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Extending Liaison Collaboration: Partnering with Faculty in Support of a Student Learning Community.

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Extending liaison collaboration: partnering with faculty in support of a student learning community

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this article is to describe the successful collaboration between faculty in Eastern Kentucky University Libraries and the University's Occupational Therapy Department in supporting a graduate student learning community, and the benefits of stepping outside of typical liaison activities to play an active role in this new educational paradigm.

Design/methodology/approach – In 2006, graduate students and faculty in Occupational Therapy at Eastern Kentucky University, with a librarian and with the support of a national professional organization, facilitated the completion of a graduate thesis through the use of a topic-based learning community. This team completed an in-depth, evidence-based review of occupational therapy journal articles in the context of a regional university environment. This article focuses on the collaboration between faculty and librarian as they facilitated this new learning paradigm, the enhancement of the liaison partnership, and the results of the project especially in terms of student learning outcomes.

Findings – Collaborating with faculty to support a student learning community, and supporting students in atypical ways, contribute in valuable ways to strengthening the relationship with academic departments, increasing the perceived value of library services, and promoting student success.

Practical implications – Library liaison programs benefit from innovative partnerships with faculty, and from seeking opportunities to participate in new educational models.

Originality/value – This paper addresses the benefits of participating in student learning communities.

Keywords Academic libraries, Students, Learning, Communities, Partnership

Paper type Case study

Introduction

Librarians are constantly on the lookout for creative strategies to expand their liaison activities in order to consolidate productive relationships with faculty and to increase opportunities for relevant information literacy instruction. Partnering with faculty in new educational methodologies is one significant way in which librarians and faculty can work together to enhance student learning.

In 2006, graduate students and faculty in the department of Occupational Therapy at Eastern Kentucky University (EKU), in partnership with a librarian, facilitated the completion of a graduate project though the use of a topic-based learning community. This team, in the context of a regional university environment, and in conjunction with a national professional organization, completed an in-depth, evidence-based review of research to support an occupational therapy intervention. During the course of the

project, the librarian and the faculty project coordinator worked closely together to define the scope of the project and plan its implementation. Both parties found that they were called upon to employ new approaches as part of the "inquiry team" learning community. This teaching/learning approach is a new instructional technique which emphasizes student-centered, team-based education. The faculty leader used the teaching/learning process combined with project management skills to move the group of students toward their goal of producing a database of evidence-based articles on a specific clinical question. The librarian provided planning, topic-based information literacy instruction, and research support to the inquiry team. This project used an evolving library/faculty partnership to meet a variety of emerging student and discipline needs, many determined by the current context of clinical work, education and information literacy.

The current context

Over the past ten years health-care professionals have been under an increasing demand to support clinical decisions with evidence of best practice in their fields. These systematic reviews are defined as "the conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients" (Sackett *et al.*, 2000). Faculty, students, and practitioners are now required to develop two new skill sets for practice, i.e. completing an in-depth systematic review of the literature and integrating that information into practice – in other words, practice based on evidence.

The demand for increasing expertise in completing a thorough analysis of the literature has reached back into academia, as faculty struggle to learn and teach best practice in researching evidence to support practice. The standard of evidence-based practice has placed increasing demands for information and training on reference librarians at regional universities. This has been particularly significant at EKU, a Master's level university with a focus on teaching and service to a particular region (regional university) of Kentucky. This focus serves to constrain the time and scope of the reference librarian to teaching and service with much less time available to devote to an expanded research role.

It is customary at many academic institutions, particularly in the libraries of research universities, and at legal and medical libraries, for librarians routinely to support faculty in performing extensive research projects; indeed, this is often close to the full-time responsibility of these librarians. On its "About Eastern Kentucky University" web page, this university defines itself as "dedicated to three specific functions – high-quality instruction, scholarship, and service, and places emphasis on the three in that order". The libraries follow this directive in being student-centered and instruction-focused, with a very different set of responsibilities, for example, than that of the librarian at the research institution who performed the second half of the project searches.

In addition to the mission of the university constraining the scope of the reference librarian, there is the complex two-fold focus of assisting the academy (faculty and students), and the community (practitioners) in this arduous process. These systematic reviews require lengthy database searches in, at times, obscure journals or databases. The support of a full-time research librarian is a necessity. However, regional university reference librarians, with their emphasis on instruction and public service,

have difficulty providing the level of research assistance needed to complete the evidence-based review. As we implemented this project, we experienced both the benefits and challenges of trying to meet these needs while riding the cusp of change.

