

» “Libraries are about Freedom. Freedom to read, freedom of ideas, freedom of communication. They are about education (which is not a process that finishes the day we leave school or university), about entertainment, about making safe spaces, and about access to information.”

- NEIL GAIMAN

Strategic Library™



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Outreach, Engagement, Learning, and Fun in 60 Seconds

» Button making at the Rutgers University Libraries

BY MEGAN LOTTS AND TARA MAHARJAN

In the fall of 2016, the Rutgers University Libraries (RUL)-New Brunswick Learning and Engagement team spent \$580 to purchase a button maker and supplies to make 1,000 buttons. Since then, the libraries have collaborated on button projects with many departments on campus, including the Rutgers Art History Student Association, the Zimmerli Art Museum, and the School of Arts and Sciences Honors program. These partnerships have helped the libraries build strong ties with the Rutgers-New Brunswick communities and attracted a devoted group of button makers who regularly attend library events.

In 2016, the RUL art librarian requested that the Learning and Engagement team purchase a button maker as a tool for library outreach through pop-up makerspace events. The inspiration came from the ACRL 2013 conference, where Char Booth, associate dean of the library at California

State University-San Marcos, spoke about libraries building goodwill within their communities and noted that the Claremont College Libraries button maker was worth its weight in gold.¹

Button making is a low-cost, high-impact, pop-up makerspace activity that libraries can use to facilitate outreach, connect patrons with collections, teach students about copyright, and promote creativity and fun, all in just 60 seconds. Since purchasing the machine, the libraries have collaborated on button making projects with many departments on the Rutgers campuses, including the Art History Student Association, Living Learning Communities, Landscape Architecture Department, Mason Gross Visual Arts Department, School of Arts and Sciences Honors program, and the Zimmerli Art Museum. These partnerships have helped the libraries build strong ties with other campus entities and fostered collaborations with the Rutgers-New Brunswick communities.

**DESIGNING ENGAGEMENT
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*Understanding Student Study Habits to
Inform Library Operating Hours*

**DEVELOPING WEEDING
PROTOCOLS FOR BORN DIGITAL
COLLECTIONS**



Figure 1. Image of button maker and supplies.

The button maker has also attracted a group of devoted followers who regularly ask reference questions and attend library events. Making a button provides a quick moment of engagement between a patron and a library staff member, but it is from these kinds of meaningful brief encounters that libraries can learn about their patrons' lives and needs. These encounters can also be a source for the powerful stories, images, and statistics that help libraries demonstrate their impact and value to their communities.

BRIEF HISTORY AND OTHER LIBRARIES MAKING BUTTONS

Benjamin S. Whitehead first created buttons, also known as button badges, in 1893, when he placed a sheet of celluloid on the front of a button to prevent scratching.² In 1896, The Whitehead & Hoag Company received the patent for the button badge,

which used a metal pin anchored to the back of the button to fasten the badge.³ The 21st-century resurgence of button making in academic libraries has coincided with the rise of the "making culture." The 2013 article "10 Ways to Celebrate Maker Culture," focused on making activities as a way for libraries to offer programming and create in-house publicity. Button making was number six on the article's list.⁴

Although button making may be found more often in public libraries, many academic libraries use this tool as a means to educate students and help them relieve stress. Some libraries even allow their button makers to circulate. A few university libraries are thinking outside the box and using their button makers in unexpected ways. In 2014, Ann Marie Ramussen and Heidi Madden cotaught a writing 101 course in which students were asked to write papers about Medieval badges. As

part of their project, each student was asked to draw one of the badges they had studied, and they then used the library button maker to turn their drawings into modern day badges.⁵

In a project at the University of California-San Francisco Archives titled "Archive Your Pride," summer intern Kelsi Evans located images from the AIDS History Project Ephemera Collection and the Bobby Campbell Diary for patrons to use in creating buttons that celebrated diversity.⁶ In an article on creating inclusive academic libraries through diversity initiatives, Anne Switzer notes that three academic librarians from Oakland University participated in a campus-wide initiative called Students, Administrators, and Faculty for Equality (SAFE) in which allies were given SAFE buttons to wear to identify themselves as knowledgeable about LGBT resources and willing to help.⁷

From the examples listed above, it is clear there are a variety of ways academic libraries can use a button maker to build goodwill, highlight collections, educate patrons about copyright, encourage diversity and inclusion, relieve stress, and foster collaborations between departments.

COST, SUPPLIES, AND STORAGE

The button maker has become a key point of engagement at Rutgers, yet it cost the libraries just \$580, including the machine, a graphic punch, and supplies to make 1,000 buttons.⁸ After making the initial investment in equipment, each button cost the libraries roughly ten cents to make. In one year, the libraries hosted 15 well-attended events in which more than 2,400 buttons have been made.

The button maker and supplies are easy to store and can be quickly moved from one library to another (see Figure 1). Besides the button maker itself, our supplies include a graphic punch to cut perfect button-sized circles, a small hammer and block in case the machine jams, a few pairs of scissors, and pre-made copyright-free image tem-





Figure 2. Collage of SC/UA image templates.

plates we think students might want to use to make buttons. We also provide blank button templates, markers, crayons, and colored pencils so patrons create their own images to turn into buttons.

BUTTON MAKING AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Tucked into the basement of Rutgers Alexander Library, Special Collections and University Archives (SC/UA) is not a place most students come across. Generally, students do not know of SC/UA unless they are required to visit for a class or they find a book in the catalog that is held by the department. This relative obscurity means that outreach is incredibly important. Using fun, eye-catching images from SC/UA for button making facilitates conversations about the image, where it comes from, and how students can visit SC/UA to see the item or image in person.

One of our most popular buttons is a black- and-white image of an African American man in a Rutgers football uniform holding a football. The man in the image is Paul Robeson, a Rutgers alumnus, athlete, singer, actor, and civil rights activist who was black-listed during McCarthyism. Students, who are intrigued by the picture, often want to know more about Robeson, and we can then direct them to our primary and secondary source materials held in SC/UA.

In one instance, a member of one of the Rutgers Living Learning Communities (LLC) reached out to the art librarian to inquire about acquiring 23 Paul Robeson buttons. The day before, the student had made a Robeson button and now wanted to make more to give to each member of her LLC

because they were studying this alum's work. This also provided the libraries with an opportunity to work more closely with the LLC to share additional resources pertaining to Robeson. Since this collaboration, the libraries have received multiple reference questions from this LLC on other topics related to their coursework.⁹

Button making is an engaging way for SC/UA to collaborate with different departments throughout the libraries and the university as a whole. Through different button designs, the libraries have been able to highlight the holdings of the University Archives during the 250th anniversary celebration, promote images from a variety of collecting

areas for “stressbuster” events during finals week, and share Rutgers football-related images for Rutgers Family Weekend (see Figure 2). Recently, when the science library learned about button events in the libraries, they reached out to SC/UA to get archival science-themed button templates made for button making events at their library.

