**Kill the One-Shot: Using a Collaborative Rubric to Liberate the Librarian-Instructor Partnership**

**Introduction**

**Instructor:** At my last university, we had a librarian who would visit my classes and show the students how to find library sources: you know, show them the card catalog, the database, do a tour of the building, maybe a scavenger hunt? Is this something you can do for me?

**Librarian:** Oh, of course! I typically meet with many classes every semester to teach.

**Instructor:** Oh, you teach? You know, I'll be at a conference the second day of class, August 24th, so if you could take my class that day, you'd really be doing me a favor. I think getting this out of the way as early as possible would be great.

**Librarian:** I'll have to check my calendar and get back to you about that date. Will your students have a research assignment? I'd be happy to design an information literacy session tailored to their research needs.

**Instructor:** Information technology is *so* important! I'm sure they could use a refresher!

The above scenario will resonate with many librarians who teach information literacy. While overdrawn to illustrate a point, it is meant to demonstrate challenges librarians meet when collaborating with subject faculty who, for various reasons, wish to include the library (or librarians) in their courses. The request might be based on a previous institutional experience such as a former graduate student’s memory of a library orientation, a desire to fill a class period early in the semester because the instructor has conference plans, or it might come from a general sense that a library visit will take care of students’ basic research needs. In fact, “Please do your usual library talk,” is not an uncommon request. As educators with a goal of employing best practices while designing curricular structures that will allow for effective information literacy (IL) instruction at the class, course and program levels, librarians at the Valparaiso University (VU) Christopher Center Library embraced the opportunity to respond to the one-size-fits-all model as well as its natural offspring, the dreaded one-shot.

VU librarians benefitted from a University-wide initiative begun in 2013 to create a writing program with vertical curricular integration. This initiative occurred around the same time that library faculty were moving from a variously dispersed instruction model to a formalized information literacy program with a cohesive structure. There were many moving parts at play as VU implemented the writing program, from administrative-level strategic planning, to General Education Committee learning objective revisions, to department and program impact conversations. By modeling the library’s IL program after the curricular structure of the writing program, librarians were able to more easily enter those spaces of dialogue, planning and implementation already occurring on behalf of the writing program. Since the director of the writing program felt that writing could not be taught absent information literacy, librarians also benefited from having an advocate with political capital and motivation to support the new IL program. The result was that subject faculty undergoing training to certify their courses as writing-intensive were also able to hear from librarians about best practices for integrating information literacy into their courses. To facilitate these discussions, VU librarians developed a rubric that describes librarian-instructor collaboration models such that the “library visit” can be transformed into enriched and impactful IL instruction that goes far beyond what the one-shot can offer. The rubric has since become an invaluable tool for VU librarians who meet with subject faculty to “negotiate” IL course integration. It has transformed the interactions and is received positively because it is a shortcut that conveys information literacy’s subject area relevance, as well as the library educator’s ability to transpose IL concepts and skills while moving across disciplinary contexts.

**Literature Review**

**Librarian-Faculty Collaboration**

Collaboration with subject faculty is a common topic in library science research. Much of the literature focuses on collaboration as a means to improve traditional information services, such as reference (Watts & Mahfood, 2015; Mitchell, Comer, Starkey & Francis, 2011) and collection development and management (Shipman, 2014; Shen, 2012; Horava, 2005). Another common theme is librarian-faculty collaboration as a catalyst for designing new or modified services that are better suited to today’s digital information landscape. Ratto and Lynch (2012) describe partnering to create a textbook alternative for students via the library’s e-book subscriptions. Shepley (2009) tells of a healthy collaborative relationship that resulted in improved library services for students enrolled in a distance education program. Tumbleson (2016) is the latest in a long line of researchers (Corrall & Keates, 2011; Xiao, 2010; Black, 2008) to describe the importance of collaborating with faculty in order for librarians and library resources to become embedded in the virtual spaces of a course management system.