Description of the project

The American Occupational Therapy Association's Evidenced-Based Literature Review Project is a systematic process to critically evaluate evidence relative to a focused question, assessing the value of occupational therapy interventions. The process includes drafting a clinical question and search strategy, then searching the literature for evidence relevant to the question. The professional organization provided a structured process and appropriate forms to the inquiry team with instructions for completing the steps in this systematic process. The process then was completed by a group of EKU graduate students with a faculty mentor. The Occupational Therapy department had recently designed these inquiry teams to facilitate the completion of a thesis or project at the Master's level. The review process, then, served the dual purpose of enacting the recommendations of the professional association (the American Occupational Therapy Association) and providing a platform for the students to complete their Master's requirement for a major investigative project.

The inquiry team began meeting in the fall semester prior to graduation for the student participants. The graduate students and faculty discussed the review process, the focus of the review, the literature search strategies, the inclusion and exclusion criteria, and the project time line. Initially, much time was spent on arriving at the focused question and defining the terms in the question. With input from the professional association and clinical experts, the following focused question was defined:

What occupational therapy interventions are effective for improving and maintaining participation and performance in paid and unpaid employment (volunteer opportunities, home management, child care) and education in individuals with severe mental illness?

After the focused question was agreed upon, the students began to define the terms in the question relevant to occupational therapy.

While the inquiry team was adept at defining search terms in relation to the question, the final matrix of search possibilities was beyond the skill of both students and faculty. As is true of many students even at the graduate level, these students did not have adequate information literacy skills to complete this complex project. As the faculty also lacked the in-depth skills needed, the students quickly decided to enlist the ongoing help of the reference librarian.

When contacted in autumn 2006, EKU Libraries assessed the feasibility of participating in the project, the nature of the task required, and the time needed for implementation. The library considers its instructional role paramount. Its mission is to instruct and support students as they become independent researchers, capable of high-level critical thinking. On the reference team, librarians' daily tasks are oriented to classroom instruction, reference assistance, collection development, and committee work. Reference librarians do not typically perform major research projects for students or faculty, because the focus is on assisting students in becoming adept at locating and evaluating information. In this case, however, while there was appropriate administrative concern that the amount of time required would take away from

existing instructional job responsibilities, the decision was made to take the risk because of the potential collaborative benefits of such a project.

The libraries came to view the opportunity to work on this research initiative as significant outreach to an academic liaison department and as a means to explore a possible expanded role in a regional university. Participation in this national project became an important aspect of the reference librarian's liaison activities and enabled the library to serve the larger community through contacts with the professional community as well as a presentation of this inquiry team project to the state association.

The goal of the research project was to build a database of articles demonstrating evidence-based practice in occupational therapy related to a specific clinical problem. The librarian's task was to perform initial searches in several EKU databases to identify likely evidence-based articles and then forward the citations and abstracts of these articles to the graduate students for evaluation against project criteria. The first task was to organize and structure the library component. The librarian designed and administered an instruction session to the inquiry team customized to the study's requirements. This session accommodated the library's primary mission of developing student research skills.

The instruction session was at a level appropriate to graduate students, providing techniques for efficient, complex searches. Search suggestions included information on grouping search terms so as to perform the searches in as efficient a manner as possible. The session also included a discussion of Boolean operators as well as truncation. It provided an in-depth look at search results, especially as regards the major and minor subject terms associated with each article. Even if the term searched did not appear in the abstract, which was the initial screening tool, if it appeared in the subject terms, the article was deemed worthy of consideration. The librarian discussed the use of the linking software, which provides alternate methods of obtaining the full text for those articles that were citation-only in the original database. The session also included specific instructions for obtaining articles through interlibrary loan, when necessary.

Frequent and ongoing communication was required among all of the stakeholders, including the library personnel, faculty, students, the national organization, and community practitioners. The librarian and the faculty coordinator participated in an iterative process, similar to processes used in qualitative research, at each stage of the project to assure clarity and consistency in activities. The process helped us to arrive jointly at appropriate keyword combinations from the table of search terms initially identified, searched in sequence by the librarian. The iteration assured that all of the stakeholders provided input based on their extensive professional experience to EKU's professionally inexperienced students. The ongoing and close communication was essential as the members of the team experienced changes and challenges to their respective roles.

