# Liaison Roles
UNCG University Libraries
March 2015

Introduction

The roles of library liaisons (subject specialists assigned to academic disciplines) continue to evolve. This document describes both ongoing and new roles in order to assist with planning, evaluation, assessment, and recruitment. Best practices for each role are included to provide concrete examples of effective work

Four functional roles of liaisons
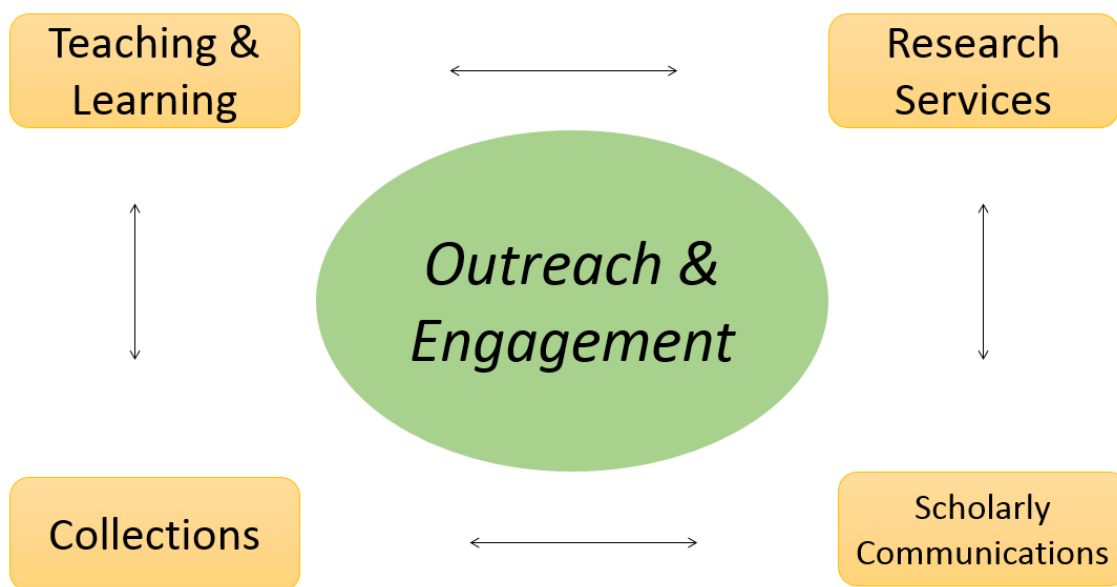
Central nature of outreach & engagement

The ethos of liaison work is a mindset of outreach to and proactive engagement with UNCG students, faculty, staff and administrators. Liaisons might also work with alumni, other researchers, and community members. This outreach mindset permeates all four functional liaison roles described below.

General responsibilities of liaison work

- Develop strong working relationships with faculty
- Seek opportunities to collaborate and establish partnerships in research, teaching, advocacy, etc.
- Monitor trends in teaching and scholarship in assigned disciplines
- Promote library services and resources
- Assess both user needs and liaison services
- Engage in continual education in librarianship and assigned academic disciplines

1. Teaching and Learning

- Provide information literacy and research instruction to distance and residential classes via guest instruction, teaching or co-teaching credit-classes, online learning objects, etc.
- Work with instructors to integrate information literacy and research skills into the curriculum
- Create and maintain effective library guides, subject portals, tutorials, videos, and other learning objects
- Design graded and ungraded research assignments in collaboration with instructors that incorporate information literacy goals
- Assess student learning of information literacy concepts using the University Libraries' "Student Learning Outcomes" and via multiple assessment methods
- Identify core classes and curricula that would benefit from research instruction and/or learning objects, and contact the teachers involved

Best practices

- Developing teaching and assessment skills through conferences, workshops, team-teaching, observing others teach, etc.
- Discussing teaching experiences and ideas with other librarians
- Reading new and revised syllabi
- Reading students' research projects or observing final presentations for assessment
- Examining other libraries' research guides, tutorials, videos, etc. for fresh approaches and new ideas

2. Research Services

- Provide customized reference and research services through email, phone, chat, and individual and group consultations
- Help staff the Information Desk and AskUs online service
- Make referrals to other librarians, SCUA, campus units, etc. as appropriate
- Seek opportunities to extend services through embedded work
- Understand database interfaces, citation management tools, and other research tools used on campus
- Support the Reference Intern program through training and mentoring
- Understand the research process of students and faculty

Best practices:

- Monitoring information desk and liaison queues in LibraryH3lp
- Applying reference interviewing strategies to research services
- Following up with users after the initial research session
- Investigating the research interests of faculty and graduate students in preparation for providing future research service
- Learning new interfaces and tools through training, webinars, and self-directed learning
- Analyzing LibStats, web logs, and other methods of data tracking to better understand user behavior and to make recommendations on how to improve our services or interfaces

3. Collections

- Communicate with users regarding collection and research needs
- Develop and maintain print and electronic collections for assigned subject areas
- Manage collection funds effectively and efficiently
- Monitor research and publishing trends in assigned subject areas
- Contribute to accreditation reports and "new program" applications
- Remain knowledgeable about SCUA collections and collaborate with SCUA as needed
- Support donor connections as relevant to liaison subject areas

Best practices:

- Discussing collection, budget, and licensing issues with faculty, administrators, and graduate students in meetings and one-on-one conversations
- Examining UNCG-authored papers for research interests, trends, and use of research sources
- Promoting use of Gobi alerts
- Investigating and offering trials to new or cheaper databases
- Supporting NC LIVE and the Carolina Consortium

4. Scholarly Communications

- Keep current with general trends in scholarly communications, and monitor subject-specific trends
- Educate and inform faculty, graduate students, and campus administrators about scholarly communication issues, copyright, author rights, etc.
- Investigate and promote new avenues of scholarly communication such as open access publishing, institutional repositories, journal hosting, etc.
- Encourage and support the writing of data management plans
- Discover and recruit UNCG scholarly output for inclusion in the open access digital initiatives

Best practices:

- Encouraging faculty to submit their work to NC DOCKS
- Attending workshops, webinars and forums sponsored by the Scholarly Communication Team, ACRL, etc.
- Encouraging faculty to attend such workshops, webinars, and forums
- Referring users to the Scholarly Communications Officer when appropriate

March 4, 2015