

Research Incentive Fund Report

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In May 2016 I was awarded a generous grant from InULA that allowed me to travel to the NASIG 31st Annual Conference in Albuquerque, NM. Formerly known as the North American Serials Interest Group, NASIG's purpose is to promote and support the information resource lifecycle, with an emphasis on scholarship, serials, and electronic resources.⁹ With broad categories such as these, NASIG, then, is a community of information specialists with expertise spanning serials, acquisitions, discovery services, emerging technologies, digital services, access services, and electronic resources.

At the conference, I and my colleague, Ria Lukes, presented a research project we conducted during spring 2016. The title of our presentation was, "Using Course Syllabi to Develop Collections and Assess Library Service Integrations." This presentation shared the methodology and results Ria and I realized for our research. We described how we collaborated with campus faculty and staff to obtain syllabi spanning the 2015 calendar year and then performed a content analysis for the 477 syllabi we collected. In our session, we reported the extent to which different resource types (e.g. books, databases, legal cases, etc.) were represented in syllabi and the percentages of those items held by our library. Our results included:

- The top four resources we found listed in syllabi were: books (52%); websites (24%); media, including DVDs and TV series (10%); and periodicals (9%).
- Of the books represented on syllabi, our library did not lease or own 87.3% of the titles. Upon further investigation, we found that the majority of the books we do not have are textbooks, and our current collection development policy specifies we do not normally purchase textbooks.
- To evaluate the integration of the library within courses, we checked whether the word "library" was specifically mentioned in syllabi. Only 29% referred to the library, and glaring omissions were our robust LibGuides and the concept of librarians as experts.

Although we originally began this project to evaluate and develop our collections, we also discovered the negligible and disheartening lack of library presence within syllabi. However, we were encouraged by the inclusion of research assignment subjects and types within syllabi, as well as concepts we could match to information literacy themes.

Other sessions at the NASIG 2016 conference, as well as other similar national conferences, have reported on library acquisitions of course-adopted texts, which are based upon lists acquired from university bookstores. Sharing this presentation allowed Ria and me to demonstrate an alternative and more comprehensive option for targeted library material acquisitions. Feedback from the presentation indicated other librarians planned to explore similar projects at their institutions. Additionally, since the presentation, Ria and I have proceeded with our project by discussing resource and library integrations with specific faculty; this work is ongoing. Future phases of this project include: continuing to identify courses and assignments we should further scrutinize in order

⁹ NASIG, Vision & mission, 2016.

http://www.nasig.org/site_page.cfm?pk_association_webpage_menu=308&pk_association_webpage=186

to inform our collecting levels; using known assignments to develop LibGuides faculty may post directly to their course sites within our campus Learning Management System; and reviewing alternate acquisition models, such as SUPO (single user perpetual license) or MUPO (multiple user perpetual license) options. I am grateful to InULA for its support of this project.