Changing roles

As this project developed, it soon became evident that all of the participants would be challenging existing perceptions of their functions and changing their traditional roles to meet the new educational student learning community paradigm. The students, faculty, and librarian had to learn each other's role in this process, change their usual

roles and be willing to take on any number of tasks. This learning process had both benefits and challenges for the inquiry team. Among the benefits was an increased understanding of the demands being placed on faculty and the library liaison by our existing expectations and administrative structure. An evolving understanding arose among team members that information literacy is a complex and, at times, difficult subject often sorely neglected in undergraduate education. Singh (2005) finds that faculty in the programs she studied report "only some of their undergraduate students could be considered information literate by (ACRL) standards". Eastern Kentucky University Libraries has a robust information literacy program, in partnership with the English department. All sections of basic English courses receive face-to-face library instruction. However, transfer students may slip through the cracks, and graduate students (including those in this project's learning community) may have received little or no information literacy instruction as undergraduates, depending on their undergraduate academic institution. The project participants came to EKU as graduate students with inconsistent abilities in this area. One of our objectives was to provide assignment-specific information literacy instruction as a remedy.

With effective communication and working relationships, the project became an exceptional learning process to understand in depth the roles and functions of our peers at this regional university.

The librarian's roles
The librarian provided planning, instruction, search results, and support to the inquiry team. Contrary to the traditional role of supporting and educating students in how to search the literature, much of the reference librarian's efforts involved performing first-level searches in EKU databases to identify evidence-based occupational therapy articles for the graduate students to review against evidence-based practice criteria. Thus, more time was required on this project than is customary for a reference librarian at a regional university, where most responsibilities consist of instruction, reference, and committee duties. The typical role of an EKU librarian focuses on helping students become information literate. This evolving role demanded that the librarian be responsive to her liaison department's needs while participating in the database creation initiative. The librarian was called upon to understand the students' and department's requirements in this project and to see participation as an opportunity to expand her outreach and collaborative efforts. This process required a flexible outlook and the willingness to commit to finding ways of incorporating substantial additional responsibilities into the typical work flow. The nature of the work demanded exercise of effective problem-solving skills. These skills were required to resolve issues such as deadline pressures, managed by recruiting the assistance of other personnel when it became clear how much time was required to perform the necessary searches.

Above all, the reference librarian needed to utilize strong communication while interacting with the various participants: with the faculty leader in planning effective implementation of the project, with the learning community in providing instruction and in providing clear and meaningful search results, with colleagues in providing direction as they assisted with research, and with library administration in persuading them of the merits of involvement in this extended outreach activity.

The faculty leader's roles

The faculty leader's role in the learning community was that of facilitator, coach, and project manager. The learning paradigm, which places the focus of learning on the student and the subject, provided the philosophical foundation for the project (Barr and Tagg, 1995). The subject was truly the center of this endeavor, with faculty, students, and librarian learning throughout the process. This type of method might best be described as a topic-based learning community. The faculty leader facilitated communication among faculty, staff, students, and professionals so that they collaborated to arrive at a research question, compile appropriate data, analyze the data and, finally, write up the project. Weekly meetings, telephone conferences, use of Blackboard, and e-mail communication all centered on the development and research related to the specific clinical question. Additionally, the instructor had the responsibility of assuring equity among the students and continued development of each student's research, writing, and presentation skills.

Discussion of expanded roles

The unique and expanded roles of both the reference librarian and the faculty leader, and their collaboration in planning, guiding and implementing the database creation project created an effective student-centered partnership. Outreach to, and collaboration with, faculty have been traditional liaison activities in academic libraries. As demonstrated by our project, today's environment brings new educational methods and a heavier emphasis on electronic information resources. This project revealed the benefits of structuring the liaison's role to fit these new realities. Elrod and Somerville (2007) posit the benefits of seeking "new opportunities for expression of professional expertise in collaboration with academic faculty". We also believe that the advantages of employing these new opportunities far outweigh the drawbacks experienced in the implementation of this complex process. Elrod and Somerville (2007) go on to note that some degree of reorganization of activities and approaches is necessary to permit librarians to become more central to the university's educational mission. Indeed, EKU Libraries' participation in this database creation project, with its refocusing of liaison outreach activities, flexible response to the Occupational Therapy Department's needs, and new educational approach confirmed this point. In undertaking the completion of a graduate thesis through the use of a topic-based learning community, the librarian (and the faculty leader) modeled the principles of our university's mission statement: "Eastern Kentucky University is a student-centered, comprehensive public university dedicated to high-quality instruction, scholarship, and service". The reference librarian and the faculty leader served students and furthered their scholarly goals by joining with them to accomplish this graduate project initiative. The team as a whole served the university, the national organization, and the community by developing a database of evidence-based articles, a new and timely information resource for practitioners.