Much of the literature touts collaboration as a vehicle for improving the library’s visibility on campus. Gilman and Kunkel (2010) describe how developing an institutional repository had the unanticipated benefit of strengthening the library’s relationships with various units on campus, including the Provost’s Council, the Office of Research, and academic departments (p. 24). Creaser and Spezi (2014) note a disconnect between academic libraries and faculty (p. 204). They offer that developing collaborations can disabuse faculty of their traditional, collections-centric perceptions of the library and can improve their awareness of the value of the library as a supporter of teaching and research (p. 205).

One additional major theme is faculty and librarians collaborating to conduct research and writing projects, wherein the various parties benefit from each other’s expertise. Reynolds, Smith, and D’Silva (2013) describe how they -- two communications faculty members and a librarian -- collaborated on a social movements research project, which originated organically after Reynolds helped Smith and D’Silva locate some elusive information sources (p. 378). Foutch (2016) describes collaborating with a faculty research team to undertake a comprehensive literature review on mental health and nutrition, and tells how her involvement took on unexpected elements, such as providing guidance on citation management and training student research assistants (p. 81). Foutch writes that contributing to faculty members’ research projects “provide[s] librarians with evidence they can use to show the academic community that they should be actively engaged in knowledge creation and dissemination” (p. 82).

**Collaborating to Teach IL**

Foutch’s (2016) above comment alludes to a perpetual problem when pursuing librarian-faculty collaboration, namely that librarians are often overlooked as potential partners with valuable knowledge to contribute to the activities of other faculty members. Overcoming faculty’s misconceptions about librarians is often a necessary first step in promoting IL in the classroom. The literature fortunately offers considerable guidance on how academic librarians and subject faculty can collaborate to promote IL. Over a decade ago, Lindstrom and Shonrock (2006) called for librarians to work with instructors to become integrated into the college classroom, in order to maximize the number of students receiving IL instruction. They described the widely varying successes of incorporating IL into universities’ curricula and note that, although administrators had made IL a strategic priority at a handful of institutions at that time, most collaboration efforts were still happening on a course-by-course basis (p. 22). The model of using subject-specialist librarians to serve as liaisons to academic departments, the authors noted, was highly successful, resulting in new opportunities for librarians to teach one-shot sessions, as well as to co-teach with subject faculty (p. 20).

In the subsequent decade, numerous published case studies have described successful librarian-instructor collaborations to promote IL, mostly through classroom instruction. Smith and Dailey (2013) describe a partnership between two librarians and a public health professor who had noticed poor quality of sources in students’ papers. The librarians and professor created a plan to integrate IL into the course, which included identifying four specific IL learning objectives taught over a series of three instruction sessions. Their extended collaboration resulted in the students using better, more appropriate statistics and journal articles in their research papers as compared to previous semesters (p. 323). The authors contribute the success of the collaboration to their deliberate, proactive planning on the IL instruction and its objectives prior to the start of the semester, and to the willingness of the professor to sacrifice days for teaching course content in favor of IL instruction (p. 323). Garvey, Hays and Stempler (2017) describe a successful effort to utilize a flipped classroom approach in their IL instruction with first-year students at CUNY College of State Island. The authors similarly account for the effort’s success by pointing to the proactive meetings between all collaborators, including librarians, the University’s Writing Across the Curriculum Coordinator, and other members of the English Department. All collaborators had vested interests in improving student learning outcomes, and they met frequently to determine IL learning outcomes and to design and fine-tune teaching instruments that would facilitate student learning, including a website and an accompanying assignment (p. 265). Lundstrom, Wishkoski and Davis (2017) describe an effort to promote IL by collaborating with faculty on assignment design. Faculty and librarians met in a workshop setting to discuss how to redesign existing assignments in order to scaffold the research process. These workshops resulted in improved assignments and also led to greater goodwill and interest in collaborating between subject faculty and their librarians.

