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COLLABORATORS IN COURSE DESIGN: A LIBRARIAN AND PUBLISHER AT THE INTERSECTION OF INFORMATION LITERACY AND SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

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INTRODUCTION

Fall 2013 marked the inaugural semester of Purdue University's Honors College, an interdisciplinary college established to "[bring] together bright young scholars from across the university in a vibrant intellectual and residential community." Honors College students take "small, interdisciplinary honors courses…pursue innovative research, collaborate on exciting projects, and become leaders on campus and in the community" (Purdue University, 2014).

The inaugural freshman cohort comprised over 500 students and Emily Allen, the Honors College's Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, set out to build a curriculum for the masses. A system was established by which faculty could propose courses to be reviewed by a curriculum committee, and Professor Allen also reached out to individuals across campus with invitations to develop new courses. One such invitation arrived in the Inbox of Charles Watkinson, Director of Purdue University Press and Scholarly Publishing Services, to develop and teach a course "on academic and scholarly publishing that would be both theoretical and practical … that would culminate in a student-edited publication of some sort" (E. Allen, personal communication, August 22, 2013).

Because of my experience co-teaching freshman honors seminars, my membership on the advisory board of the *Journal of Purdue Undergraduate Research (JPUR),* and my expressed interest in undergraduate students' knowledge and perceptions of scholarly communication topics, Charles invited me to join this endeavor as a teaching partner. Together, we set out to build and provide a learning experience that would immerse students in the world of scholarly publishing, from practical issues to philosophical challenges. We sought to encourage the development of critical producers *and* users of information, savvy publishers *and* authors.

CONTEXT: THE INTERSECTION OF SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION LITERACY

Supporting the development of information literacy competency in undergraduate students, via teaching, partnerships, and curricula, is a strategic goal for Purdue University Libraries, as it is for many college and university libraries (Purdue University Libraries, Press,

and Copyright Office, 2011). Traditionally, information literacy has been interpreted as a set of skills related to finding, evaluating and using information (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2000).

Revisions to ACRL's information literacy standards is currently underway, and shared drafts propose the replacement of a skills-based standards framework to one based on threshold concepts including "Scholarship is a Conversation" and "Research as Inquiry" (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2014). This work complements a conversation already underway at the intersection of scholarly communication and information literacy, which calls for and documents examples of engaging students in learning about scholarly communication topics. Davis-Kahl's (2012) piece and Davis-Kahl and Hensley's (2013) anthology provides examples of librarians engaging students and faculty in learning about these topics through the lens of information literacy. A white paper (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2013) published the same year explores and articulates three intersections in particular - publication economics, digital literacies, and librarians' changing roles - and poses the following questions: "How is information in the digital age created and published? Who owns it, controls it, and who can access it? What should we teach about this rapidly changing information environment, and what are effective ways to teach it?" (p. 7). Warren & Duckett (2010) alluded three years earlier that a skills-based approach to information literacy may overshadow these sorts of questions, claiming "As the information landscape continues to grow in complexity, it is becoming increasingly important for students not only to be able to locate and access useful information but also to understand the forces that shape the information they consume" (p. 350).

While designing our course, Charles and I were inspired by this literature, a small set of syllabi (Jones et al., 2006; Regazzi & Aytac, 2010; Willinsky, 2008; Xia, 2013) for relevant courses found online, and the excellent work of library faculty at Pacific University who have developed an undergraduate course on scholarly journal publishing and an academic minor in editing and publishing (Gilman, 2013).

PUBLISHING BOOTCAMP

Pedagogy and Learning Outcomes

There are a number of ways we could have designed this course. Charles and I could have taken turns lecturing about these topics and issues and designed quizzes and tests to assess students' grasp of content, but we believe and research demonstrates that students learn better when they are active participants in their own learning and when presented with opportunities and expectations to apply knowledge (Michael, 2006; Prince, 2004). Thus, we designed our course with plenty of opportunity to do so.

Our course design was guided by the tenets of constructivist learning theory, which prioritize problem-solving, the construction of personal meaning, and active learning pedagogy. In these environments, the instructors' role is not to impart knowledge, but to facilitate learning. We sought out to create a project-based course filled with student-centered activities and to guide students as they grappled with "real and authentic problems" (Lamon, 2003, p. 1463).

We hoped that after completing this course, students would be able to:

- Make informed decisions as an author about how best to communicate their work.
- Engage in knowledgeable discussion and debate about scholarly communication trends, issues, and ethics;
- Review, edit, and design journal and book manuscripts for digital and their ancillary print formats.
- Recognize diverse career opportunities available in the publishing industry.

Activities and Deliverables

Throughout the semester, students heard from and participated in discussion with us and a variety of invited experts. These included archivists, directors of other university presses, local authors, Purdue's University Copyright Officer and Scholarly Repository Specialist, and a number of staff from Purdue University Press.