Buttons are also an interesting piece of ephemera, which patrons can take away for free from library-sponsored events. For an exhibit opening about a New Jersey politician, buttons using his old campaign posters were made as giveaways. During an art and feminism Wikipedia “edit-a-thon,” feminist-themed buttons, based on SC/UA's weekly #FeministFriday social media posts were given away to participants. Overall, the button maker has helped get Rutgers SC/UA out of the basement by highlighting the libraries' unique collections, and it has also served as a teaching tool and a means for SC/UA to collaborate with other departments on campus.

BUTTON MAKER AS TEACHING TOOL

Button making offers a low-cost pop-up making activity that addresses the idea of an object from concept to consumption, producing a tangible object that can be worn or given to a friend. Creating a button strengthens creative thinking and problem-solving skills, which are crucial when conducting library research, and also provides an opportunity to discuss finding images



Figure 3. Alexander Library button making event for stressbusters fall 2016.



Figure 4. Button images created by Rutgers student printmakers for Banned Books Week 2017.

and understanding copyright laws.¹⁰

Some of our most popular button making activities are the pop-up makerspaces we host, which include “stressbuster” events that happen for the Rutgers University Libraries at the end of each semester (see Figure 3). These events provide library patrons an opportunity to take a short break, stretch their creative muscles with hands on learning, talk with a librarian, and maybe make a new friend, all while making a button. For patrons who do not have time to create their own buttons, we provide a selection of premade buttons featuring images from SC/UA.

Student clubs often approach the libraries and ask to use the button machine and supplies. In one button making experience with a group of 12 undergraduates from the Art History Department, we discussed finding images and understanding copyright laws, as many students brought images that infringed on copyright restrictions. Students were curious to learn more about copyright and asked questions about how to find and properly cite an image when writing a paper. This opportunity also allowed the Art Library to share a recently created “finding images” LibGuide, as well as lead students to many other helpful research guides.

One of our most engaging button making projects was a collaboration between Rutgers Mason Gross School of Visual Arts and the Art Library, funded by a Banned Books Week grant from the Freedom to Read Foundation. With this grant, the Rutgers art librarian worked closely with an advanced

Join us March 21, 2019 at 2PM Eastern for a live webinar:

Turning Outward: Using Outreach and Engagement to Develop Unconventional and Unique Collaborations Within Your Communities

In the 21st century librarians are thinking more about outreach, engagement, collaboration, and innovation when it comes to everyday tasks such as programming, building collections, and providing instruction and reference support. Many libraries are beginning to think more about what is happening outside of their spaces, to provide better services and resources inside their spaces.



Some libraries are moving from traditional models of reference and instruction, to active mobile spaces outside More...the libraries, where communities come together to collectively produce, curate, and consume information. The Rutgers University Art Library uses the ideas of turning outward to connect with the local campus and New Brunswick communities, to provide innovative programming that engages a wide range of patrons.

Through this webinar you will learn:

- more about outreach, engagement, and what it means to turn outward;
- how to create low-cost high-impact innovative programming within your own organization;
- about the Rutgers Art Library Exhibition Spaces, Pop-up Makerspaces; and
- a recent Banned Books Week celebration funded by the Freedom to Read Foundation.

Presenter: Megan Lotts is a reference and instruction librarian for the Rutgers University Libraries. Lotts currently serves as a liaison to the departments of Art History, Digital Filmmaking Landscape Architecture, and Visual Arts. As well as her work as an Art Librarian, Megan works closely with the undergraduate population including teaching a course for the Rutgers SAS Honors program. At Rutgers, Megan has served as the chair of the Rutgers University Libraries Undergraduate Experience Team, the chair of the Rutgers University Libraries Advisory Committee of Library Services for Person with Disabilities, and 2 years as Faculty Secretary.

Registration fee: \$49/person. Ask us about group rates for parties of 4 or more (email jenny@libraryworks.com)

Registration link: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1281032590928230401>

undergraduate printmaking course from Rutgers Mason Gross Visual Arts, taught by associate professor Barbara Madsen, to teach students about intellectual freedom, censorship, and banned books. The students then created images that were made into 1,000 buttons and distributed across the Rutgers campuses (see Figure 4). Students still talk about this project and the importance of intellectual freedom. They ask for

more buttons and want to know when the libraries will host this event again. If you pay attention on campus, there is a good chance you will see one or more of these buttons on a backpack or jacket.

WHAT OUR BUTTON MAKERS HAVE TO SAY

In general, Rutgers and local communities love making, wearing, and sharing buttons. The button maker is regularly requested by

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student clubs, departments, and organizations throughout the Rutgers communities.

In November 2017, a button making list-serv was created due to the popularity of the button making events. Prior to button making events, the libraries send out an email with a blank button template attached. This alerts students of upcoming events, so they can create their images ahead of time, print them, and bring them to the event.

In January of 2018, we began placing stickers on the backs of the buttons including the RUL logo, as well as the hashtag, #RULbuttonmaking. We hope this sticker will encourage individuals to share their creations and button making experiences on social media. But also the stickers extend the libraries reach, as many buttons made at these events are given away as gifts.

Also in January 2018, the Rutgers-New Brunswick libraries have "more intentionally" started collecting statistics, including providing a comment box at button-making events. The comments have been overwhelmingly positive and included statements such as, "Thanks for the new pin, I love it and put it on my backpack," "making buttons is awesome," "we love buttons," "making a button made my day," "best library ever," "thank you RU Libraries," "I love the idea of creating my own button," and "I'm going to make one for my mom."

With the popularity of button making, more button events are happening across RUL. This allows students to explore the various libraries and meet the respective librarians throughout the Rutgers-New

Brunswick campuses. The demand is so high that library graduate assistants and student workers are also learning to how to use the button machine and troubleshoot problems so that we can host more pop-up events throughout campuses. Also RUL is contemplating purchasing more machines.

