
Embedded Librarianship:

What's Been Going On? What's Next?

Panel Presentation

Pharmaceutical & Health Technology Division

SLA Annual Conference, Seattle

June 16, 2008

David Shumaker, Clinical Associate Professor, Catholic
University of America

What's Been Going On? ... A Review of the Recent Literature

Deborah Brown and Dean Leith: "Integration of the Research Library Service into the Editorial Process"

- Space realignment forced librarians to move in with editorial groups
- Relationships flourished
- Customers are happy; staff are happy
- When the opportunity came to re-centralize the library staff, nobody wanted to



What's Been Going On? ... A Review of the Recent Literature

Russell Hall: "The 'Embedded' Librarian in a Freshman Speech Class"

- First-year speech class incorporated one class period of bibliographic instruction by a visiting librarian
- Instructor recognized that students did not demonstrate mastery of research techniques
- Instructor approached librarian to attend every class, and arrangements were made
- Librarian contributed to class discussions and provided help outside class
- Student performance went up!



What's Been Going On? ... A Review of the Recent Literature

Susan Smith and Lynn Sutton: “Embedded Librarians: On the Road in the Deep South”

- Wake Forest University librarians invited to go on 2-week bus trip with summer class
- Provide research instruction and guidance, tech support, and develop experience learning component of the course



What's Been Going On? ... A Review of the Recent Literature

Angela Tod et al.: “Exploring the Contribution of the Clinical Librarian to Facilitating Evidence-based Nursing”

- Nurses don't use the medical literature effectively to support patient care. How can librarians help?
- Nurses discuss patient care issues at shift changes. If the librarian would show up on the ward a couple times a week when those discussions are happening, she could identify issues and provide meaningful evidence to aid in caregiving decisions.



Thinking about the Reports: The Good News ...

- “Embedding” is going on in multiple sectors, worldwide
- Embedded librarians are forming strong relationships
- There’s some evidence that they add value
- Customers are happy
- Embedded librarians are happy



... and the Questions

- How much does location matter?
- Who pays for embedded librarians' services, and what happens to the work they used to do?
- What about those who can't, or won't make the transition?
- How to maintain librarian-librarian collaboration?



What's Next?

- We need more stories, and more research
- SLA Research Grant: Models of Embedded Librarianship
 - Co-investigators: David Shumaker and Mary Talley
 - Goal: develop an evidence-based model to guide librarians who are considering or planning a shift to an embedded model.
 - Steps:
 1. Identify examples of embedded library services
 2. Analyze factors that contributed to their successful initiation and sustainment
 3. Create in-depth profiles of a few successful programs





David Shumaker

202-319-5551

shumaker@cua.edu

Embeddedlibrarian.wordpress.com

Full Citations to Articles Discussed

- Brown, D. and D. Leith, *Integration of the research library service into the editorial process*. *Aslib Proceedings: New Information Perspective*, 2007. **59**(6): p. 539-549.
 - Hall, R.A., *The "embedded" librarian in a freshman speech class: Information literacy instruction in action*. *College & Research Libraries News*, 2008. **69**(1): p. 28-30.
 - Smith, S.S. and L. Sutton, *Embedded Librarians: On the road in the Deep South*. *College & Research Libraries News*, 2008. **69**(2): p. 71-74, 85.
 - Tod, A.M., Beverly Bond, Niamh Leonard, Irene J. Gilson, Simon Palfreyman, *Exploring the contribution of the Clinical Librarian to facilitating evidence-based nursing*. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 2007. **16**(4): p. 621-629
-