

Transformative and Translational: Supporting a new PhD Program

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Background

- Librarians invited to join curriculum planning sessions (March 2016) for new PhD program in Translational Health Sciences (THS)
- Three librarians volunteered as liaison librarians for the program
- Librarian(s) attended weekly planning meetings from May to September 2016
- Librarians created research guide on Translational Science (<http://libguides.gwumc.edu/translationalscience>) to support new program
- THS Program: Three online courses and two residency weekends each semester; 18 students

Librarian support during Year/Cohort 1 (2016-2017)

- Hands-on workshop during Fall Residency weekends:
 - Weekend one: Searching PubMed for T1-T4 research & RefWorks
 - Weekend two: Advanced search techniques for PubMed and other databases
- Individual consultations to support students as they do mini-scoping review projects
- Developed and co-taught online class session with faculty member on scoping reviews (Fall)
- Researched and identified examples of good and bad quantitative and qualitative studies (Spring)
- Co-taught online class session with faculty member on qualitative research (Spring)



Librarian support during Year/Cohort 2 (2017-2018)

- Hands-on workshops moved earlier (orientation and residency weekend one), covering the same content as in Year/Cohort 1
- 3 liaison librarians asked to offer Independent Study course to help students properly frame and research their dissertation questions
 - Requested in August, began teaching in September – we had four students
 - 10 week online course delivered asynchronously via Blackboard, with a few live, online didactic/feedback sessions
 - Required librarian preparation and background reading to be able to develop and teach
- One librarian also co-instructor with program director teaching a course on Critical Appraisal



Proposed librarian support during Year/Cohort 3 (2018-2019)

- Continuing program support and instruction during orientation/residency weekends
- Independent study course will become a formal elective spanning 15 weeks (instead of 10 weeks)

Lessons Learned

- Just say 'yes!' Don't think too hard about what it will take to accomplish, embrace the challenge of uncertainty and short deadlines.
- Accept setbacks and don't make assumptions; seek and incorporate feedback throughout the process/course
- Unexpected requests can strengthen librarians' curricular skills and ties with faculty; you'll both begin to see the library in a new light!
- Librarians can be key players in the interdisciplinary team that is the core of translational science