CONCLUSION

At RUL, our button maker has become a tool for engagement, which has allowed the libraries to connect with patrons in unexpected ways. This machine has helped highlight the libraries' unique collections and encouraged students to ask about our Special Collections and University Archives. Button making has also facilitated conversations about copyright and finding images, topics on the minds of many academic librarians. Lastly, the button maker helps students have fun and leave the library smiling. These moments have led to more reference encounters, departmental collaborations, and unique experiences happening at RUL. Due to the overwhelming success with the button maker, more machines will be ordered, allowing the Rutgers community the continued opportunities to learn, create, and enjoy something as simple as a button. ■

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS: Megan Lotts (megan.lotts@rutgers.edu) is art librarian and

Tara Maharjan (tara.maharjan@rutgers.edu) is processing archivist at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

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The advertisement banner features the Springer Nature logo on the left with the website springernature.com. The main text reads "New from Nature Research. Driven by the needs of the research community". On the right, there are three colored boxes: "nature machine intelligence" (dark blue), "nature metabolism" (orange), and "nature REVIEWS" (teal). A blue button with a right-pointing arrow says "Find out more". The background is a collage of scientific and research-related images.

Designing Engagement for Academic Libraries

BY BETSY WHITLEY AND AMY BURGER

WHAT DRIVES US

Research shows that when it comes to engagement, retention, grades, and academic skill development, using libraries is good for students, and library use contributes to student success. Providing experiences that engage students both academically and socially is high on the list of successful retention efforts, according to sociologist and educator Vincent Tinto (2012). Where better for that to happen than the library?

While libraries have been stereotyped as quiet, exclusive places, they have actually served throughout history as gathering places, community places, and democratic places. Libraries are part of the social infrastructure or “third spaces,” so called by sociologist Ray Oldenburg, places where people gather, like parks, pubs, cafes, and plazas. Unlike businesses, there is no expectation that users must pay to be in a library’s space.

When promoting the library as “place,” consider that engagement and providing engaging activities:

- adds to the sense of community and connection (social, cultural, and academic)
 - with scheduled events to participate in with others by intent or chance
 - with rooms and seating to read, hang out, drink coffee, eat lunch, and for team projects and study groups, etc.
- nurtures the idea of both the library and the world of scholars and scholarship as relevant and inclusive to young adults and the community—the library has something for everyone and is not exclusive
- relieves both library and academic anxiety by encouraging relaxing visits offering opportunities to connect and unwind.

At Dalton State College, we have striven to address each of these points in our outreach efforts. Over half of our students are first generation, and many are second-language English speakers, to whom college may seem especially new or confusing. In addition to the campus itself, the academic library may be perceived as intimidating,



a significant factor in the phenomenon of library anxiety.

Library anxiety was documented by librarian and researcher Constance Mellon in 1986. Mellon’s work led to her holding “warmth sessions” to build rapport between students and librarians. Carol Kuhlthau’s research on information seeking additionally clarified that an uncertainty factor inherent in the research process also fosters anxiety. Anxiety and discomfort need to be dispelled in order for students to choose to use libraries.

Some library anxiety may be expressed as “I hate libraries,” by those who don’t know how to use the library. The resulting feelings of discomfort, incapability, helplessness, not smart enough, not belonging, and shame can lead to a mindset that is closed to the idea of libraries. This mindset and discomfort may give rise to the idea that the library is an exclusive place, for scholars only, not “me.” Engagement in libraries can lead to a mindset change, so that more students change their point of view to “I do belong here,” and “I am a scholar.”

WHAT WE’RE DOING AT DALTON

The majority of students new to Dalton matriculate in the fall, which means they attend the mandatory orientation over the summer. While for years, the library’s role

at this event was a place at a table with a display board, in the past few years, we have garnered a spot on the schedule of breakout sessions. While not every student at orientation chooses to attend our session, those who do learn about the library in a low-stakes game modeled after the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga’s wonderful Library Myth-busters activity. Like Mellon’s warmth sessions, the goal of the orientation is more to put a friendly face on the library than it is to inform students of printing costs, resource sharing, or food and drink rules—although the session does that as well.

When fall rolls around, the college hosts a weeklong Week of Welcome event to mark the beginning of classes. Roberts Library has participated in this event for years, predating our employment at Dalton State. In recent years, the library has used games, film screenings, food, and prize giveaways to host our own open house event. These events have been themed: in 2016 and 2017, we hosted an all-day

Library Carnival, and in 2018 reduced the event to two midday hours with an Alice in Wonderland theme. Reducing the event’s duration allowed library employees to maintain library services and focus our creative and enthusiastic energy for a more manageable event. This event encourages students to encounter the library space and employees in a fun and approachable way that we hope contributes to the lessening of library anxiety.

Another event we host regularly is Stress-Free Week, during finals. The library offers extended hours, crafting workshops, games, a coloring station, and visits from therapy dogs, and provides free drinks (coffee and cocoa in fall semester, coffee and fruit-infused water in spring semester).

The three aforementioned events are the most significant in terms of time, cost, and effort. They are also less focused on information literacy skills than simply illustrating the library’s atmosphere of welcome and approachability.



Smaller-scale events have a role in our library too. During the year, we frequently offer passive programming, such as a DIY poetry station in April, DIY snow globe table in December, and make your own Valentine in February.

Not only do we develop activities that bring students into the library, we make efforts to get the library out on campus, attending community events and campus activities. Even something as simple as eating lunch on campus periodically can make the library more visible as a part of the campus community.

Like many academic libraries, campus patrons are our primary users, but we are open to the community as well. Some of the outreach events we offer are publicized in the local newspaper and actively marketed as open to the public. These include author talks, which bring writers to the library to discuss their work, and many of the activities in our yearly summer reading program.

The summer reading program was developed after library leadership recognized that campus events during the summer semester were limited. The summer reading program involves book talks, workshops,



and larger events. Each summer, the reading program is themed. Recent summers have focused on themes of food, travel, mystery, and pop culture. Notable events for the last two of these were a live-action murder mystery game and a Harry Potter birthday celebration, which included a wand-making activity.

In summer 2018, Roberts Library underwent the first phase of a planned years-long construction project, and as a result, did not offer a summer reading program. However, we made sure our patrons were aware of the project's progress by sharing updates on our social media accounts. Because much of the library and the ongoing work was shrouded by plastic sheeting, this virtual engagement was welcomed by curious users.

WHERE WE PLAN TO GO NEXT

While attendance numbers and verbal participant feedback are valuable, the only program for which we've conducted a formal assessment has been the live-action murder mystery game. In that case, feedback from attendees was positive, which was encouraging. However, we realize that planning and implementing ways to gather and

incorporate user feedback is an important next step for our efforts.

Roberts Library has several events planned for the spring 2019 semester. We encourage you to consider trying some of your own. ■

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS: Betsy Whitley (bwhitley@daltonstate.edu) and Amy Burger (aburger1Wdaltonstate.edu) are librarians at Dalton State College in Dalton, Georgia.