A major project that set the stage for our course was the publication of a print and electronic book. Charles and I partnered with Kristina Bross, Associate Professor of English, who in Fall 2013 taught Interdisciplinary Writing, an Honors College course during which students engaged in archival research to discover and write mini-biographies of students of Purdue's class of 1904. Our students began the Spring 2014 semester with a book proposal and raw Microsoft Word files of these biographies, and shepherded this real-life project, a volume of the biographies, to publication. Each of our students copyedited a chapter, corresponded with authors about redline/edited proofs, and completed internal proofs after typesetting text and images in Adobe InDesign. Each student designed and pitched a cover design to a panel of professional experts who selected the winning design. In pairs, students developed marketing components, including a press release, text for an Amazon blurb, and ideas for a social media campaign.

Additional course deliverables included an author strategy scenario, for which students documented a decision-making process they would undergo if publishing a work of their choice. They reviewed submissions for an issue of the *Journal of Purdue Undergraduate Research* (*JPUR*) using the same criteria and process as do members of the journal's faculty advisory board. Students also formally debated Open Access after researching and preparing arguments for both negative and affirmative positions.

Little Else than a Memory: Purdue Students Search for the Class of 1904 was published in April and became available for download via Purdue's institutional repository soon after (Bross, 2014). To culminate the semester, our class traveled to Bookmasters, a publishing services company in Ashland, Ohio, where students spent a day touring the facility and talking with publishing professionals. There we were able to pick up the first copies of our book, hot off the press, and take group photographs in front of the presses that printed the book and cover.

Student Performance and Evaluation: A (Very) Initial Report

The authentic deliverables served as assessments of student learning. Responses to a brief Qualtrics survey completed mid-semester revealed unanimous high levels of satisfaction with the course. In response to the question, "What aspects of this course so far have you most enjoyed?" the phrase "hands-on" appeared in 4 of 6 students' responses. All responses indicated an appreciation of the opportunities to apply course content in a real-life context. In response to the question, "What changes would you make if you were teaching this course?" the most frequently expressed request was more coverage of fiction and trade (as opposed to just scholarly) publishing. In response, we arranged for a panel of local authors to meet with us later in the semester.

Students also completed a pre/post survey to measure their perceived levels of knowledge and confidence related to course learning outcomes. Responses to the post-survey have just been received, so detailed analysis and report is forthcoming. Initial analysis reveals a significant increase in perceived knowledge and confidence levels related to all course learning outcomes.

MULTIPLE PARTNERSHIPS

Course-Related Partnerships

The development and implementation of this course enabled, encouraged, or solidified a variety of rich partnerships at the intersection of scholarly communication and information literacy. Key partnerships include those between the **Honors College** and **Purdue Libraries,** including its **Press and Scholarly Publishing Services Division**, as well as the teaching partnership between me (an instruction and liaison librarian) and Charles Watkinson, Director of Purdue University Press. Together, we partnered with individuals from around campus who brought a variety of expertise in areas related to publishing and scholarly communication:

- Purdue **archivists** who provided for our students training and information on archival research and digital rights management, especially for images used in our book from Purdue Archives and Special Collections. An archivist also served as a judge for our book's cover design, providing feedback related to image rights and accurate historical representation.

- Purdue's **Scholarly Repository Specialist** joined us for three classes, leading discussions about Open Access and serving as a judge for our formal debate on the topic.

- Purdue's **Director of the University Copyright Office** joined us a guest speaker and provided a wealth of relevant resources related to copyright, which informed our discussion on authors' rights throughout the semester, particularly when preparing and reviewing author contracts for our publication.

- Finally, Purdue **Press and Scholarly Publishing Services staff members** were critical to the success of our course. Individuals from this division supported our project and our

students throughout the semester, leading workshops on copyediting and Adobe InDesign, and serving as judges for our cover design, providing feedback on marketability and design. Additionally, their involvement provided an irreplaceable insight for our students into the day-to-day life and experience of a variety of publishing professionals.

Additional and Emerging Opportunities

These partnerships seemed very natural in the context of our course design, but additional collaborative opportunities in other contexts at this intersection abound. For instance, conversations are underway between Purdue Libraries faculty and staff and Honors College administrators about systematizing the inclusion of Honors College students' capstone work in Purdue e-Pubs, our university's institutional repository. As Char Miller (2013) discusses, such a move could provide excellent pedagogic fodder. Universities with library publishing divisions may be uniquely poised for curricular collaborations, collaborations towards other undergraduate student publishing endeavors such as undergraduate research journals. The Library Publishing Coalition's website lists over 50 contributing and founding institutions (Educopia Institute, 2013). Librarians, archivists, and press staff, could develop or co-develop courses that focus on different aspects of publishing and scholarly communication, or partner with disciplinary faculty teaching courses with opportunity, such as Professor Bross' writing class. These are a few of many possibilities.

CONCLUSION

As Baker (2007) notes, students are participants in the scholarly communication system. By acknowledging where and how and by imagining unrealized possibilities, opportunities abound for librarians and strategic campus partners to engage students in the conversation that is scholarship. By doing so, we may not only support the development of information literacy competency and savviness in real and meaningful ways, but prepare a future generation of academics, researchers, professionals, and especially users and producers of information.

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