Party Partners

Taking Reference Services in a
New Direction

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What I'm going to talk about

- What are Research Parties
- How we're doing them (planning, marketing, hosting, assessment, etc.)
- Impacts and benefits
- Challenges and opportunities
- How we're moving forward in the virtual environment

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Some Context

Who We Are
What We're Doing

SUNY Oswego

A comprehensive college on the shores of Lake Ontario

- 7,100 Undergrad students and 1,000 Grad students
- 110+ Undergraduate majors and minors
- 35 Masters Programs
- 28% of students from culturally diverse background
- 89% of students receive Financial Aid

Penfield Library

- 11 full time librarians
- 15 professional staff and clerks
- 30+ student workers

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Research Parties

What Are They?

- A drop-in consultation space for students to meet with librarians, writing tutors, and each other in a relaxed, fun atmosphere
- Social and collaborative
- Based on social learning theory and peer learning theory
- Multiple librarians and Writing Center tutors circulate the room, answering questions and assisting students with their various research needs

Expanding on an Idea

- Librarians at the University of Pennsylvania conceived of the Research Party idea in Spring 2013
- ACRL presentation Spring 2019

Three students, two librarians, and the Writing Ceter Director at a Rsearch Party 11/19/19

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Goals / Reasons

- Promote student use and understanding of Penfield Library's resources

- Foster student familiarity and engagement with librarians as a valued resource

- Encourage an atmosphere of scholarly collaboration and community at the library

- Encourage student interest and receptivity in seeking out research help at the Library

- Build campus partnerships with the library

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Planning

Summer 2019: Research and Development

- **Pre-party research and planning:**
  - Literature review/reading
  - Solidified goals and vision
  - Drafted proposal and got Director consent
  - Solicited librarian buy in on the idea
  - Created budget / secured funds
  - Figured out due dates of major assignments
  - Picked dates, reserved rooms
  - Coordinated food purchase
  - Worked with Writing Center Director and student tutors on staffing
  - Emailed faculty across campus
  - Developed marketing plan

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Marketing

- Electronic signage across campus
- Printed flyers in dorms and around campus
- Announcements on social media
- Promoted during library instruction sessions and at Research Help Desk
- Asked faculty in our liaison areas to announce in their classes

Penfield Library Invites You to a

RESEARCH PARTY!

Free Pizza!

Tuesday November 19th 6:00 – 8:00pm

2nd Floor Penfield Library

⭐ Get help ⭐ with
Citations ° Scholarly Sources
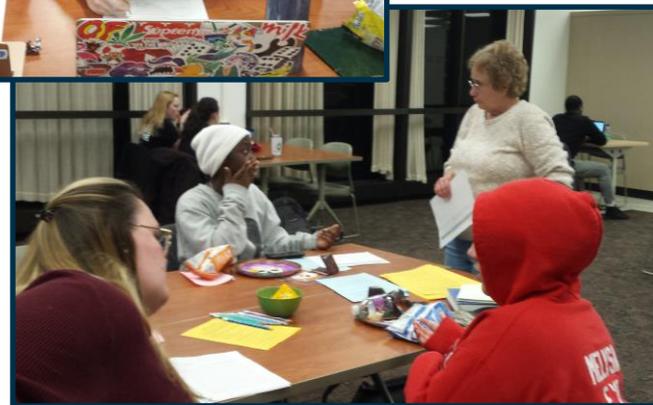Writing ° Conducting Research
& MORE

Penfield Librarians and Writing Center Tutors will be on hand!

FREE PIZZA AND SNACKS PROVIDED!

Sponsored by: Penfield Library and the Office of Learning Services (OLS)

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Types of Parties We've Hosted

- In person (3)
- Virtual (3)
- Targeted: Population specific
- Targeted: Topic specific

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Hosting in Person

Please sign in. We're glad you're here!   Research Party 3/3/20
Please write legibly

| Name | Undergrad or Grad? | How did you hear about this event? | Here for Extra Credit? | |
			Class	Professor

- Sign in sheet at the door

- Table with pizza, snacks (**not** near door)

- Student worker staffing sign in and orienting attendees to space (no grab & go!)

- Librarians circulating room --> one person coordinating and directing students to other available librarians and writing center tutors

- Laptops for student use; other research supplies/handouts

- Maintain fun, informal vibe

- Have fun!

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Two students with llibrarian Michelle 11/19/19

Hosting Virtually

- Zoom meeting

- Students sign up ahead of time for a time slot vs. waiting room feature

- Librarian 'greeter' coordinating, creating good vibe, and sending students to librarians

- Librarians in breakout rooms ready to answer questions

- Some students return to main room afterwards

Assessment

Thank you for coming to Penfield Library's Research Party!

Please answer a few quick questions so we can make it even better next time :)

What did you find most helpful?

Is this something you would recommend to your friends?

Any comments or suggestions?

In Person Parties

- Tracked reference transactions in Gimlet
- Tracked attendee numbers on sign in sheet
- Solicited feedback at each party from student attendees and Writing Center tutors
- Received unsolicited feedback from faculty across campus and several faculty attendees
- Feedback from attendees helped us make improvements & better meet student needs

Virtual Parties

- Tracked reference transactions in Gimlet
- Tracked attendee numbers
- Received unsolicited feedback from student attendees and faculty whose students attended
- Considering online exit poll

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Impact and Benefits

For student attendees

- Awareness of library resources (including librarians themselves)
- Assistance with getting research/assignments done
- Development of research skills; becoming better students

For Penfield Library

- Increased used of library resources and librarians
- Relationship building between library and students
- Partnerships with other campus offices
- Promotion of scholarly/collegial atmosphere

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"The environment was the most helpful. Everyone was happy to help and always checking up."

"I felt comfortable asking for help."

"I was so lost before I came and now I have a solid path with my research."

"It's encouraging that there are so many good resources for our students to improve their research ability and writing skills." (*Faculty member*)

Challenges

- Getting students to attend
- Librarian and administration buy in on the idea
- Faculty buy in across campus --> <u>this is key</u>!
- Funding sources for food
- How to make them better (particularly in the virtual environment)

Future/Opportunities

- Hosting Research Parties in the dorms
- Hosting Research Parties for specific student populations (international students, EOP students, veterans, specific majors, etc.)
- Hosting more class-specific sessions
- Hosting a faculty focused Research Party
- Training Peer Reference Assistants to help at Research Parties
- **Making virtual Research Parties better!**

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Thank you and Questions

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