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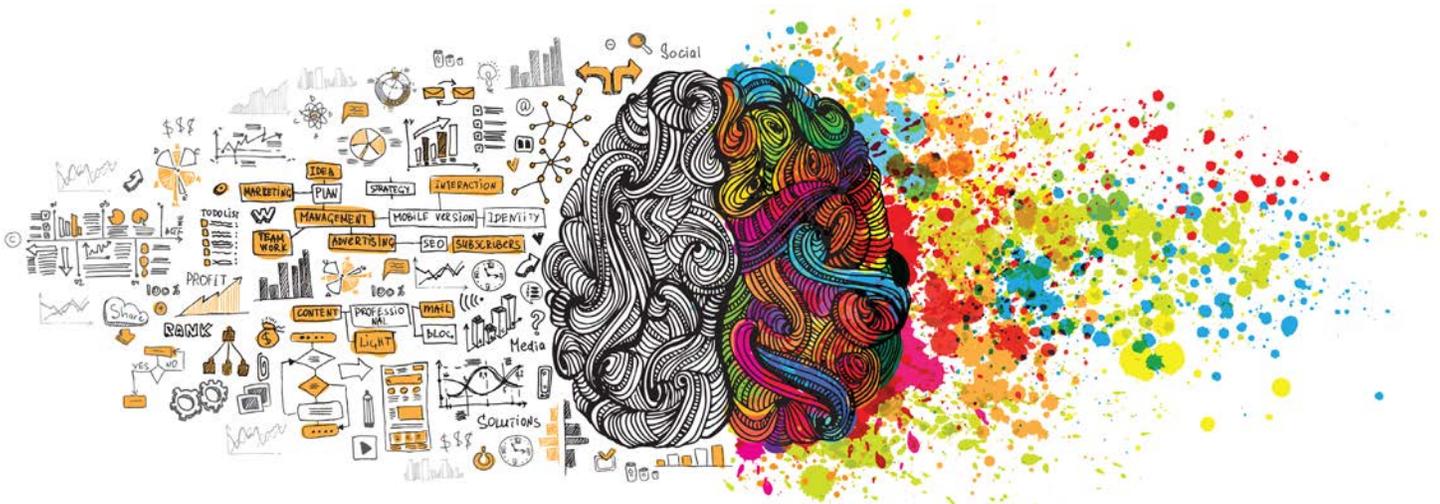
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Leading in the Present

» Mindfulness for Library Leadership



BY JASON MARTIN

ABSTRACT

Mindfulness is the deliberate, non-judgmental awareness of what one is experiencing in the present moment. Our brains are always working, scanning the environment for dangers, which can put us in a constant state of stress. Mindfulness allows us to break a thought pattern and return to the present moment, thereby helping to alleviate stress. Mindfulness is cultivated through various practices including deep breathing, mindful moments, and meditation. Mindfulness helps library leaders be more present, improve self-awareness and management, and provide mental replenishment. Mindful library leaders are better at dealing with stress and responding to the numerous demands of their job by being more focused and aware.

INTRODUCTION

Mindfulness is currently in vogue. While many of us are wary of trends that quickly fall in and out of fashion, the concept of mindfulness has been around and practiced

for thousands of years. Even though it is rooted in religious traditions, mindfulness is a secular, practical, and evidence-based practice. The benefits of mindfulness are numerous and well-documented.

Three overarching benefits are living in the present, self-awareness and self-management, and mental replenishment. These benefits help library leaders function better at their jobs and reduce stress, and they can be achieved through regular mindfulness practice. As a library leader, you will experience stress, frustrations, and negativity. How you choose to react or respond to trying times is up to you. You can become entangled in negative thoughts falling down the rabbit hole of poor coping mechanisms leading to burn out and personal and professional hurt, or you can choose to be in the moment and apply proper perspective and control. The claims on a library leader's time and the workload of a library leader are demanding. Deadlines, non-stop meetings, and urgent personnel matters create a stressful environment that wears down even the most resilient leader, but mindful library leaders

are better able to navigate this environment. This article explores mindfulness for library leaders: what it is, its benefits, how it works, and how to practice it.

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

Currently, the term mindfulness is used in a myriad of ways with a slew of meanings. Before any discussion of mindfulness, its benefits, and how it is practiced can occur, we must define the term. In order to more easily define mindfulness, let's first discuss what mindfulness is not. Have you ever driven somewhere only to get there and not remember the drive? Read the same page four or five times and still not know what you read? Ate until you were physically ill? Bounced back and forth between writing an e-mail, reading a webpage, and answering text messages and gotten nothing done after an hour? Or erupted in anger at a minor annoyance?

All of these are examples of not being mindful, or practicing mindlessness. Mindlessness is reflexive habit, habitual reactions, multitasking, and being physically in one place and mentally in another.



Mindfulness is, in part, the opposite of these acts. Mindfulness is also not being happy, feeling good, or relaxing. While mindfulness can help alleviate stress and anxiety, it is not a panacea, and even with a regular practice, we will experience the whole range of human emotions.

Humans have a natural tendency to be unaware. We are almost constantly anticipating the future or brooding about the past. This inclination to unawareness is made even worse by the distractions of modern life like smart phones, TVs in seemingly every public space, and social media. We could spend our entire lives bouncing from one thing to the next without ever being present and fully appreciating the moment in which we are living. Mindfulness is a rebellion against this tendency and the modern life of distractions. Mindfulness is the deliberate, non-judgmental awareness of what one is experiencing in the present moment. To be mindful is to be fully engaged and fully present in the moment as you experience it. As Jon Kabat-Zinn wrote in *Wherever You Go, There You Are*, mindfulness “is the direct opposite of taking life for granted.” The more mindful we are the more accepting we are of life and less desirous we are of living a different life or being another person.

Anything can be done mindfully. Mindful eating can help you eat less and enjoy your food more by focusing on each bite, how the food tastes at various points, how it feels in your mouth, and what it will do to your body once you are done chewing and swallow. This mindfulness extends to librarianship as well. The *Mindful Librarian* not only offers some great techniques for mindfulness practice, including walking meditation, joy of loving kindness meditation, and yoga, but the book also discusses at length

how to apply mindfulness to all aspects of librarianship including information literacy, reference, and working with faculty. Leadership can also be done mindfully, and being mindful makes library leaders better at their jobs. Mindfulness improves a leader’s listening, decision making, responses to an emergency, handling of angry patrons, and coping with stress. Mindfulness also makes library leaders better at innovation, managing change, and creativity. In short, mindfulness can help so many aspects of our professional - not to mention personal - lives as library leaders.

BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS

The benefits of mindfulness are multitudinous. Mindfulness and mindfulness based cognitive therapy (MBCT) are used to treat post-traumatic stress disorder, addictions, depression, anxiety, and a host of other disorders. Practicing mindfulness increases your creativity, academic performance, and feelings of contentment and happiness. In one study of a meditation group and a control group, after just 5 days of 20 minutes of meditation the meditation group showed improved and greater attention; less anxiety, depression, anger, and fatigue; and reduced levels of cortisol and better immune systems compared to the control group.¹ Being mindful leads to us being more open and receptive to new ideas, and it increases our self-compassion and self-care. The three big benefits of mindfulness are living in the present, increased self-awareness and self-management, and mental replenishment.

Living in the Present

The present is a razor thin line between the past and the future. We are almost never in the present but always thinking of ourselves in terms of both the past and the future.

We seemingly spend our lives hoping for the future to be better than the present, or wishing for our past glories to resurrect themselves. Anxiety is caused by thinking about the future and all the work that lies ahead of us to do, including the vast choices available to us. Depression occurs when we think about the past and all the choices we did not make. We regret not choosing another path, which we are convinced would have turned out better than our current situation. We try many artificial ways to limit anxiety and alleviate depression, but mindfulness may be the most natural and effective. Being in the moment gives us relief from the constant doing and evaluating of our lives and the flittering from one point to the next. Staying present allows us to keep our thoughts close, enjoy the moment and then let it go, and connect more wholly and deeply with others.

To become more grounded in the present moment means focusing our mind and attention on only what is right before us. Living in the present means being too busy in the moment to worry about or anticipate the future. We are always receiving stimuli while we are awake, and as leaders, others are always pulling our attention to and from. Focus is a critical trait for library leaders. As leaders, we are required to perform detail oriented work with budgets, carefully navigate personnel issues, and make informed decisions that take into account numerous sources of data and viewpoints. Without focus, we as library leaders can miss critical information or fail to properly understand an argument. Mindfulness allows us to focus on the important work we are doing in the present moment. Living in the present moment also allows us to build better relationships with those in our library. Relationships are vitally important for library leaders, and the best leaders are those that can build, maintain, and nurture relationships and mentor librarians. No relationships can occur, however, if we are not fully present with other people. Closely coupled with building relationships is mindful listening. This requires to not only be present with another person, but to listen to what they are saying without judgement or interpretation, a key aspect of mindfulness. When bringing a problem, concern, or idea to a leader, librarians and library staff need to be heard in order to feel appreciated and understood. Mindfulness allows us as leaders to better listen and understand others.

Self-Awareness and Self-Management

Self-awareness is a vital trait for a library leader and one of the cornerstones of emotional intelligence. When we take the time to investigate our thoughts and from where they came, we begin to learn a lot about ourselves. We learn what energizes us, what scares us, and what makes us happy. Through our increased self-awareness, we come to understand that our reactions, thoughts, and fears, while they are a part of us, are not who we are and should not control our lives. Our thoughts, also, are not always true. We should notice and investigate them instead of becoming trapped by them. This self-awareness leads to a better understanding of our leadership and a well-led life. A self-aware library leader understands his or her values, motivations, strengths, and limitations. Values are the bedrock of library leadership. The self-awareness that comes from mindfulness allows us to align our actions with our values.

Unfortunately, leaders of all walks lose track of their values in the hustle and bustle of their day-to-day lives. By being mindful of our actions and self-aware, we can make sure we live by our values and that our leadership actions are in line with those values. When those two things – our work and our values – are no longer in sync, we need to take the time as library leaders to realign them. The self-awareness mindfulness produces also allows us to honestly reflect on the consequences of our actions. As leaders, we must know if what we are doing is beneficial to the library and its community. Too often we get caught in the trap of constant change or innovation without taking the time to reflect on its effects on our librarians, library staff, and patrons. Mindful self-awareness helps us to know what actions of ours will be the greatest good to our library.

Mindfulness also leads to better emotional self-regulation. Too often we react to a situation instead of responding. This is not a difference in semantics, but a difference in mindset, thought, and action. Our reactions are habitual, but our responses are thoughtful and appropriate to the situation. When we are given bad news, our first inclination might be to react with anger. But by being mindful we can interrupt that initial reaction and give the situation the response it deserves. Sometimes as library leaders we use habitual reactions for decision making and communication. This could mean trotting out replies like, “We do not have the

money for that.” “I am too busy to try that.” or “That is not what a library is supposed to be.” These reactions require no thought, and we are on library leader autopilot when we give them. While we might think this is saving us time, effort, or money, it might actually be costing us a lot more. By reacting instead of responding, we may miss out on exciting new opportunities for our library or dismiss a great new idea off hand. Reactions can also damage our leadership reputations. Library leaders model the way. When we as leaders engage in mindless reactions of anger, sarcasm, or apathy, we have modeled those actions for the rest of the library. If we allow our mindlessness to create an angry scene, then others in the library will be less likely to approach us for fear of our anger. Self-regulation allows us to take a step back and look at a problem from a distance. What at first glance seemed insurmountable becomes very doable with a little distance and mindful thought. Mindfulness also increases our patience, composure, and grit, all of which are important traits for library leaders to demonstrate in their library.

Mental Replenishment

Physical exertion - running, lifting weights, working in the yard - depletes energy and makes us tired, and mental exertion does the same thing. Decision fatigue results from making too many decisions at one time. This can lead to making bad decisions or being unable to make any decisions at all. This is why powerful figures like politicians, CEOs, and coaches wear similar outfits or eat the same meal repeatedly: it is one less decision they have to make. The reason mental exertion makes us tired is because our brains require energy to perform their jobs. Former drug addicts have a fondness for Coke and candy bars because they are quick sources of sugar that provide an energy spike for the brain. Resisting the temptation of using again takes its toll on the brain's energy supply. This is the same reason dieters often fall off the wagon. They deplete so much energy resisting desserts and simple carbs that they can no longer make decisions and give in to their cravings for brownies.

The point is thoughts take energy. All those thoughts that pop in and out of your head - about what you are doing after work, the project you need to complete next week, what your significant other really feels about you - consume energy. When it comes time to make crucial decisions

about the present and future of our library, we may be too mentally drained to make a proper decision. Library leaders attain their positions, in part, because we are willing and able to make the important decisions when needed. But if we are mentally drained when the time comes, then we may be unable to make a decision or make a very bad decision that hurts our library and our livelihood. We should never waste energy on useless thoughts, worry, or anxiety. Mindfulness allows us to relate to our thoughts in a different way, helping us to break thought patterns and save energy. Mindfulness practices like meditation refresh our minds helping us to focus on when we need to. Mental replenishment can also help us as library leaders to avoid burnout. Our brains need to be recharged and reenergized. This is done through proper rest and stimulation. Too often, leaders do not get the mental and intellectual replenishment they need, opting instead to mindlessly “zone out” with the TV, junk food, and alcohol. Mindfulness allows library leaders to cultivate the mental stamina and mental health to be productive on the job for a long time.

