Big Ten Academic Alliance Liaison Institute Meeting
University of Maryland, College Park
Friday, June 21, 2019
Discussion Notes

I.   **Sharing Experiences**

1. **What is a specific project/activity important to you that worked (i.e. what was successful)? Why?**
- Adding librarian/library instruction into the school's curriculum (ex: IMPACT program training for faculty to integrate information literacy into the curriculum; experiential/iterative learning; teaching a for-credit subject class in a department; creating animated videos for library instruction, etc.)
- Having a library presence in online resources (ex: adding LibGuides in ELMS or other Canvas software)
- Continuing long-term assessment (ex: getting feedback from professors and TAs)
- Doing outreach on campus to expand knowledge about the library
- Connecting one-on-one with faculty
- Doing programs and events with faculty (ex: Russian film series; STEAM salon; Speaking of Books)
- Using the talents of others (ex: someone who has a museum background with exhibition design to create engaging displays; the communication office to create posters; etc.)
- Starting new partnerships with faculty, staff, students, administration, etc.
- Identifying what grads and faculty don't know (ex: they don't want to ask the other what they don't know, so you can be the person to ask/the middle-man)
- Providing a class for incoming graduate students

2. **What is a specific project activity/important to you that did not work (i.e. what was a challenge)? Why?**
- Change in management (budget cuts and employment turn-over)
- Outreach to unaffiliated users
- Timing, coordination, and expectations of instructions not met
- Timing and coordination for outreach events
- Attendance was lower than hoped
- Support from other departments was lacking (ex: not being on the faculty listserv for the department)
- Undergrads who don't know what they need before they need it
- Siloed departments that don't want to collaborate with you or each other
- Lack of functional skills to actually carry out the project

3. **Extra Tips/Thoughts:**

- Ask: "How do we define success?" Set expectations and realize what is realistic and achievable. Also, consider identifying projects that may be failures/what might not work before diving into them
- Communicate with stakeholders (and speak the user's language, not an internal language full of acronyms, etc.)
- Set specific targets/goals
- Reorganize internally so it reflects the internal priorities of the organization/project and the users' needs. Often subject librarians work is not understood internally by other library staff/departments.
- Support diverse needs within a department. Consider helping with smaller, less flashy things first.
- Maybe gatecrash (politely stopping by someone's office without an official appointment) if someone doesn't want to meet/is difficult to coordinate schedules with
- Provide coffee, lunch, or snacks at events
- Avoid redundancies with other departments (i.e. writing centers, career centers, etc). Redundancy results in poor attendance. Invite these other departments, etc. to come if they are really good at what they do. Collaborate with them instead of doing what they do.
- Keep Trying and Adapting!

II. Subject vs. Functional

1. How does subject and functional relate?
- Definition of functional and subject: There are lots of bleeds over, but <u>subject</u> is considered stuff within your discipline and only within the discipline; <u>functional</u> can be things that matter across disciplines (citation managers, copyright, GIS, etc.)
- Silos are hard to work across—subject experts are in silos & functional experts are in silos. How much functional services are needed and at what point do subject specialists refer to them? (ex: copyright services offices working well—mature service and clearly defined, when service came into being and effort was made for internal training, so experts have a baseline of what to do in a situation.)

2. What are the differences between the two? What are the similarities?
- Functional librarians can point liaisons to relevant resources that have come in
- In broad strokes, functional librarians have to keep up on all standards, while subject specialists bring knowledge of the subjects
- Communication is key between both types of librarians! If you have a specific request, let the other specialist know and then make a plan to move forward together or separately.
- Functional librarians can work with subject librarians to support consultations. (ex: working with data.)

- Also, consider how change can happen: ground up or top down? It best cases, it will be both, because you have to change patterns, habits, and work culture.

3. **How do we balance external and internal facing responsibilities?**
- What is external and internal is different for everybody. The Challenge is educating colleagues about what it is you're doing. Explaining your role and how it works, advocating for yourself is key inside and outside the library.
- Internal responsibilities could be service and scholarship and using your work to inform your service and scholarship.
- There are difficulties in giving up traditional responsibilities, like reference services, but such changes help in workloads.
- Scaling up- where it is possible, create online instruction for large programs or courses
- Internal collection development responsibilities could be difficult for liaison librarians alone. Moving more to demand-driven acquisition could help here.
- Advocating for more liaison librarian positions could help alleviate large workloads

III.   **Looking into the Future**

1. **What functional areas could be a good fit for collaboration? What does that look like?**
- Getting access to opening up copyright for items that need to be researched in HathiTrust- similar to CRL process each member lib gets to propose something or a list of things.
- Sharing technical tool specialists like R, GIS across BTAA
- Creating and sharing datasets.
- In order to collaborate first there is a need for documentation about what the librarian does, their baseline knowledge and others' baseline knowledge about that role. This would help inform librarians of when to refer commonly asked questions from the liaison librarian to the functional librarian and vise-versa.
- Ask: What collaborations are *already* happening? Especially within BTAA.

2. **What subject areas could be a good fit for collaboration? What does that look like?**
- Marketing strategies across BTAA-- what are we all doing? Internal and external.
- Shared infrastructure: for data and digital humanities projects
- Collaborative collections development
- Open Access and open education resources
- There are successful subject collaborations going on, maybe a clearinghouse or directory for these.
- Subject specialists identify in affinity groups- based on functions sometimes.
- Subject specialists can document what functions they are experts in or level at which they know things.

3. **Are there any areas in which BTAA could share a single position?**
- Share a single position? Could "position" mean a policy vs. a job? (Just some food for thought)
- Sharing language/area studies librarians (ex: currently happening between Chicago and Minnesota). Could one institution provide funding and the other something else? Or, some sort of bartering system? Other librarians that may "share" well: GIS, data, systematic review.
- Repositories- sharing institutional repositories across BTAA.
- Data catalogers
- Visiting librarian programs, visit another BTAA library and work on something at the other institution.

4. **How do we keep this momentum going? What can our future activities look like?**
- Continuing education (other industries are good at continuing ed and librarianship can improve here)
- Teaching certain pedagogical frameworks, methodologies, ways to approach different topics so that you would get "certified".
- Come up with standards and share out, best practices.
- Bringing in experts from BTAA institutions who have someone in a certain area to provide training
- Creating support groups for certain subjects, areas or functions.
- Creating a BTAA cross-institutional committee