Team Up: Collaborating with Public Relations Students to Promote Library Subject Specialists

INTRODUCTION

The University of Florida was seeking more effective methods for reaching undergraduate students. Previous internal studies had revealed that when students think of the library, librarians were often overlooked as a source of help. It was clear that students were unaware of the vital role librarians play in student success. This issue was further compounded by the fact that libraries were increasingly developing a brand platform, list of campaign issues, and a research agenda to help students become more aware of services provided by librarians to develop a brand platform, list of campaign issues, and a research agenda to help students become more aware of services provided by librarians.

RATIONALE/PROBLEM STATEMENT

If you knew a librarian could assist you with _ _ _:

- Test prep material
- Locate statistics, government documents and other hard to find resources
- Help create citations and works cited pages
- Locate scholarly research for assignments
- Library for a quiet place to study
- To consult with a librarian on a research paper or project

Why Do You Usually Come into the Library?

- Looking for research materials
- Want to use the computers
- To consult with a librarian on a research paper or project
- To know a librarian could assist you with _ _ _

Selected Focus Group Results:

- Students were unaware of Library West's Assignment Calculator tool
- Students were unaware that Library West can help with copyright questions
- Students were unsure of what a Subject Specialist was
- Students were unaware of the Ask a librarian feature
- Students were unsure of how to contact a librarian if they needed help

2. Students' Data Collection

Peer Survey

A 23 question anonymous and uncontrolled survey was conducted December 2016 with 512 self-identified participants. Students were asked about their perception of librarians and their roles in the library.

Student Focus Group:

Students participated in two separate sessions, each with eight participants. Two open ended questions were asked:

- "What do you think a librarian could assist you with...?"
- "What would you ask a librarian if you had a question about...?"

Selected Focus Group Notes:

- "I don't know what a librarian could assist me with..."
- "I don't know what I'm supposed to ask them [librarians] about. I think I would come to them if I had a question..."
- "I think they would be an instrumental part of student success..."

Peer Survey Results

Survey distributed at Marston Science Library, Library West, and through social media with 2852 respondents, students, staff, faculty, all levels.

- 95% percentage of “yes” answers
- 88% first “Client” Meeting with Class, Librarian shared data from past surveys to give students an idea of what they were up against

A 13 question survey was conducted February 22-23, 2016 with 352 collected responses from a wide range of majors. Survey question types included Likert scale, multiple choice, and rank order questions.

- Percentage of “yes” answers:
  - 95%
  - 88%
  - 86%
  - 83%
  - 79%

3. Highlights from Final Campaign Plans

- Top 10 Infographic

4. Examples of Outreach and Marketing Initiatives

- Top 10 Infographic

5. Assessment on Outreach & Marketing Initiatives

- Current Ongoing Assessments
  - Top 10 Infographic
  - Facebook presence has been noted 204 times since September 16, 2016
  - Approximately 1,000 print copies distributed.
  - Tabling Event
  - Librarians and library student ambassadors held in-depth, one-on-one conversations with 4,179 students over 4 hours of time.
  - Social Media
  - Library West Facebook page gained 105 likes since August 16, 2016.

- Planned Future Assessments
  - Survey measuring awareness of subject librarians to be distributed before and after elevator wrap installations.
  - Draft follow-up/satisfaction survey for librarians to send to students after research consultations.
  - Evaluate reaching back and consultation statistics for needs.

6. Next Steps...

- Video Profiles
  - Create fun and engaging video profiles for all subject librarians. Example: https://youtu.be/oTtUIvQnClQ

- Commercials
  - Create promotional videos using the gator mascot to introduce librarians and how they can help students with research and become their academic teammates.

- Graduate Intern Help
  - Apply for internally funded, graduate student internship grant to have a public relations & marketing student to help execute further campaign ideas.