

**One Plus One is Greater than Two: Faculty-Librarian Collaboration for
Developing Information Literacy in Higher Education**

William Ko-Wai Tang
The Open University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Introduction

Information literacy is a term that is utilised to refer to the set of skills required to identify information needs, locate, evaluate and use information (American Library Association, 1989). Past research studies (Fain, 2011; Foo et al., 2014; Tang, 2018) have shown that students often have trouble in identifying, locating, evaluating and using information. In education settings, some faculty members believe that it is the responsibility of librarians to teach these skills (Derakhshan & Singh, 2011; Weiner, 2014). There are also studies (Hawes & Adamson, 2016; Otoide & Idahosa, 2018) that have demonstrated how faculty members and librarians have equal stakes and mutual goals in developing the information literacy skills of students.

Faculty-librarian collaboration is particularly essential for effective information literacy education. There are several works (Bakermans & Plotke, 2018; Gilman et al., 2017) that focus on the importance of integrating information literacy learning activities with librarians and teachers. Faculty-librarian collaboration is established on a shared vision, mutual respect and continuous discussions, regardless of the substantial course contents (Arp et al., 2006; Shumaker, 2012). By collaborating, there is a mutually beneficial and well-designed relationship entered by faculty members and librarians to improve students' information literacy. This short article highlights the main forms of collaboration between faculty members and librarians in developing information literacy skills for university students.

Forms of Faculty-Librarian Collaboration

Change the Format of the “One-Shot” Information Literacy Session

Typically, librarians at university libraries provide an information literacy course to all freshmen, or first-year, students. It is generally in the format of a “one-shot” information session, but such a session is not linked to the curriculum. The freshmen do not know what they need to know, and so these sessions cannot, realistically, help them to improve their information literacy skills and the quality of their learning (Igbo & Imo, 2017). Librarians can collaborate with faculty members. The first step towards such a collaboration is to connect with the faculty members directly (Zanin-Yost, 2018). Librarians can discuss how to work productively with faculty members based on their teaching modules. In general, faculty members and librarians can discuss the assessment items and course syllabus together. Then, librarians can provide one or two focused library sessions in information literacy. For example, if faculty members identify that students often have trouble in providing quality information on their assignments then librarians can focus on the selection of quality information in the library session. This provides a more overtly relevant, and hands-on, experience for students. This has proved to be more effective than a ‘one-shot’ library session without any focus on a course’s learning content and associated assessment tasks. Moreover, it would be better if the “one-shot” information literacy library session is included in the module. Such an arrangement enhances the quality of student work and reduces the workload of faculty members (Junisbai et al., 2016).

Flip the Classroom to Integrate Information Literacy

An other form of collaboration is to develop a flipped classroom learning experience for students. Hawes and Adamson (2016) have shown the benefits of the flipped classroom model. The librarians can provide flipped classroom library instruction sessions for students with targeted follow-up by faculty members in lectures. In the flipped classroom setting, the library instruction session is generally conducted online, with some video demonstrations. The librarians are responsible for identifying and planning content and objectives for students.

Therefore, librarians also often work as facilitators in this model. Hawes and Adamson (2016) believe that this could compensate for the lack of interaction opportunities and offer more engaging activities for students than a library seminar alone would be able to provide. The embedded model changes librarians from the external partner to the internal partner (Summey & Kane, 2017). It helps to build up a strong relationship with students and faculty members (Summey & Kane, 2017).

Develop a New Information Literacy Module

With university support, the faculty members and the librarians can form a teaching team to create a full learning experience for students to develop critical information literacy skills. The faculty members and the librarians develop the semester-based sessions on information literacy together for first-year students, in which faculty members and librarians work as instructors. The librarians generally aim to develop students' information literacy skills through collaboration with faculty members across each stage of course development, including course design, delivery and assessment (Douglas & Rabinowitz, 2016). These semester-based sessions can form a new credit-bearing module or a non-credit bearing compulsory module in information literacy.

Information Literacy Learning Community

In addition to embedding information literacy in a formal curriculum, some studies (Burgoyne & Chuppa-Cornell, 2015; Lebbin, 2005) have noted the value of forming a learning community to develop information literacy skills. Learning communities help to build connections between disciplines by developing interrelated common curricula. Students in the learning community have, in this approach, gained greater academic achievement and shown higher levels of motivation since they are working towards a common goal, which enhances the learning atmosphere. There are several models of learning communities, such as freshman interest groups and pair-groups, which connect freshman courses by theme and connect students with similar interests together for intellectual growth. The librarians acts as peer-facilitators and research consultants in each of the learning community group (Igbo & Imo, 2017).

Conclusion

Information literacy education is not just an issue for librarians. The faculty members should share the responsibility for developing students' information literacy skills. This short article has briefly introduce four forms of faculty-librarian collaboration: (1) re-design "one-shot" library sessions; (2) develop a flipped classroom learning experience; (3) develop a compulsory module in information literacy; and (4) form a learning community. The information literacy development models, highlighted here, require tight cooperation between faculty members and librarians so that the curricula can cater to students of different levels to maximise their learning outcomes.

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Corresponding author: William Ko-Wai Tang

Email: wtang@ouhk.edu.hk