurst Photography, 2006.
Used with permission.

Linfield College Libraries

- Paraprofessionals 6
- Faculty Librarians 5
- Administrators 5.8
- Student Workers 12.63
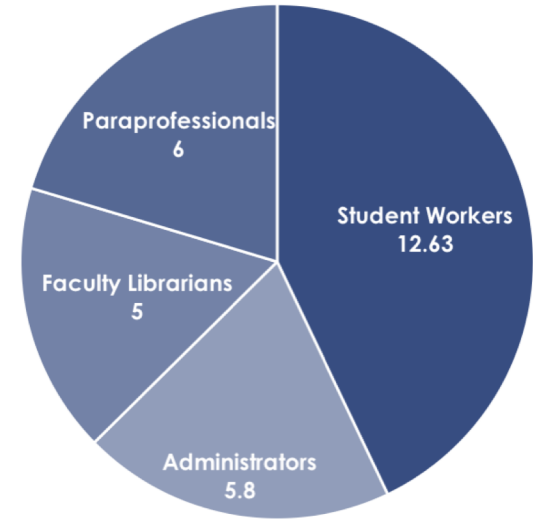
Lean staffing/multiple roles
+
Student workers
=
Creative staffing solutions

Notes for Slide 5

Students aren't just a focus as content creators for the IR – they're also a focus for us in terms of staffing. Compared to institutions of similar size, the Linfield Libraries are pretty leanly staffed, and lean staffing means we have to be creative – so we've chosen to get creative with our use of student workers. This is an area that institutions, regardless of their size, can look at to determine if they're getting all that they can out of the various segments of their employee pool. We could not run our libraries (both in Portland and in McMinnville) without our student workers. This is true of our standard departments like circulation, media services, reference, and technical services, all of which utilize student workers, but it's also true of our archives and our IR. At any given time, the archives usually employs between 2 and 5 student workers, some of whom may be grant-funded, and the IR employs 1 student worker on budget. During the academic year, student workers can work up to 10 hours a week; during the summer, a smaller group of students work 20 or 40 hours per week, depending on staffing needs in other areas and supervisory capacity. For full-time staff, our archivist has historically spent up to 0.25 FTE on IR-related work; as the repository manager, I estimate that I average between 0.25 and 0.33 FTE on managing the IR and all that entails – content upload, quality control checking of metadata, student worker supervision, integration with external systems, and, of course, recruiting and promoting new content.

Student Roles

Notes for Slide 6

We have two primary roles for students working with the IR – working directly with our archivist as Archives Technicians, and working as the Digital Repository Assistant directly with me, and I'll share some details on what we ask the students in these positions to do in just a minute. I coordinate closely with our archivist on existing and new projects to establish project timelines and expectations for student worker involvement. For new collections, we have a kickoff meeting to discuss any needed changes to our standard metadata configuration, adjustments to site design and organization, and requirements for grant reporting, and we continue to communicate regularly about these issues throughout the process.

Archives Technicians

Prep files for ingest

Create metadata and collection descriptions

Complete spreadsheets for batch upload

Notes for Slide 7

We ask a lot of all of our student workers. Archives students get all kinds of hands-on processing experience with collections (some of which may never find their way into the IR), work on writing finding aids and collection notes, do digitization and/or editing of video/audio files, participate in oral history interviews, and assist with social media promotion of content. In terms of their relationship to DC@L, their primary roles involve prepping files for ingest, creating metadata, and completing spreadsheets for batch upload. We've tried a number of workflows over the years, and these can be modified depending on the strengths and skillsets of the individual students. For instance, one year we tried having a student work with batch revision and batch upload spreadsheets, but she wasn't well suited for the level of detail orientation needed for that task. So, we pivoted to have her focus on other kinds of work with the same collection and worked on creating templates that the repository assistant could use without needing to have the same level of familiarity that the archives technicians would have with the collection content. As a smaller institution, flexibility is key for us, and we cross-train a lot; we can't necessarily afford to have students specialize in specific areas, although we definitely try to take advantage of individuals' strengths and expressed interests. But, larger institutions might be able to leverage a bigger student workforce in ways that allow for specialist positions to emerge, perhaps in digitization, metadata creation, or social media promotion.

Repository Assistant

- Metadata entry/maintenance

- Digitization projects

- Copyright permissions verification

- Documentary photography of exhibits/events

- Transcription and closed captioning

- Creation of promotional materials

Notes for Slide 8

As you can see, we give our student workers a wide variety of responsibilities in their ongoing work. Depending on the time of year, some of these responsibilities take a back seat to the others. For instance, as new faculty are hired and I reach out to them wearing my Collections Management hat, I also take the opportunity to tell them about the IR and invite them to participate in our faculty scholarship project. This often times out to occur within a typical fallow period for the IR. Similarly, the Archives often takes advantage of summer to conduct oral history interviews and create content; since we usually don't see that new content for 1-2 months (it has to go through editing and such), summer is a good time for the repository assistant to work on closed captioning of streaming media in the IR.

