Leading by Example: Diving into Research
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Abstract
Librarians’ traditional role is assisting with literature searches and reading others’ research. Recently there has been an increase in librarians engaging in research projects. This analysis represents a ten-year retrospective of the research activity of the Himmelfarb librarians focusing on the following areas: human research, first author/co-author publications and presentations, education/training, and other outcomes of unanticipated opportunities including new partnerships, grants and projects.

Survey Results: Training
Reflecting on your experience receiving training/education, what impact did it have in helping you improve your skills in the following?

- Impact on Publishing
  - Improved my skills to publish in a librarian journal
  - Improved my skills to publish in a non-librarian journal

- Impact on Participating in Research
  - Improved my skills to participate in research
  - Improved my skills to teach research to students

Survey Results: Research
What has been your experience with systematic reviews?
- Conducted faculty consultations on systematic review
- Conducted student consultations on systematic review
- Taught Systematic Review Workshops
- Poster presentation on systematic review
- Author/Co-author on systematic review
- I have no experience and/or training with systematic review

Survey Results: Research
10-Year Professional Conference Participation
- MAC
- MLA
- Medical
- GW Research Day
- Other

What was your experience engaging in an IRB Research study?
- Collaborated with Himmelfarb colleagues
- Collaborated with librarian colleagues outside of Himmelfarb
- Collaborated with faculty/non-librarian colleagues
- Published in a medical journal
- Published in a librarian journal

Survey Results: Research
10-Year Publication Out-Put
- Himmelfarb Librarians: (12 Full-time 1 Part-time)
- Library Journal
- Medical Journal

Conclusion
Himmelfarb librarians’ increasing involvement in conducting and supporting research is reflected in increased presentations and publications (in both library and non-library related arenas), as well as increased confidence, greater comfort engaging with researchers, and a growing network of relationships across the schools that we support.

“...I understand the research enterprise more fully, I have greater confidence in participating in discussions, doing lit reviews, discussing statistical methods.”

“It helped me realize the value of what I bring to the table and strengthened my interest in medical education research.”

Lessons Learned
Librarians may be hesitant to undertake a formal research project. Using lessons learned from our experiences, we hope to encourage our colleagues to take the plunge and explore research topics that interest them.

- Preparation is important! Ensuring that librarians have the education and/or training for the research project gives the librarian not just knowledge but confidence.

- A culture of scholarship within the library support must originate with the library director.

- Ease your way in. Get involved with small projects first like reviewing conference abstracts or posters (both professionally and within your organization).

- Look at external opportunities, but also take advantage of your librarian colleagues; create a community of practice.

- Success begets new opportunities – both internally and externally/professionally.

Acknowledgements: Thanks to the Himmelfarb librarians for their enthusiasm and participation.

Methods
- Demographics:
  - 27.75 librarians at Himmelfarb in past ten years
  - Currently 12.75 librarians on staff
  - 5.5 librarians in Reference
  - 5.25 librarians in Library Operations
  - 1 librarian in Web Services
  - 1 librarian in Administration

- Surveyed current Himmelfarb librarians about their involvement with research and grants, and educational training during the past ten years; also their thoughts about participation in and preparedness for research

- Searched MAC and MLA annual conference programs and websites for former Himmelfarb librarian research-related posters or presentations

- Searched the Himmelfarb Library institutional repository and GW School of Medicine Faculty Publications for research-related publications by current and former Himmelfarb librarians

- Searched Himmelfarb librarians’ OrcIDs to gather any additional publications

Number of years worked at Himmelfarb Library
- > 10 years
- 7-9 Years
- 4-6 Years
- 1-3 Years
- < 1 year

Survey Results: Research
10-Year Professional Conference Participation
- 2006-2016
- MAC
- MLA
- Medical
- GW Research Day
- Other

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Abstract
Librarians’ increasing involvement in research has been associated with increased opportunities for training and education. This analysis represents a ten-year retrospective of the research activity of the Himmelfarb librarians focusing on the following areas: human research, first author/co-author publications and presentations, education/training, and other outcomes of unanticipated opportunities including new partnerships, grants and projects.