One particularly illustrative example is provided by Junisbai, Lowe and Tagge (2016). Librarians at Claremont Colleges collaborated with faculty to integrate IL into the university’s first-year seminar (FYS) program, and in so doing, the librarians gave the FYS faculty several options for how heavily to involve librarians in the course (p. 606). The librarians provided instructors with scenarios of collaboration levels, which ranged from Level 1 (No Collaboration), or no library involvement, to Level 4 (Substantial Collaboration), which included significant librarian input on assignment design, two or more IL instruction sessions, a course-specific research guide, a graded library-related quiz, and more. The authors found that the greatest return on investment was at Level 3 (Intermediate Collaboration). In comparing students’ papers between course sections -- specifically aspects of attribution, evaluation and communication --, the authors found that students from classes with Level 3 library involvement and those from classes with Level 4 library involvement performed similarly. The authors write that their findings “reveal a faculty-librarian collaboration ‘sweet spot’ at the intermediate level” (p. 608) and that collaboration at deeper levels does not lead to measurable benefits in terms of student learning. They also write that, during the three years of using this approach, a number of FYS faculty had moved from collaborating at just Level 2 (Minimal) in favor of Levels 3 or 4, signaling a relatively quick increase in faculty buy-in to the idea of integration IL into their courses (p. 608).

Junisbai, Lowe and Tagge’s (2016) findings provide useful insights about how to approach librarian-faculty collaboration. Specifically, granting faculty members some flexibility and autonomy in deciding how to work with librarians can lead to fruitful experimentation and increased faculty recognition of the value of IL. A flexible approach makes greater sense in light of Gardner and White-Farnham’s (2013) adaptation of Hardesty’s (1995) work on faculty culture to discuss how it might contribute to faculty resistance to partnering with librarians. Namely, Gardner and White-Farnham point to disciplinary specialization and perceived threats to academic freedom as two aspects of faculty culture that can damage librarian-instructor collaborations (pp. 238-239). Faculty members’ narrow conceptions of what research is and how it should be taught, as well as their concerns about the loss of autonomy in how they teach their courses, can result in misunderstandings about librarians’ intentions (p. 239). The present article describes an effort by the authors to change how librarians talked with faculty about IL on their campus. By designing and using a so-called “librarian-instructor collaboration rubric,” which offered numerous lenses for understanding how librarians could partner with teaching faculty, the authors witnessed a shift in attitudes among teaching faculty about collaborating with their subject librarians to teach IL in the classroom. The rubric also resulted in a proliferation of creative approaches to integrating IL, including a departure from relying on the traditional one-shot approach.

**Background**

**Institutional**

Valparaiso University (VU) is a private, independent Lutheran institution with five undergraduate colleges, a graduate studies program and a law school. (Note about closure of the law school.) The student body is currently composed of approximately 3,200 undergraduate students and 800 law and graduate students. The student-faculty ratio is 13:1. Grounded in the liberal arts, VU’s programs include Valpo Core, a first-year experience unit that is meant to initiate freshmen into the “life of the mind” through textual dialogue. Students admitted to the honors program, Christ College, complete Freshman Program, an intensive two-semester seminar in the great books tradition.

**Instruction Environment and Priorities**

Currently, the University Writing Program is a driving initiative. The University Director of Writing is implementing a vertical writing-intensive curriculum that includes writing in the disciplines. She holds ongoing writing-intensive Course (WIC) training seminars for faculty with an assignment design component. The seminars include information literacy (IL) workshops facilitated by librarians. The WIC courses must integrate IL instruction, and faculty are required to consult with librarians within their subject areas to determine how best to incorporate IL and IL educators into their courses. In fact, the General Education Committee is not supposed to approve a WIC course unless it has been evaluated by a librarian. Once faculty complete the seminar and demonstrate that the course under review fulfills the WIC requirements, they may add the writing-intensive designation. Students are required to take at least one WIC course as part of their general education requirements.

VU’s writing program has positively impacted the library’s education initiatives. The design and implementation includes three symbiotic disciplinary streams: writing, the discipline of the teaching faculty, and IL. Librarians take part in the design and planning work of the IL component within the writing program. WIC courses must include a research-infused assignment that integrates IL learning outcomes and IL instruction or, as some faculty call it, a “library visit.” In addition to the writing program, the first-year programs are strong collaborators with the library. Partnerships with Core and Freshman Program faculty have led to increased IL instruction and improved assignments. Subject faculty teaching capstone courses also often partner with library faculty on both assignment design and instruction; these collaborations invite an embedded instruction model.

