

SCALING AN EMBEDDED LIBRARIAN PROGRAM: USING A BLACKBOARD REPOSITORY TO DISSEMINATE RESOURCES AND COLLABORATE IN A REMOTE SETTING

JEWEL DE LA ROSA AND JACKIE COFFEY SCOTT



EMBEDDED LIBRARIAN PROGRAM AT SUNY ERIE

- The Embedded Librarian Program assigns a librarian to a research-based course to assist students in Blackboard.
- Working within Blackboard, a librarian collaborates with faculty to provide enhanced library service and assistance to students. Embedded Librarianship requires advanced planning and collaboration between the requesting faculty member and Librarian.
- The Librarian will post a welcome message early in the semester and will maintain a presence in Blackboard either throughout the entire semester, or during a specified period of time for a specific assignment or research paper.
- The librarian can interact with students in a library forum to assist with; narrowing or broadening a topic, recommending and evaluating sources and more.
- The frequent interactions between students and librarian enable the students to gain a better understanding of navigating the ECC Libraries and in the end will result in better utilized scholarly sources for their papers.

HISTORY OF PROGRAM

- Embedded Librarian Pilot program discussion began in Spring/Summer 2014
- We started this program to facilitate better Library service to students via online classes and Blackboard and to engage with faculty partners.
- Initial pilot began with just one English Faculty member and one Librarian in Fall 2014
- Meetings with Distance learning were necessary to establish specific Librarian role and permissions in Blackboard. After the initial pilot the terms were determined and presented at our College Senate for approval in Fall 2015. Embedded Librarians must be Blackboard certified by DL prior to being added to a course. Documented librarian role was presented and approved as follows:

The relationship between instructor and librarian is a partnership. Details of this partnership need to be worked out prior to the start of the semester. Some things to consider when engaging a librarian within your class include (but not limited to):

- Areas of focus
- Timeframe
- Level of engagement

Within Blackboard, the librarian will not have the same rights as the instructor.

The librarian will be able to:

- Build, Edit, Copy and Delete Content (files, pages, links, etc.)
- Build, Edit and Delete Assessments (tests, surveys, assignments, etc.)
- Build, Edit and Delete Tools (discussions, journals, etc.)
- Send Messages and Emails
- Create and Manage Groups

The librarian will not be able to:

- Change Course Menu Structure
- Grade Assignments, Discussions, tests, etc.
- Access Student Grades

If you would like to work with an embedded librarian contact them to discuss subject matter of the course, research assignments, and then work together to agree upon the level of involvement. Librarians can be involved as much, or as little as you would like, ranging from the entire semester, to only a specific time period. Only once this is agreed upon, will the Librarian be added to the Blackboard Course.



GROWTH AND USE OVER YEARS

- Embedded program was officially offered at all three campuses Fall 2016 with 12 courses covered by 6 Librarians
- Program has grown slowly each semester in both the number of courses and Librarians participating in the program
- In the last full semester prior to the pandemic and transition to remote instruction(Fall 2019) the program had 26 courses managed by 7 librarians.
- Campuses transitioned to fully remote instruction in the middle of Spring 2020 and saw an increase to 52 courses- doubling our statistics from one semester to the next.
- Fall 2020 was entirely remote and increased to 84 courses with 16 Embedded Librarians

EFFECTS OF THE PANDEMIC

- The program was initially targeted to and involved English courses but has grown to include research-based courses in OT, Dietetic Technology, Medical Assisting, Theatre and more.
- Beginning with one Librarian in 2014 this has increased to include the majority of both Full and Part Time Librarians being Blackboard certified and participating during the pandemic.
- One-shot Library instruction sessions have decreased as the Embedded Librarian program saw exponential growth this past year.
- Librarians and services remained relevant and vital during this transition and the stable and established program allowed Librarians to assist Faculty and students at their point of need in their courses.

NEED FOR COLLABORATION

- As exciting as the growth has been it has also presented challenges with sustainability and efficiency as courses increased and staffing remained stagnant.
- Growth required many librarians to be embedded in as many as 10 courses in a semester
- With courses and Librarians across three distinct campuses issues with communication, consistency and duplication of efforts were noted
- In order to sustain the growth and provide less experienced Librarians with assistance a centralized location for resources was created.

IDEA FOR CONTENT REPOSITORY

- There was a meeting of librarians from all three campuses to determine a basic outline for what the content repository would accomplish and what it would look like
- It was decided that the best place for the repository was in a course shell created by Distance Learning in Blackboard
- It was determined that to fill in the repository librarians who had the most embedded experience in classes/content areas would be utilized as they already had content built that they could just copy and paste
- A single person was assigned to set up frame and a deadline was set for content to be added

CREATION OF CONTENT REPOSITORY

- The Library Repository is set up within a shell Blackboard course to allow content to be easily copied from the repository by librarians embedded in live Blackboard courses
- All librarians have access to the items in the repository, but the content is created and maintained by librarians who have experience being embedded in specific classes
- The overall structure of the repository was created by one librarian. It was organized by subject and then further broken down into specific classes
- The statistics for all embedded classes were evaluated and the librarians with the most experience were assigned to fill content into classes
- Tour of Blackboard Repository

TOUR OF REPOSITORY

- The subject areas were decided upon based on departments with a history of utilizing the embedded librarian program
- Any class with a history of requesting an embedded librarian was included under the subject area
- Once a librarian with experience being embedded in a particular class was identified, they were charged with copying and pasting their content from previous classes
- Many different types of content and media are contained within the repository



TYPES OF CONTENT AND MEDIA CREATED

- Text and links are common and often relate to information sharing about the role of the embedded librarian, the librarian's availability, and contact information. It is also common to include links to the library's homepage, research guides, and other popular links such as citation guides
- Video tutorials that exist on the library's YouTube channel relating to library services and databases
- Research guides pertaining to the subject area of the class
- Libwizard Tutorials

FUTURE OUTLOOK FOR PROGRAM AND REPOSITORY

- The embedded librarian program will continue every semester as it was already popular prior to the pandemic
- We hope that the experience of our embedded program by instructors and students during the pandemic will lead to continued collaboration and growth
- Librarians who are assigned to the repository are expected to maintain and update their content on an as needed basis
- In the future we hope to include formal assessment of our embedded librarian program as it is not included in our instruction assessment

CONCLUSION, QUESTIONS, DISCUSSION

- <https://padlet.com/jeweldelarosa/ab9uaky9x5xitbt9>