Practical Considerations

Notes for Slide 9

With the exception of our annual student symposium and our undergraduate research journal, all of our submissions are mediated. We see this as an advantage in that we can build relationships with people to cultivate possible future collections without having to worry about some of the quality control issues that can crop up with unmediated deposit. It also enables us to have more control over what we take on, especially since our capacity for new projects can be limited by the other roles we have in the library. (I am the Collections Management Librarian, in charge of acquisitions/budgeting, serials, and cataloging, and our archivist also serves as our director of interlibrary loan.) Over the years, we've identified tools that help us to manage the day-to-day aspects of the IR and that allow our distributed model of staffing to function.

File Sharing Tools

Dropbox (primarily for Linfield College Archives content)

Trello

OneDrive/SharePoint

Notes for Slide 10

File sharing has become even more important for us in the last couple of years. My repository assistant has worked remotely for me during the summer from her home about 5 hours away from McMinnville, and now during the school year she's a student on our Portland campus, so that remote arrangement has continued during the academic year. But, it's also just a natural evolution for those of us co-located with one another, as we've all discovered ways to streamline getting content to each other and the students we work with. We regularly use these three sets of tools to share files.

We use Dropbox mostly with the Archives, where they dump information sheets used to help us create descriptions and complete metadata for image collections. They also host the images there so that we can grab URLs to use in batch uploading.

I also use the free version of Trello to share files with my repository assistant –since we already use Trello for project management (which I'll talk more about in just a moment), it's handy to attach relevant files to individual project cards. But, Trello does have a file size limit, so occasionally we need to use a different tool.

We use Microsoft's OneDrive and SharePoint tools to get around the file size limit in Trello, as well as when we need to share content among stakeholders internal to Linfield, particularly with our Dory Project researchers. The repository assistant and I have been set up with shared permissions to access this content and have an established set of procedures for dealing with content as it goes through various steps in the review and ingest process.

Project Management Tools

Trello

Google Drive

Wiki (Google Sites)

Notes for Slide 11

We also use a variety of project management tools. Our top 3 are Trello, Google Drive, and an internal wiki formerly housed at Wikispaces that we're currently migrating over to Google Sites.

To Do

review symposium submissions
☑ 0/1

Linfield Authors (Kernberger, Winkenweder, Fiordalis)
👁 💬 1 📎 3

add publications to Google spreadsheet (Norman)
📎 1

upload event recording releases to permissions
📎 12

add publications to Google spreadsheet (Nordstrom)
≡

upload postcard permissions
📎 6

Add a card…

Doing

upload OWHA interview video (Ponzi)

upload OWHA interview photos (see email from 2018-03-20)

edit captions for Life and Death in Rock: Meditations on Tombstones

edit captions for What Is New with Canopy Management?

Add a card…

Videos waiting for Kathleen's review

edit captions for How Language Undermines the Revitalization of the Cultural Commons

edit captions for On the Contrary: How to Think about Climate Skepticism

edit captions for On the Contrary: How to Think about Climate Communication

edit captions for Technologies That Undermine the Exercise of Ecological Intelligence

edit captions for A Joint Last Lecture

edit captions for Paralympism, Disability and the Ethics of Elective Amputation
📎 1

Add a card…

Nonvideos waiting for Kathleen's review

upload OWHA interviews (see email from 2018-03-20)

upload collab. burn sculpture images to avcstud_collab (see email from OneDrive sent 2018-03-11)

Linfield authors (Araguz - Until we are level again)

upload OWHA interview & interview photos (Baker, Cole)
👁 💬 1

upload OWHA interview & interview photos (Montalieu)

upload post-grant reports (Atkinson, Wilkins, Broshot, Tillberg, Bestwick, Beam, Toro, Weisz, VanBeek, Carrasquillo Hernández, Peterson, Crane)
💬 2 📎 15

Add a card…

Done (sp

Linfield M

Linfield M
📎 24

post-gra
📎 1

post-gra
📎 1

post-gra
📎 1

post-gra
📎 2 ☑

post-gra
📎 5 ☑

Add a car

Notes for Slide 12

I use Trello with the repository assistant to track ongoing projects. As you can see here, she has a To Do list of items in the queue waiting for action, and I can easily see what she's working on and what's ready for my review. Trello allows you to drag and drop cards from one list to another and add features like checklists, due dates, alerts, and comments or messaging within the cards. This works a lot better for us than trying to track priorities or completed projects via an email trail.