While the environment for collaboration across campus has many positive features, there is still much work to be done. The librarians are challenged by the fact that IL can be defined differently amongst different constituencies, even within the library itself. Librarians sometimes encounter faculty or administrators who relegate IL to a set of skills and the teaching as show-and-tell.

**Organizational Placement of Library’s Instructional Effort**

The library’s Information Literacy Program, whose director reports to the dean of the library, has frequently functioned as a collection of activities determined by teaching librarians working within their liaison areas. We have standardized content within the first-year Core program where instructors are mandated to bring in their classes for Fall and Spring instruction sessions. Instructors teaching a writing-intensive course (WIC) are also required to work with a librarian to integrate IL into the assignment design as well as to hold as least one IL class. It is the responsibility of the instructor and librarian to “negotiate” the librarian’s role as instructor. Valparaiso’s IL Program, while robust in many ways due to ongoing collaborations and the library’s commitment to student learning, does not fully stand by itself organizationally. We lack a comprehensive assessment program and are currently working on establishing a vertical curricular programming structure that is integrated into campus protocols such as the General Education Program. While the library is committed to graduating information literate students, some librarians’ schedules and work responsibilities allow them to be more invested than others in teaching and advocating for IL within the library and across campus.

This pockets-of-focus structure is mirrored in the wider campus. Faculty collaboration is highly variable. Because we are not fully structurally integrated, we are often dependent on department cultures and individual subject faculty buy-in to gain instruction time within courses. Within the wider institution, IL appeared in the University’s strategic plan for 2014-15, but then was removed because it had been listed as an action item to be completed within a certain timeframe. IL is not an explicit General Education learning objective, yet some disciplines list it as a departmental one. Overall, the level of importance placed on graduating information literate students is developing and seems to be developing in the right direction.

**Instruction Program Content**

The Information Literacy Program provides course-related and course-integrated one-shot IL instruction sessions that are often paired with individual student research consultations; this is the predominant structure. Many librarians are also embedded in courses within their liaison areas, and the level of embeddedness, as well as instruction construct, varies. For example, one librarian embedded in an upper-level English course teaches in-class sessions, facilitates small group work and provides individual consultations. Online-only instruction has occurred as well. The librarians also present regular first-year and international graduate student orientation programming.

**Creating the Rubric**

As detailed above, VU librarians had experienced varying levels of success with convincing subject faculty of the importance of IL. While faculty in some departments have become adamant IL boosters who include library instruction in all their courses, other departments rarely request such instruction. As the campus was preparing in 2016 for the upcoming launch of the writing-intensive courses, informal conversations suggested that some faculty who were resistant to IL had a limited understanding of what it meant to collaborate with a librarian. These subject faculty often had a one-size-fits-all conception of library instruction, assuming such instruction would take place in the library, last an entire class period, be mostly a repeat of content that students had learned previously, and not be customized to their particular courses’ needs. The problem seemed to be a lack of imagination on the subject faculty’s part and lack of clear communication on the library’s part. When further clarifying conversations between library and subject faculty led to a newfound willingness to integrate IL instruction, especially after the instruction’s potential usefulness was better understood, the authors decided that some tool or visual aid was needed to improve communication with faculty. They determined that a simple document outlining the various aspects (or “lens”) of library collaboration, and the range of possible options within each lens, could convince other “IL doubters” of the value of working with their librarians.

A review of the literature, particularly Junisbai, Lowe and Tagge’s (2016) levels of collaboration, revealed several lenses for thinking about library-instructor IL collaboration, including the number of instruction sessions, the depth of librarian input on assignment design, involvement in assessment, and the creation of course-specific support materials. To these themes, the authors added additional lenses that they deemed relevant from their own personal experiences.

