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Critlib Unconference

Critlib 2015


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Session: Extra-Library Critlib Interventions

Critlib Unconference 2015 Session 1 Attendees

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Session 1, 9:30-10:30:

Extra-library critlib interventions

(please revise/add to as desired, thanks!)

Introductions and what brings us to this session

lots of discussion during the introductions about committee work, also bringing grassroots organizing, and interest in how to get conversations started outside of the library

thinking about challenges and successes

different levels of respect may be afforded to us in meetings with others at the college, even where librarians are faculty

incremental work, can be difficult

how do we forge allies? junior faculty can often be more receptive, if we can identify them as allies

so many of the college-wide conversations are about the things students need to know in order to get a job

sometimes the Center for Teaching and Learning can be a place for discussions of social justice in teaching

junior faculty can be tricky too, the tenure process can inhibit junior faculty voices, balancing act between speaking up and fear of reprisal

resource: Heather Hackman, started in teacher ed doing diversity work, she's good at pointing out ways that our education structures support white supremacy

successes? sometimes when we become more familiar with critical theory/theorists, we can see the social justice across the campus

have found that the education, indigenous studies departments are places where social justice is in the curriculum

can also get students involved, start petitions, etc. -- sometimes students can take the ball and run with it

important to note that much of this work that we do is extra work for us too, on top of the work we usually do (not just extra = outside of the library)

also a labor issue

challenges too of disconnect when students act entitled, how to we impart that cultural competency to them without building it into the curriculum

also how to we get around the "this is who we are so we don't have to do it because this is who we are" in places where there are already inclusion policies/spaces

Hackman has said that we want to talk about systemic stuff, but we start with diversity, inclusion, and then we often don't get to the systemic stuff; challenge is to try and find ways to bring the system in

one idea is to find the money -- sometimes getting a grant to support a program can help bring these issues to an administrative level, for example the Muslim Journeys program

mission statement of the college/uni, can we tie this work into that?

framing this as how we benefit our students and our community

can we keep reminding the administration that supporting this work is congruent with the mission?

what in an ideal world would real action look like? is it even possible, or is that antithetical to higher education?

tension between encouraging students, esp. first-gen, to enroll but most institutions are tuition-dependent

suggestion that librarians are in a position of relative power on campus to have these conversations, e.g. adjunct faculty are disempowered

positive! talking about critical theory/pedagogy is a way to reposition the conversation: this is why we're here, let's think about what we can do

some of this is how you sell it, how you can talk about it (though be careful not to let this work fall entirely onto one/a few people)

we have a great rapport with students. now can we transfer that to relationships with faculty/administrators

the labor question, again! teaching outside of our library responsibilities, great for partnerships, maybe not so great for us

the longer we're in our positions, the more opportunities we have to hire folks who are amenable to this work, student workers too
think of partnerships for social justice topic training for student workers as well as prof staff/faculty, e.g. for circulation desk

hard to have these convos, though, when understaffed -- hard to take time when the house is on fire

the LLAMA microaggressions webinar, many had support, how to make support if you don't have it?
what about professional development standards?

another thought is to try and hook into the Chief Diversity Officer at your place, again finding these allies outside of the library

can be challenging to get folks to come to events that really need to, again can you use your allies to do personal invitations?
also if faculty need a certain number of hours of professional development, that can help draw people in