Programme

• Closing Keynote

Aligning Library Services with Researcher Needs

Dr Susan Gibbons
• University Librarian & Deputy Provost, Yale University

The alignment of library-based services with the needs of researchers requires continuous assessment and adjustment. User research, based in the methods of ethnography and anthropology, can serve as a powerful tool for assessment and discovery of emerging researcher needs. This presentation will give examples of using these research methods both to identify current library service misalignments and to discover emerging researcher needs. The presentation will also include examples of library partnerships with university presses that can result in improved researcher discovery of university press titles.
ALIGNING LIBRARY SERVICES WITH RESEARCHER NEEDS

Susan Gibbons
Stephen F. Gates ‘68 University Librarian
Deputy Provost, Collections & Scholarly Communications
Yale University
Library Challenges (Sampling)

Technology is rapidly changing research practices
Shift from ownership to access
Economic constraints

How can libraries stay aligned with the changing needs of our users?
LIBRARY ALIGNMENT ACROSS UNIVERSITY

- Student retention
- Mental wellness
- Student/faculty recruitment
- Fund-raising
DISCERNING USER NEEDS

• Usage data
• Surveys
• Squeaky wheel
• “When I was at university....”
Dr. Nancy Fried Foster

Use methods of anthropology and ethnography to conduct in-depth studies of library users
EXAMPLE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

▪ How students write/research papers?
▪ Barriers to dissertation/thesis completion
▪ How are science libraries being used?
▪ What role should physical collections play in an undergraduate library?
▪ Design of space and services in a center for teaching and learning
EXAMPLE RESEARCH METHODS

- Design charrettes
- Photo elicitation
- Observations
- Reply cards
- Academic diaries
- Mapping exercises
- In situ interviews
- Retrospective interviews
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EXEMPLARY RESEARCH METHODS

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MISALIGNMENTS (FACULTY)

- Institution Repositories
  - “Institution” focus not disciplinary
  - Metadata?
  - Digital preservation
  - Takes too much time

- Emerging need: a document management system
MISALIGNMENTS
(Graduate Students)

Special collection research

Horror stories of special collection research trips

Yale Libraries made it seem easy
MISALIGNMENTS
(UNDERGRADUATE
STUDENTS)

- Library
  Orientation

- Timing was
completely wrong
ext class

That afternoon

Antisemitism in Punk Rock
70's & 80's

8:00pm
Circ Desk room

10:00

Week before due

responded 3 days later

emailed
to Dad's advice

to my dad
EMERGING NEED (GRADUATE STUDENTS)

- Magical summer myth
  - Alerting grad students to the myth
  - Offering librarians as silent partners
Emerging Needs (Undergraduate Students)

Design of library spaces

Shift from group spaces to individual study space
OBSERVATIONS REGARDING STUDENT USE OF CONTENT

• Limited use of library/native interfaces- just go to Google
• Strong brand loyalty when early success
• Continued decline in use of physical collections (except for special collections)
• Zero tolerance for resistance (e.g., DRM)
• Lack of standards leads to significant confusion
ALIGNMENT WITH OUR UNIVERSITY PRESSES

- CIP work (Univ. of Chicago)
- Creating MARC records for projects (art portal project)
- Support of digitization efforts
- Co-publication projects
  - Special collections
  - Speakers
- Author talks in the library
MORE INFORMATION

https://tinyurl.com/y9credok

Dr. Nancy Fried Foster
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