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.

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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?
  o 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.
  o 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.
  o 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?
  o Tour Guides are very good about conveying the fact that there are libraries other than Butler, and that students should find study space elsewhere.
  o 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?
  o Desks near entrances with people who can and want to help.
  o Points of help should be centralized. (Don’t send us to another location to do another thing; we often just won’t go.)
  o 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:
  o 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.
  o The last field on the scan request form is only 40 characters - not enough space to do what we need.