Organizations that are mindful - that is populated with people practicing mindfulness - have similar benefits. The well-being of those in the organization improves as their stress decreases and resiliency increases. Relationships between those in the organization become better as compassion is raised, improving collaboration in the organization. The overall performance of the organization improves with greater innovation and an enhanced ability to deal with change. Mindful organizations are much better than non-mindful organizations creating, receiving, and recognizing the importance of new ideas.

HOW MINDFULNESS WORKS

Our thoughts become our reality, and our focus grows our reality. When we get caught in a thought pattern that produces stress, anxiety, or depression, we need to be aware of the pattern and then be able to break it and return to the present moment. Think of your thoughts as cars on a highway. Sitting and watching the cars drive by you may notice some cars are fancy, some cars are beat up, and others are driving erratically. Noticing the cars and their conditions are fine, but you would never run onto the highway and hop on to the back bumper of a fancy car or step in front of speeding car. Yet, we do this with our thoughts many times

throughout the day. Mindfulness provides us a way to notice the cars as they pass, accept that there are cars on the highway, and return to our activity in the present moment. While mindfulness is currently a hot topic, it is a concept that has been around for 1500 years or more. So why is mindfulness so important to our well-being?

Our ancestors lived in a world of constant danger. The African savannahs were filled with large, dangerous animals, poisonous snakes, and other humans with less than pleasant intentions for our well-being. Our brains were scanning the environment non-stop looking for danger, and when it found danger our sympathetic nervous system kicked into high gear. This put us in “fight-or-flight” mode, tensing our muscles, focusing our attention, and releasing adrenaline and stress hormones like cortisol throughout our bodies. This state of stress was designed to be a temporary one allowing us to get out of a danger. A fight would only last a few minutes as would a retreat from danger. We could then take some time to calm down and be back on our way. Despite what happens at library board or faculty meetings, the modern world is extremely safe. Most of our brains never have to worry about a charging rhinoceros, but that does not mean our brains stop scanning the environment for danger.

Now, however, instead of finding poisonous snakes - or is that a stick? - our brains find looming deadlines, upcoming financial obligations, and a never ending stream of work that needs to be done. We can start by thinking of an upcoming deadline and before we know it we are thinking about deadlines, appointments, and commitments nine months out. The same can happen going backward in our thoughts. We can think of something we should have said at that meeting two days ago, and in no time flat we are thinking about the embarrassing scene we made in the middle school cafeteria. We can also start arguing with ourselves about whether we really want to

eat some cookies or not. This back-and-forth between pro and con can build up a thought so big that we need to act on it by eating entirely too many cookies. These “dangers” of the modern world rev up our sympathetic nervous system, but instead of a temporary spike that helps us overcome the danger, our bodies experience prolonged states of stress, which they were never intended to do. This can lead to health problems, diminished cognitive functioning, and unhealthy ways of dealing with the stress.

Mindfulness has four parts. The first is noticing our thoughts as they occur. The second is acknowledging that those thoughts are there. The third part is re-centering or bringing our attention back to the present moment. And the final part is meditating, which we will discuss in more detail a bit later on. The first two parts of mindfulness consist of four parts themselves.

The first part is recognizing when a thought or feeling has occurred. This might seem obvious, but the human mind can be quite adept at ignoring and refusing to recognize what it is doing. As the old joke goes, denial is not just a river in Egypt. The second part is acceptance of that thought or feeling. This does not mean giving in and doing whatever pops into our heads, but accepting we have those thoughts or feelings. Too often we try to push away “bad” thoughts or feelings and hold on to “good” ones, often with disastrous results. For example, you may get the thought “I want to eat some cookies.” Acceptance entails acknowledging and living with that thought without acting on it. The third part is investigating from where that thought or feeling came. Sit with the thought or feeling and examine it instead of acting or reacting to it. Perhaps you had a stressful meeting or a fight with someone you care about. These events can cause you to seek relief in sugary desserts. Understanding what causes a thought or feeling is a key step in being able to manage that thought or feeling. The final part is non-identification with that thought or feel-

ing. Having a thought to eat cookies does not make you the Cookie Monster. It just means you had a thought to eat a cookie.

Mindfulness gives us a way to interrupt these thought patterns and thereby reduce stress using our breath. When our minds and attention drift, mindfulness brings us back to the present moment. Mindfulness acts as the anchor our minds need to keep from becoming lost in the stormy sea of our thoughts. When we notice our thoughts have strayed from the present moment and acknowledge those thoughts exist, we can use our breath to bring us back to the present moment. Just like any other skill, mindfulness takes practice.

HOW TO PRACTICE MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness can be practiced in many ways. Below are a few methods that move from the quick and easy (mindful breathing) to the more the committed (meditation). The point of these practices is the same as practicing the violin. A violinist practices a piece of music over and over again so that when she performs her muscle memory and neural pathways take over allowing her to be at her best. The same holds true for mindfulness. By practicing we prepare ourselves for the moment in our leadership lives when we are faced with a crisis, emergency, or feel the anger rising. Instead of giving in to habitual reactions and unhealthy coping mechanisms, we can activate our mindful responses.

Belly Breathing

Try as hard as you might, you would be hard-pressed to find someone - anyone - who would not agree that breathing is important. In fact, it is the central act around living. But oddly, most of us do it wrong. We take shallow breaths, which become worse when we go into fight-or-flight mode. Our breath is what centers and stills us and counters the physiological effects (elevated heartbeat, sweating, increased aggression) of stress. This puts us in a better state to

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respond - not react - to a situation. By practicing taking deep, long breaths, we improve our overall breathing and are better able to respond in an emergency.

Practice

- When we take a deep breath, our bellies should expand, not our chests. Place your hand on your belly button and take a deep breath. This should push your belly and hand out.
- Hold the breath for a beat and then exhale, leaving your hand where it is.
- As you take more deep breaths, make sure to touch your belly button to your hand.
- Do this for ten breaths, once or several times each day. If all else fails, then just take one mindful breath a day. No one is so busy they cannot do that.

Application

When your mind wanders bring it back to the present by taking a deep belly breath.

