Feb 11, 2022 | [Student Library Advisory Committee](#)

Attendees (Library members): [Allison M. Morrow](#) [Abigail Lovell](#) [Breck A Witte](#) [Jonathan O. Cain](#) [Candice A Kail](#) [Kaneisha Gaston Arhin](#) [Madiha Zahrah Choksi](#) [Zak Rouse](#)
Attendees (Student members): Ariane Fong, Rahim Hashim, Chase McAndrews, Camille Sensiba, Mohammad A. Salhut, Evan Tilley, Jennifer Todaro, Tianyu Yang

1. Welcome/Introductions
2. Agenda for Spring Semester: Getting Help from the Libraries
   a. February meeting: physical spaces
   b. April meeting: virtual spaces
3. Housekeeping note re: new members; call for ongoing recruitment
4. Housekeeping note re: suggestions for agenda topics
5. Wrap-Up + other questions/concerns

Questions and Answers/Feedback:

- What kinds of things do you need help with when you're using the library in person?
  - In Butler, it's all navigation. Need to find the location of a meeting. Need to meet someone in a certain room. Need to find a book in the stacks.
  - For smaller libraries, it's about finding a nice space to work. In general, finding an appropriate space to suit current study/work needs is usually most pressing when visiting physical locations.

- If you are having trouble finding space, how do you fix that?
  - Library online/print resources that help locate study/work space aren't adequate enough. Wandering is the only and best option.
  - Ask the circulation desk.
  - It's difficult to locate computer terminals in locations other than SEL.

- If you have trouble finding a resource, how do you get help?
  - Circulation. (This was up voted many, many times)

- What do you use the Circulation desk for? What do you need help with?
  - Borrow a stapler
  - Ask how to find an open seat
  - Ask where to take a phone call
  - Ask where to do a Zoom class
  - Ask general way finding questions (restrooms, stack entrance, etc.)

- Have you used drop-in reference help in the libraries? Which location?
  - No one on SLAC has used this service.

- Have you used scheduled reference help in the libraries? What was the experience like?
  - Yes. Usually reaching out to librarians and archivists via email is the best way to do this, but I only do that if I know what I'm looking for.

- Students often feel like undergrad research questions are not worthy of having a full meeting with a librarian - maybe people think it's for graduate level, don't want to waste people's time.
- Students don't fully understand what that resource, consultations with librarians, can accomplish. It's also hard to understand how it works. This could be due to a lack of experience or knowledge about the offering.
- Writing Center was a helpful way to learn about consultations. Librarians came in to describe 1-1 consultations, and undergrads then feel like they are able to then take advantage of that resource - almost as though they're being given permission.
- Visiting the drop-in desk has not been successful. Once, I visited the desk and there were no hours posted, no one at the desk, no info about how to connect them digitally. Another time, I found a person, but they seemed confused/annoyed that the student showed up in person. Eventually, I got help, but felt like I was inconveniencing someone.
- It's not clear enough that consultation appointments made online is the best way to start that type of relationship.
- Reference help needs to feel like a point of service, not something behind a closed door or difficult to find.

- When are you most likely to need help?
  - Late evening, into the night. But for Zooms or taking a call, it's more during the day.
  - No specific time, necessarily. It's unpredictable, but usually time-sensitive.

- Where to take a call seems to be a common help request - anything more to add here?
  - The career center has interview booths to reserve. Students can reserve in advance; they're private and easy to use. Libraries might consider something like this.
  - "Talking allowed" library spaces are great, but there is not a lot of general knowledge about these. People seem to know about this for Butler but don't necessarily explore other spaces. SEL, for instance.
  - Zoom calls have hit hard the past few semesters - getting to a place where there is minimal noise for everyone else on the call between in-person classes is very difficult.

- If you could identify the top FAQs (that your peers have) or pro tips related to the topic of getting help, what would they be?
  - Get (and keep) a Guide to the Libraries. Use it to find different libraries and go check them out. Guide is mostly about navigating space, and it's very helpful. Find less busy spaces.
  - Once you've found a new library, take some time and walk the whole space. You will find chairs, desks, corners, resources you would have zero way of finding otherwise. Must wander the spaces.
  - Learn how to find a book
  - How to request a scan; offsite requests.

- Is there a place where it's been particularly easy to get help? In the Libraries, or anywhere on campus?

- Any space that has a physical desk and a person near an entrance is helpful. You know you can ask them a question. Lerner, for instance, has a big desk at the entrance that is staffed. It's an open invitation to ask any question.

- Is there a place where it's been particularly difficult to get help? In the Libraries, or anywhere on campus?
    - The Biology and Engineering Buildings (Northeast part of campus) are notoriously difficult to navigate because of all the traffic at the building entrances/lobbies. Mudd, for instance, is difficult to navigate. There is no signage about where the cafe is, where you can study, etc.
    - Generally speaking on campus, not knowing what floor a building starts on is problematic (Butler campus level is 2nd floor, others have this issue, too). Campus-wide problem.
    - Any help point with a closed door is a major barrier.

- Have you gotten help for a library-related question from someone not in a library space?
    - Tour Guides are very good about conveying the fact that there are libraries other than Butler, and that students should find study space elsewhere.
    - Peer-to-peer conversations are where this most often happens. Advice about where to find study space, what time of day to use certain services, etc.

- Synopsis: What would you LIKE the experience of getting help in the libraries to be? What are the ideal scenarios?
    - Desks near entrances with people who can and want to help.
    - Points of help should be centralized. (Don't send us to another location to do another thing; we often just won't go.)
    - For reference help in particular - no closed doors. Navigation, knocking, entering spaces that don't feel common…these are all intimidation factors.

- General questions/comments/concerns:
    - I am a TA and trying to get scans regularly. I make the request on CLIO, but then 9/10 times, my request is declined due to some issue, and then I have to go to the library in person to pick up the book and scan it myself, etc.
    - The last field on the scan request form is only 40 characters - not enough space to do what we need.