Embedded Librarianship: Connecting Faculty, Librarians, and Students in Online Courses to Improve Information Literacy Competences

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About

The Session
This session includes strategies for planning, implementing, and evaluating the embedded librarianship model in online learning environments. Several approaches to embedding and collaborating will be discussed.

The Presenter
Rolando Méndez is:
- Academic Manager
- Communicator
- Educator
- Problem Solver
- Organizational Bricoleur
- Lifelong Learner

The Institution
- IAUPR is a private non-profit institution founded in 1912 comprised of 9 campuses and 2 professional schools.
- Ponce Campus has 29 online academic programs, a deanship, a transdisciplinary academic department, and a center for instructional design and multimedia production.
Embedded Librarianship Theory

The embedded librarianship model is based on the collaborative, integrative, and active work of librarians in diverse educational and organizational spaces.

Under this model, librarians create partnerships with academic departments, professors, instructional designers, administrative staff, and students to collaborate in the integration and facilitation of experiences that help them develop and improve their informational literacy competences.
Purpose
Developing informational literacy

The acquisition and mastery of these skills can contribute to students’ academic performance and success, as they learn how to locate reliable information needed to solve the problems they face and inform their decisions.

Requisites
1. Developing, building, and maintaining partnerships
2. Becoming acquainted with the disciplinary context
3. Delivering timely and personalized services
4. Anticipating needs
5. Maintaining presence

Reale (2015)
Benefits of Embedding

Facilitates the development of literacy competences in faculty and students.

Promotes collaboration between students, instructors, and librarians.

Integrates librarians in teaching, learning, and research processes.

Enriches learning and research processes through transdisciplinary collaboration.

Makes Instructors also accountable for the development of students’ informational competences.

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Embedded Librarianship at IUPR

01 The librarian waits for the student to come to the Library (Traditional approach).

02 At the request of the instructor, students visit the librarian to get help on completing a project or activity (F2F, One-shot to Occasional).

03 At the request of the instructor, the librarian visits the classroom to offer a conference or hands-on training (F2F, One-shot).

04 The librarian is assigned to an academic department to support its students on a per-request basis. A help desk is created.

05 The department or faculty member coordinates an online conference or workshop. A recording is shared for future reference (Virtual, Sustained).

06 The librarian actively participates in online courses as teaching assistant. Also intervenes outside the course (Virtual, Iterative).

07 Informational competences are embedded and reinforced throughout the curriculum. Faculty are trained to develop them (Desired approach).
How We Implemented the Model

What We Wanted
Implement the Embedded Librarianship Model in online courses

The Challenge
Embedding librarians in over 100 online courses.

Our Solution
A department led pilot project (2 phases)

What We Did at Department Level
- Coordinate the project’s planning, implementation, and evaluation.
- Coordinate course access for librarians.
- Coordinate librarian’s intervention in courses
- Certify librarians as online instructors/designers (Phase Two).
- Manage communications with the parties involved.

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Model Implementation

Librarians
• Helped them create templates, surveys, and rubrics.
• Helped them setup webinars on Research in databases/Citations and References in APA Style (Phase One).
• Helped them create learning materials (Phase Two).

Faculty
• Invited them to participate. Requisite: Be teaching a course that included research-based activities (Phase One).
• Selected courses that were research-focused and impacted several majors at undergraduate and graduate levels (Phase Two).
• Oriented them on project expectations and deliverables.
• Trained them in the use of their disciplines’ databases.

Courses
• Created "Ask the Librarian" discussion forum.
• Created announcements informing students about the project.
• Created pre/post tests.
**Project Results**

**Student Feedback**
The librarians’ integration was helpful for completing course activities and for improving literacy competences.
The project could improve by providing
- A better explanation of the project
- Faster responses to inquiries
- More flexible service hours
- More time with librarians in the course

**Lessons Learned**
The scope of implementing this model in online courses was too broad. Therefore, we should adopt and implement administrative and instructional strategies that encourage and reinforce the development of informational literacy competences throughout the curriculum.

**Next Steps**
- Reconceptualizing the project under ACRL’s new Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education
- Developing a certification course for the facilitation of information literacy activities in online courses.
- Strengthening library support resources for online students.
- Creating a rubric instructional designers can use to evaluate informational literacy activities in online courses.
- Embedding informational literacy activities in online courses.
1. Leadership’s support and buy-in facilitates the implementation of the model in online courses, especially with faculty integration/engagement.

2. Faculty, librarians, and students should be clear on the purpose and approach to the implementation of the model, as well as on their respective roles in the process.

3. Librarians must be skilled at facilitating learning and communication processes in virtual environments. Equally, faculty should be adept in facilitating the acquisition of information competences. Being certified helps!

4. Learning activities should be phased. Becoming an informational literate is an iterative process.

5. There should be alignment between the course, the instructor, and the librarian.

6. Embedding the librarian entails changing the culture.
References


Thanks for your Feedback!

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