Remember, your breath is the anchor for your wandering mind.

Mindful Moments

Throughout the day take several "mindful moments." These are times when you stop to reflect on what you are doing and how you are feeling. You can set a timer to alert you to when to take a mindful moment. You can also take these moments after big and important events or when you notice you are feeling bored or uncomfortable.

Practice

- Stop what you are doing and take three belly breaths. Now take 3-5 minutes to notice what you are doing.
- Are you single-tasking in your work or activities? Or are you working on three things while watching a video and listening to a podcast? Take a few breaths and either continue what you are doing in a mindful way or make adjustments to become more mindful in your work.
- Explore - non-judgmentally - how you are feeling. Tense? Happy? Energetic? Tired? Do you feel these sensations and emotions in certain parts of your body? Use your breathing to try and relax those areas of your body.
- Is your neck sore? Or lower back aching? It could be the way you are sitting and working. Take a moment to readjust yourself into a more comfortable position.
- Take charge of your attention by noticing colors, sounds, and noises around you.

Look out the window and take notice of what is happening outside.

- Pause and reset after big events, especially those that are emotionally draining. Also, take the time to reset when you are feeling bored or uncomfortable.

Application

These mindful moments get us in the habit of noticing and not interpreting our thoughts, feelings, sensations, and emotions instead of ignoring them or judging ourselves based on them. This helps us to notice at crucial times when we are starting to become angry, stressed, or frustrated and not allow those emotions to affect our response.

Meditation Practice

According to an old Zen saying, everyone should meditate for 20 minutes a day. Unless you are too busy, then you should meditate for an hour a day. Meditation allows you to clear and focus your mind when you do not need to, so that when you need to clear and focus your mind you can. While meditation is an ancient tradition that has its roots in Eastern religion and philosophy, anyone - Christian, Jew, Muslim, Atheist, Agnostic, or Devotee of the Flying Spaghetti Monster - can meditate. It is not an act of worship, but a way to practice bringing your mind back to your breath. Meditation is not about achieving a goal of a set amount of improvement; we can easily become frustrated when we are too attached to outcomes and do not experience enough progress towards them. Meditation is also not about shutting off our thoughts completely. The only time we are without thought is when we are dead. Meditation is the practice of noticing our thoughts and returning to our breath. When our mind wanders and we bring it back to the present, that is meditation.

Many types of meditation practices exist, including but not limited to concentration, loving-kindness, moving, and visualization meditations. While all practices are similar, what is described below is mindful meditation. It should be noted that meditation is not for everyone.

You may experience deep emotions, thoughts, and/or ideas that you will eventually have to explore, so you must be willing and able to explore them.

Practice

- Before meditating make sure you are not hungry, thirsty, or need to use the

bathroom.

- These will all cause distractions while meditating
- Find a place where you do not do anything else and make that your meditation place.
- That way when you go to it your mind knows you are there to meditate.
- Sit--straight in a chair or on the floor - against a wall if you need to - just make sure you are comfortable. If you are sitting in a chair place your feet flat on the floor. If you are sitting on the floor, then find a position that is comfortable. Place your hands on your thighs or gently fold them together. Again, being comfortable takes precedent over any strict posture.
- Focus on a point in front of you and close your eyes. You can also look downward or keep your eyes open. Whatever feels most natural to you.
- Begin breathing deeply and evenly, not too fast or too slow. Count each breath on the out breath starting with one and working your way to ten. Once you get to ten, start back at one. When a thought comes into your head, let it float to the top like a bubble and pop or interrupt the thought pattern with your breath.

Start with 5 minutes a day and commit to seven days. You can use an app like Insight Timer to time your meditations. After that, increase the length of your session by five minutes each week. You can practice for as much time as works for you, but 20 minutes a day is generally recommended. Classes and instruction are good, but they may be costly or not available in your area. Try recruiting a meditation partner. You can check in with each other once a week and discuss how your practices are going, what obstacles each of you face, how much the two of you practice. You can also keep a journal and log how often you meditate and the length of your meditation each day along with any challenges, thoughts, or questions that may arise during or about meditation.

Application

Meditation is about noticing when you are no longer present and bringing your attention back to your breath. By cultivating this ability in practice, we can better use it in our everyday lives. This will help us become more present and replenish us mentally. To develop greater self-awareness, set aside some time to explore

the thoughts - where they came from and why they arose when they did - that come across your mind during meditation practice. Many thoughts come from boredom; your brain really wants to do something all time. But others may come from emotions and feelings that need deeper exploration. This will lead to a greater intellectual and emotional understanding of yourself. If you find yourself constantly thinking of what you need to do when you are finished meditating, then try a brain drain: before meditating list all the things you need to do in order to clear your mind of those recurring thoughts and ideas.

An old bumper sticker reads "A Bad Day Fishing Beats a Good Day at Work." The same can be said about mindfulness practice. There is no good or bad mindfulness practice session. A bad session is still better than nothing at all, and even this mindset is not healthy for mindfulness. It is a practice, and all practices have ebbs and flows, peaks and valleys, states of flow and states of no go. Detach yourself from the immediate outcome and look at the long, big picture. Meditation - and mindfulness in general - is more than a practice. With the right commitment it can become a "way of life." You must decide what level of commitment and exploration is right for you.

CONCLUSION

The world of a library leader can be a hurly-burly one. Near constant meetings, distractions, interruptions, and decisions can make us stressed and out of touch with the work we are doing. Mindfulness helps to reduce stress by increasing our focus, aligning us with our values, and improving our decision-making abilities. Mindfulness is about noticing our thoughts, acknowledging them, and breaking thought patterns that can cause stress, anxiety, and depression. By using our breath, we can bring our focus back to the present allowing us to live more fully in the present moment, control our emotions, and re-energize our minds. When we are mindful, we do not react, and we do not let our thoughts and emotions run away with us. Instead, we respond in the present moment to the present moment. It may sound like a cliché or an empty platitude, but our success in life is not due to what happens to us, but how we relate and respond to what happens. By being mindful, we can respond to life's events in a more measured and thoughtful way.