Ultimately, nine lenses emerged:

* Design of Support Materials (e.g., LibGuides)
* Design of Assignments
* Classroom Visibility
* Teaching Time (Length)
* Teaching Content Level
* Student Contact Outside of Classroom
* Visibility in Virtual Spaces
* Timing of Support
* Assessment of Student Learning

Each lens was given its own line in the authors’ rubric. For each lens, the authors then created examples along a spectrum of involvement, to show the extent to which an instructor and librarian could choose to incorporate or exclude this particular aspect in their collaboration. They intended to demonstrate that different types and levels of involvement might be more appropriate for different courses, depending on the course material, the program of study, the assignments, and circumstantial factors, such as time constraints. The goal was to shatter subject faculty’s expectations by showing that, with library instruction, no one-size-fits-all exists. The four levels of involvement ranged from None, to Minimal, Healthy, and Superlative. Each term was chosen to be as neutral as possible, to suggest that the level of involvement is not a moral judgment but rather a determination of what is best for that particular course. In using the rubric, the authors frequently explain to subject faculty that, for a particular course, many lenses will have no or minimal involvement, whereas others will have healthy or superlative involvement; the levels of involvement are not subject to across-the-board decisions for that particular collaboration. Upon completion, the rubric contained a range of examples for each of the nine lenses, thus providing 36 snapshots of potential librarian-instructor collaboration. After seeking editorial input from their librarian colleagues, the authors finalized the rubric in PDF format and put it to immediate use in speaking with campus faculty.

**How Valpo Librarians Use the Rubric**

Librarians introduce the rubric to faculty during discussions about how IL instruction will be integrated into their courses, with the expectation that librarians will participate in the design and delivery of the course material. The authors view this conversation as a negotiation. Where subject faculty are resistant to giving over class time or pedagogical agency, it has proven useful to slide this tool across the table to clarify the librarian’s position. Rather than starting with a “grace-and-favor” approach, the rubric upholds the value of the IL work and places the librarian on solid, authoritative ground. It helps the librarian argue that there are better and best ways to achieve IL education within a course, and that course (or even disciplinary) context is part of the arrangement. This message is shared with faculty during the University Writing Program workshops in which the authors introduce the library’s IL program and its required integration into their WIC courses. Additionally, teaching librarians use the rubric when they meet with faculty one-on-one to establish how IL will be integrated into their courses. It is also used with faculty who already have established relationships with librarians, but who may need help envisioning IL integration beyond the one-shot model.

**Outcomes and Challenges**

For the past two years, the librarian-instructor collaboration rubric has been indispensable to VU librarians as they have worked to integrate IL into the curriculum on their campus. Following is a discussion of the major dimensions of how the rubric has contributed to this work.

**Negotiation Tool**

By giving instructors many ways of understanding library collaboration, the rubric helps librarians get a foot in the door with faculty members who historically have resisted IL instruction. Because it presents multiple options, the rubric moves the conversation from “No” to “Well, maybe,” allowing librarians then to work with subject faculty to negotiate what might be best for a particular course. Through the rubric, librarians present their flexibility while mitigating the potential threat to faculty’s autonomy (Gardner & White-Farnham, p. 239). The rubric shows instructors that collaborating with the librarian does not have to be onerous. Rather, the librarian is willing to be flexible and to customize instruction to the course’s needs.

Additionally, the rubric suggests many aspects of collaboration that subject faculty might never have considered, such as involving librarians in assignment design and assessment. On numerous occasions, after presenting this rubric to a roomful of subject faculty, the authors have heard comments of “I never knew librarians would do that!”