The positive ramifications of responsiveness to faculty needs and requests are discussed in detail by Joan Leishman (2003). Leishman describes collaborative models which are faculty-driven as opposed to those prescribed by a library's formal liaison program. At the Gerstein Science Information Centre at the University of Toronto, three separate experiences involved librarians working with faculty to integrate customized information resources into curricula. In each case faculty initiated the contact. Positive responsiveness to these requests demonstrates the library's service

philosophy and interest in faculty collaboration. Leishman (2003) states that their liaison program has "created an environment where librarians are encouraged to be open to specialized needs and to take innovative approaches to customizing information delivery to meet these needs". This approach yields beneficial exposure for the library and reinforces its service orientation. Also noted as important to the success of the project is the library's involvement in planning from the beginning. Our database creation project reflects a similar perspective and experience. EKU Libraries was approached by faculty to participate in the evidence-based practice database creation project and made the decision to take the risk of involvement in order to expand the liaison role and enhance collaboration with Occupational Therapy faculty and students. The Libraries, too, participated in the planning process early on, and this early involvement facilitated implementation of the research from our point of view.

Harvey and Dewald (1997) emphasize the importance for librarians of proactively and aggressively pursuing opportunities to partner with faculty and to support new paradigms in active, student-centered, collaborative learning. They advocate for librarians having a more embedded role in the creation and delivery of educational experiences – especially those that make use of group learning. EKU Libraries' active participation in the development of a new information resource and the librarian's role in the planning, creation, and delivery of this particular unique educational experience are closely aligned with this approach.

Elrod and Somerville (2007) also state that new educational practices which actively engage students and which feature inquiry learning experiences call for rethinking the roles of all educational elements, including professors, libraries, librarians, and students. A team approach is needed to "meaningfully integrate information resources and information literacy into student learning" (Elrod and Somerville, 2007). These principles were reflected in our project's utilization of new approaches in outreach, collaboration and educational methodology, in which each member of the learning community contributed to the success of this initiative.

The search process

The process of locating articles reflecting evidence-based practice involved combining numerous pairs of terms, chosen by the graduate students and the national organization, with which to search. The librarian was initially given a list of ten client diagnosis terms. She recommended consolidating these terms to streamline the search process. The final diagnosis list included these seven terms:

(1) mental illness;

(2) personality disorder;

(3) anxiety disorder;

(4) psychosis;

(5) psychotic disorder;

(6) schizophrenia; and

(7) mood disorder.

In phase one of the project, we searched each of these seven terms in combination with terms from the extensive occupational therapy interventions list of level-one keywords,

again chosen by the graduate students and the national organization. The interventions list was organized into an occupation-based topic and other associated keywords in that category. The process involved searching each term from the diagnosis list in combination with a term from the interventions list. For example, *mental illness* was searched in combination with *childcare, parents, parenting, child rearing, parent-child relations*, and so on throughout the list. The librarian repeated this process for each of the seven diagnosis terms. The project team's process therefore involved systematic searching of all the possible keyword terms provided in EKU databases (see Table I for a matrix example).

While starting off with a list of several target databases, the team of researchers found that the time constraints prevented going beyond two, CINAHL and MEDLINE. To cover all of the combinations in the two databases, more than 1,100 searches were