Project Management Tools

Trello

Google Drive

Wiki (Google Sites)

No further action required

No further action required	Further action required - see Notes field	Will need to follow up RE: full text	Oral presentations/film/performance (may or may not have full-text content to upload)			
Name	Title	Manuscript ID#	Notes	Abstract Published?	Full-Text Content Received?	Ful Co Up
Higinbotham, Katie	High Desert Journal: Writing and the West	1226	Oral presentation - no full text to upload	Yes	No	No
McTaggart, Molly L.	Can Sexism in the House of Representatives be Measured with the Presence of Military Installations?	1227	Oral Presentation	Yes	No	No
Patterson, Grey; Pfalz, Andrew; Allison, Jesse	Neural Audio: Music Information Retrieval Using Deep Neural Networks	1228	Poster	Yes	Yes	Yes
Oliver, Haley V.; Lundquist, Katie M.	Evaluation of the Prerequisite Requirements in Principles of Economics and Student Success at Linfield College	1229	Poster	Yes	No	No
Hoffbeck, Carmen A.; Griffin, Tyler W.; Fradkin, Steve; Weisz, Jeremy	Tracking Nuclear Inclusion X (NIX), a Potential Pathogen of Pacific Razor Clams	1230	Poster	Yes	No	No
Kinney, Erin M.; Coste, Sarah; Reinke, Catherine	Examination of the Monoamine Oxidase a Gene Promoter on Motivation to Exercise and Levels of Voluntary Physical Activity	1231	Poster	Yes	Yes	Yes
Roberts, Patricia; Cowell, Joshua	An Empirical Analysis of the Factors Affecting College Quarterback Prospect Signing Bonuses	1232	Poster	Yes	Yes	Yes
Broshot, Nancy; Cooksy, Hayden; Taylor, Tatiana; Hanson, Wes	A Comparison of Urban Soil to Rural Soils	1233	Poster	Yes	Yes	Yes
Walser, Matthew E.; Bestwick, Megan	Role of Copper and Tor Signaling in Reactive Oxygen Species Induced Cell Aging	1234	Poster	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gladding, Madison; Gilbert, Brian	Synthesis and Characterization of Au:Ag Core-Shell Nanoparticles with 4-Aminothiophenol Surface Enhance Raman Spectroscopy (SERS) Tag	1235	Poster	Yes	Yes	Yes

Notes for Slide 14

We also utilize Google Drive regularly to help us track ongoing projects, like our annual student symposium submissions that you see here. Again, this is a cleaner way to consolidate information than relying on email trails. By using color coding, we can see at a glance which items still need further attention and which items have been completed.

Project Management Tools

Trello

Google Drive

Wiki (Google Sites)

DigitalCommons@Linfield Wiki

- Home
- Archives
- ARTS
- BIOL
- DCatL
  - DCatL Contexts
  - DCatL DC Mappings
  - DPLA/Primo Harvesting
  - Image Editing
  - Permissions
  - Scanning Access Files
  - Scanning Negatives
  - Scanning OCR
  - Scanning Photos
  - Statistics
  - Style Guidelines
- ENVS
- Faculty
  - crisscrossing Science
  - Faculty Presentations
  - Faculty Publications

Processing Guidelines for IPO: Postcards from Abroad

These series include both postcards from students written while abroad and winning essays submitted to the annual IPO Essay Contest. Make sure you are in the correct series for the postcards or essays you want to upload. The date the postcard or essay was written (not when we receive the content from IPO) will let you know which series you need to be in. Each series corresponds to an academic year, so make sure the postcard or essay gets uploaded to the correct academic year. The correct series for the 2017-2018 academic year is **intl_postcards_1718**.

Examples:
Postcard is dated 2010-05-26
This postcard should be uploaded to the **intl_postcards** series (for the 2009-2010 academic year).

Postcard is dated 2010-10-31
This postcard should be uploaded to the **intl_postcards_1011** series (for the 2010-2011 academic year).

Postcard is dated 2011-02-06
This postcard should be uploaded to the **intl_postcards_1011** series (for the 2010-2011 academic year).

File Naming: Please rename files according to the appropriate template below. For the type component, choose from the following: Essay, Postcard. For the date component, enter dates as YYYY-MM-DD.

LastNameFirstName_Type_Date
IPOPostcardsPermissions_LastName_Year

Examples:
RomeroKevin_Essay_January2014
Cone-MurakamiRobin_Essay_Spring2013
CrowderSteven_Postcard_2013-02-20
IPOPostcardsPermissions_Crowder_2013

Notes for Slide 16

Finally, our third major project management tool is our internal wiki. We've developed this documentation resource over the last seven years, and it includes processing guidelines for each collection, with info about any specialized metadata entry, file naming conventions, dealing with linking to related resources, how to assign disciplines, and so forth. Our wiki has gone through numerous iterations – it started out on a local server in a clunky environment that wasn't user-friendly; about 2 years in, we moved it to Wikispaces, but with the announcement that they're shuttering their platform later this year, we're once again in the midst of a migration of this content, this time to Google Sites. The various wiki pages are invaluable for the repository assistant and the archives technicians, especially when they're dealing with a collection that they may only work with once a year.

Questions?

Kathleen Spring
kspring@linfield.edu

Notes for Slide 17

I hope this has given you some sense of the variety of things our student workers do to support the IR at Linfield and how we've utilized students in creative ways to help staff our repository. We ask a lot of our students, but we also get tremendous results from them. Our students have told us they've learned skills they never would have learned in other work study positions, or perhaps even in their classes, and in many cases they're doing advanced work that might be expected of full-time paraprofessionals. Our particular approach might not work for every IR, but I firmly believe that every IR with access to student workers has something to gain by thinking about how they might utilize them in different ways than they are now.