**Librarians’ Expertise**

The rubric also opens up the conversation about what, exactly, librarians might bring to the classroom. The rubric shatters the myth that librarians have one, singular “library presentation” that they simply dust off and present repeatedly. Instead, because the rubric includes lenses for “Teaching Content Level,” “Teaching Time**,”** and other pedagogical elements, it creates space for librarians and instructors to have a discussion about what content the librarian could share with the students. Subject faculty are often surprised to learn about the range of content that librarians are able to teach, beyond simple point-and-click database demonstrations. Topics such as narrowing a research topic, structuring a literature review, navigating datasets, citation management, and the economic forces shaping scholarly publication are just a small sample of more advanced IL topics that VU librarians have taught in the classroom. By encouraging such conversations, the rubric has allowed instructors to see librarians as peer colleagues who are capable of teaching a range of IL competencies relevant to the students’ needs. In this regard, VU librarians doubtless have benefitted from their status as members of the faculty. As Creaser and Spezi (2014) note, academic librarians classified as faculty overwhelmingly feel that their status makes it easier to be respected as equal partners when collaborating with instructors (p. 197). Librarians without faculty status might face more pushback from instructors who do not understand the depths of librarians’ expertise, but the rubric at least presents an opportunity for this conversation.

**Optimization Within the Classroom**

Because the rubric suggests so many lenses through which to understand IL instruction, it allows librarians and instructors to choose library instruction options that are best for that particular course. As VU librarians frequently tell the instructors, they don’t *want* to be involved in every class at the superlative level -- it would not be scalable and would have diminishing returns on investment, as Junisbai, Lowe and Tagge found (2016, p. 608). In some courses, a 30-minute classroom visit from the librarian might be the best approach, allowing just enough time for a refresher on particular resources. In other writing- and research-intensive courses, sustained contact over multiple sessions might be best, with students even required to meet with the librarian for personal research consultations, allowing time to reinforce IL competencies. As another example, some courses need customized LibGuide pages; others could just rely on the general discipline LibGuide.

**Turning IL Doubters into Library Advocates**

The rubric has been a powerful tool in winning over “IL doubters,” that is, those subject faculty who previously did not see the relevance of IL in their disciplinary courses nor think of librarians as equal teaching partners. The rubric helps demonstrate that IL is a serious, multifaceted discipline, and that librarians are in fact IL experts. Subject faculty who become convinced of the value of IL also have frequently become strong advocates for the library on campus. Many of these faculty members have gone on to offer vocal support to colleagues across campus about the value of utilizing the librarians for their teaching and research acumen, resulting in a gradual shift across campus in how the library is viewed.

**Recommendations and Future Research**

VU librarians have had considerable success with promoting IL on their campus in recent years, and the librarian-instructor collaboration rubric has played a part in facilitating the conversations that led to that success. In light of this progress, librarians on other campuses might be curious about adopting a similar tool to enable these conversations. Drawing from their recent experiences, the authors offer the following pieces of advice for librarians who want to change or reinvigorate their outreach to faculty.

**Let go of what may be comfortable**. If the 50-minute one-shot is holding your IL instruction hostage, it may be difficult to change. However, you will find it freeing to up-end the status quo. Entice that old instruction model over to a window and….do your best work.

**Identify promising faculty spaces, i.e. points of entry**. VU librarians realized that the new writing program provided a good opportunity to bring IL to the faculty. There was institutional buy-in for this new program, and the director of writing understood the importance of IL education. The authors cultivated this relationship and were able to join the faculty training workshops. Such points of entry likely exist in other campus contexts. It can take time to establish relationships and build connections, but the authors have noticed that opening one door and doing good work leads to more opportunities. Be open, present and engaged. Confidently have your elevator pitch at the ready. Then be judicious about where you spend your energy.

**Use the rubric to improve existing contexts**. You might already use an IL instruction model, but feel that it is not working as well as it should. Perhaps you feel constrained by faculty expectations or ingrained departmental practices. Introduce the rubric and let it help you offer creative alternatives. It is possible instructors will be pleasantly surprised and open to change.

**Use the rubric to make your case to instructors new to library instruction**. The rubric is very useful when you are first establishing an IL instruction model. Rather than breaking the one-shot habit, you can begin where you mean to end. By negotiating your involvement based on the particular needs of the instructor and students, as well as what you are willing and able to offer, you will build a solid, sustainable foundation that is custom built. It will function much more effectively than a one-size-fits-all structure.

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