Occupation-based	Other key words			
Childcare Level 1	Parenting, parents, child rearing, parent child relations			
Meal preparation Level 1	Menu planning, cooking, food related skills, meal planning			
Homemaking, Home management Level 1	Housekeeping, household management, laundry skills, ironing, repair, cleaning, gardening/yardwork			
Grooming Level 2	Self-care skills, personal hygiene			
Shopping Level 1	Grocery shopping, clothes shopping			
Dressing Level 2	ADL, professional dress			
Financial management Level 2	Money, money therapy, monetary skills, financial counseling, financial management, personal finance, income, credit cards, financial planning, budgeting			
Time management Level 1	Activity diary, individual time use, time, time use, time factor, routines			
Community mobility Level 2	Transportation, community transportation, auto mobility, driving, driving behavior			
Health management Level 2	Health promotion, health improvement, medication management, health education, health behavior, disease management			
Safety Level 1	Home safety, prevention, safety risks			
Education exploration – volunteer/retirement/work Level 1	Learning, career counseling, nonprofessional education, career education	Volunteer – voluntarism, social participation, voluntary workers	Retirement – retiree	Work – occupation, vocation, job, employment, work capacity
Identifying an area of interest in work/education Level 1	Interest inventories, interests, personality traits, vocational interests, self evaluations, career planning, vocational aptitude			

Note: Key words for search: Occupational Therapy Interventions (based partially on OT Practice Framework)

performed. We evaluated the associated abstracts, and formatted the citations of those articles deemed in keeping with the evidence-based practice criteria provided by the inquiry team.

The regional university reference librarian completed the initial searches and arrived at the first in a series of article titles and abstracts (see Figure 1 for a sample of feedback the librarian provided to the students for review). Upon receiving the list of titles and abstracts, the students began a second-level analysis

AOTA Evidence-Based Articles Project

Database: CINAHL

Employment Seeking Level 1

• **Keywords**: employment and mental illness and occupational therapy

Evidence-based employment services for persons with serious mental illness. Gray K; *Mental* Health Special Interest Section Quarterly, 2005 Sep; 28 (3): 1-2.

No abstract

Developing a worker role: stories of four people with mental illness. (includes abstract) Kennedy-Jones M; Australian *Occupational Therapy* Journal, 2005 Jun; 52 (2): 116-26.

Background and Aims: Work plays an important role in adults' well-being, irrespective of health status. Vocational rehabilitation can enable people with *mental illness* to return to open *employment*. A narrative approach was used to explore how individuals with a *mental illness* made sense of their work-related experiences.
Methods and Results: Four Clubhouse members in open *employment* for at least 6 months completed in-depth, semistructured interviews, from which narratives were created to reveal events, significant persons and actions that assisted these individuals to resume work. Woven into the participants' stories were four 'impelling forces' contributing to a sense-of-self as a worker. These impelling forces were: support from significant others, the personal meaning of work, experiences within the Clubhouse programme, and the ongoing struggle with *illness*. Implications for *occupational therapy* practice are discussed.
Conclusion: The findings of this study urge *occupational* therapists and others to provide opportunities to provide on-going support to people with a *mental illness* who seek paid *employment*.

Employment for people with serious mental illness: barriers and contemporary approaches to service. (includes abstract) Henry AD; OT Practice, 2005 Mar 21; 10 (5): Suppl: CE-1-CE-8.

Adults with serious *mental illness* (SMI) face many barriers to *employment*, yet many of these individuals want to work. Recent years have brought about notable advances in the development and dissemination of vocational rehabilitation services for adults with SMI. Supported *employment* is now considered an "evidence-based" practice for people with SMI. Unfortunately, many adults with SMI do not have access to state-of-the-art *employment* services. *Occupational* therapists and *occupational therapy* assistants work with adults with SMI in both hospital and community-based *mental* health settings; many of our clients identify *employment* as an important life goal. *Occupational therapy* practitioners need to be knowledge-able of the core principles of evidence-based *employment* services, and of the intervention models that exist, in order to best support clients in achieving their *employment* goals.

Chart used by students to collate the Librarian data for further review

Keywords	
employment and mental illness and occupational therapy	Individual placement and support increased the likelihood of employment of people with severe mental illness. Bennett S; Australian Occupational Therapy Journal, 2003 Sep; 50 (3): 180-1.

No abstract |

Figure 1.
Abbreviated sample of
feedback from the
librarian

based on inclusion and exclusion criteria identified in the search strategy. Once titles and abstracts were identified and evaluated as relevant and appropriate, the students began the in-depth review of the articles. Articles were again sorted by inclusion and exclusion criteria. The remaining articles were included for a full article review on the evidence table.

Considerable planning was required to resolve the issue of time allocation in implementing the necessary research. The volume of searches was beyond the scope of one librarian, given the EKU reference team's usual responsibilities. The librarian therefore recruited a second reference librarian and a graduate assistant, a student in library and information sciences, to assist. The librarian determined how long it took to do a certain number of searches, then set the schedule and monitored pacing. These three needed to accomplish a considerable portion of the searches within the constraint of the semester time limit (before Christmas vacation) while the graduate students were off campus on an internship placement. Completing these searches then would allow the students to have the spring semester to complete their review in time for graduation. Because of these time constraints and the labor-intensive nature of the search process, the faculty coordinator was able to secure the assistance of a librarian at a research university with a medical school. This researcher, experienced in similar projects, completed the database search portion of the project.

By mid-February the students had received over 950 citations for the Level One review. A final list of 145 was compiled for student analysis into themes. Relevant articles were individually evaluated and critical information was added to an evidence table. After completion of the evidence table, students critically assessed the topic areas. The project and final assessment papers were presented at the Spring Research Day at EKU. This presentation completed their graduate project.

The project was a journey of discovery as everyone moved through this process. In addition to the positive outcomes for the students, all of the participants were able to reflect on their traditional roles and reassess the effectiveness of the existing library/faculty relationship in the current evidence centered environment. As we traveled through the process our perceptions of our roles were challenged and changed as we explored innovative ways to meet the needs of the students, the academic department, the library and the professional community.

Benefits and challenges

A variety of benefits and challenges were identified through student written feedback; a focus group of students, professional organization and faculty; and ongoing feedback between students, faculty and librarian after the project was completed. First and foremost, students were satisfied with the experience and successful in completing their degree requirements. Students were uniformly pleased with this process for several reasons. First, it was a "real" project that contributed to the profession of occupational therapy. Students and faculty subsequently worked with the professional association to publish evidence in a variety of formats, including a paper summarizing the evidence and a chapter in a continuing education project. Students also felt that they learned how to do an evidenced-based review and how to critically analyze research. They became aware of the complexity of doing library research and the effort one must take in order to assure rigor in their research findings. They believed that the strengths of the project were in the inclusion in the work with a reference/research

librarian and the parallel learning about the use of research in a library. They also felt that the inquiry team was strengthened by communication with a librarian, a professional group and each other to quickly resolve problems. Finally, each student met the learning outcomes of the course. All completed evidence-based reviews which were assembled into a publishable paper. All increased their knowledge of evidence-based practice and became experts at analyzing research articles. And an added benefit was that students became knowledgeable consumers of library resources – life-long learners and information-literate.

Benefits for the faculty and librarian were evident as a strong collaborative relationship was forged throughout the project. This relationship continued long after the completion of the project and facilitated an affiliation between the regional university library and the community of practitioners. These practitioners, who frequently supervise students, also received literacy training as a result of this work, through a presentation given by the librarian and the faculty leader at the state association conference. This learning experience most certainly reflects the trend in education toward active, involved learning as well as collaboration among units in the university setting. These multilevel benefits far outweighed the challenges.

While the benefits were numerous, challenges also existed. Certainly, time and resources were an issue. The one drawback identified by students was that the time allocated to the project did not allow a continued relationship (in the project) with the regional university's reference librarian. Students recommended that more time be allotted to a project of this scope. While the research university librarian who completed the database searches was faster at locating more obscure sources, the students preferred working with the regional university's reference librarian as information was provided in a more "student friendly" format. The EKU reference librarian was easily accessible and able to work with the students and faculty directly to arrive at a format for presenting the results of the database search. In this way the presentation of the data became a learning tool for students based on their emerging understanding of the Occupational Therapy Framework for Practice. The research university librarian was not easily accessible and presented lists of data organized by date or author. Students were expected to translate the data into a professional framework or context with no real professional experience. While this approach is appropriate for faculty researchers, the task proved difficult and time-consuming for students.

The very active role of the faculty requires extra time to communicate to all involved. Faculty communicated regularly with all of the stakeholders in this project, including the inquiry team, the professional association, and administrative units within the university. Communication is central to the success of the project, and time is at a premium.

This inquiry team is convinced that the multilevel benefits have far outweighed the challenges encountered in the limits of time and resources. Each time such a learning group is experienced, we develop a better understanding of each other, our services, and our ways of viewing the world. The faculty leader and the librarian agree that they have seen the demonstrated benefits of this approach in enhancing student learning. We are in the forefront of breaking down the silos of traditional education, and this new approach will only benefit our students and our university communities.

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