RESOURCES:

Apps:

- Aura
- Calm
- Headspace
- Insight Timer
- Mindfulness App
- Oxford MBCT
- Seven Second (7s) Meditation
- Stop, Breath, and Think

Books:

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- Mindfulness <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news-tags/mindfulness>
- Mindfulness: Finding Peace in a Frantic World <http://franticworld.com/>

- Mindfulness Institute <http://themindfulnessinstitute.com/>
- Oxford Mindfulness Centre <http://oxford-mindfulness.org/>
- Your Guide to Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy <http://mbct.com/>

Podcasts:

- Harvard EdCast: Inner Strength Leadership Training 101 <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/14/10/harvard-edcast-inner-strength-leadershiptraining-101>
- Mindful Meditation at the Hammer (UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center)
- Mindfulness (Susan Stabler of Villanova University)
- Mindfulness + Creativity (USC Annenberg Digital Lounge)
- New Psychology of Depression (Oxford University)

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Jason Martin (jason.martin@mtsu.edu) is Associate Dean in the Walker Library at Middle Tennessee State University

FOOTNOTE:

- 1 Yi-Yuan Tang, Yinghua Ma, Junhong Wang, Yaxin Fan, Shigang Feng, Qilin Lu, Qingbao Yu, Danni Sui, Mary K. Rothbart, Ming Fan, and Michael I. Posner. Short-term meditation training improves attention and self-regulation. PNAS. 2007 104 no. 43, 17152–17156.

When Do Veterinary Medical Students Study?

» Understanding Student Study Habits to Inform Library Operating Hours

BY ERIN R. B. ELDERMIRE

ABSTRACT

Many libraries have expanded their opening hours to a 24/5 or 24/7 model. But does this reflect when students actually study? Little evidence about when medical or professional students study is available. By mounting a prominently placed poster with a graphical timeline that students could affix self-adhesive dots upon, the Flower-Sprecher Veterinary Library gathered students' preferred study times on different days of the week (Monday-Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday). The students reported their most active study times as Monday-Thursday between 4:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m., peaking at 8:00 p.m., and the fewest study times on Fridays. The poster results informed our decision that it would be of minimal benefit to student users to change library operating hours to a 24/7 model. This user-feedback method can be replicated in a variety of settings to provide quick and easy input to inform library decision-making.

INTRODUCTION

The Flower-Sprecher Veterinary Library (FSVL), one of 18 unit libraries that comprise Cornell University Library, supports Cornell's College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM), which hosts 149 graduate students, 436 professional students, 251 faculty, and 572 staff, for a total population of 1,408 individuals. The FSVL has 121 seats, and gate counts measure approximately 90,000 visits annually. It is staffed by three support staff (who comprise a full-time-equivalent of 1.75 full time employees), two full-time academic librarians, and eight student assistants who primarily share the responsibility of staffing the circulation desk. Over the last 10 years, during the academic year the FSVL has operated Monday-Thursday 7:30 a.m.-11:00 p.m., Friday 7:30 a.m.-7:00 p.m., Saturday 10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. and Sunday 10:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m.

Of the user populations that the FSVL supports, veterinary students utilize the

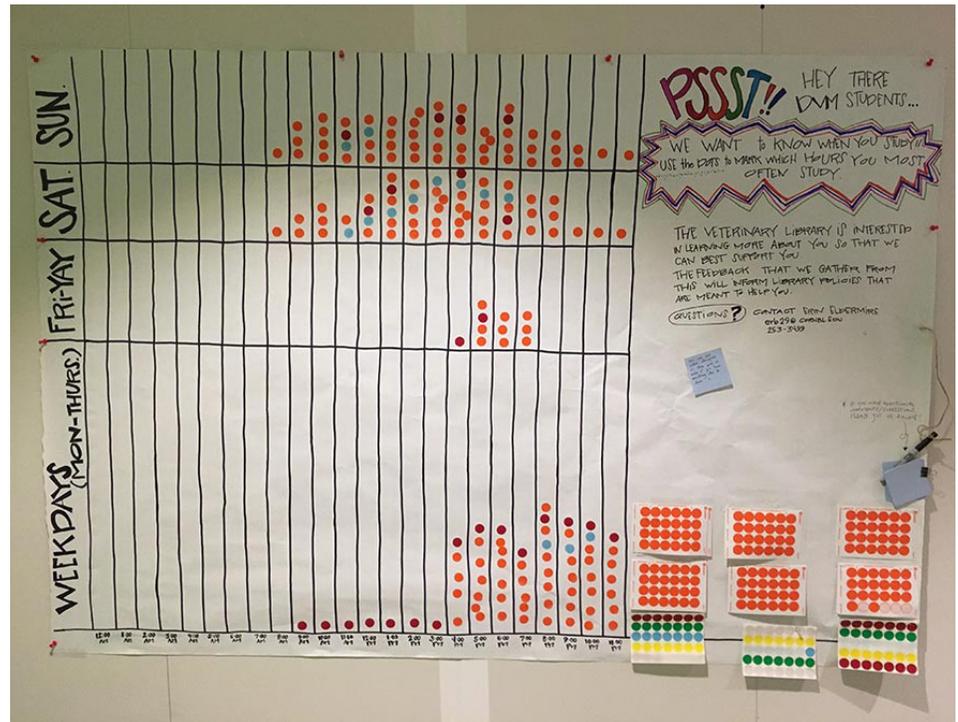


Figure 1: An image of the 70" x 48" poster that veterinary students used to indicate their preferred study times, 24 hours after it was erected.

resources and spaces within the library more than any other user group (personal observation). The three most popular resources that the FSVL provides for veterinary students are a large textbook collection that supports student coursework, laptops for loan, and a quiet space with ample tables and carrels to spread out on. In particular, the textbook collection, available via an open reserve system in which multiple copies of required textbooks are held, is an important resource for veterinary students. Although some textbooks are available as e-books through the library, not all are, and for those that students can access, some limit concurrent users. The cost of textbooks for a veterinary curriculum is high. Cornell University estimates a cost of \$1,000/year for books and supplies (Cost 2018⁸), as compared to UC Davis' estimated cost of \$3,516/year (Cost of Attendance 2018⁹). This discrepancy by program may reflect Cornell

University veterinary students' access to the FSVL textbook collection.

The FSVL is not the only place where CVM students can study. The CVM building complex offers an array of amenities that students may use for studying, including a café that serves lunch items, coffee and espresso drinks, and study spaces with tables and chairs in an open atrium and via rooms that house 8-16 people. These spaces are available to the public during regular business hours, and to CVM members 24/7 via keycard access. In addition, members of the CVM are able to use other unit libraries at Cornell University, two of which are 24/5 spaces; the closest of these is a half mile from the CVM building complex, and the other is one mile away.

In 2017 the FSVL Library, which is embedded in the CVM at Cornell University, considered whether to change its operating hours to 24/7. As a part of an extensive

» **When considering a shift to a 24/7 operation, I felt it most appropriate to address student study behaviors and student needs to inform our hours of operation. I needed to assess student study habits in a simple and easy way, and I wanted something that veterinary students could easily contribute to.**

project to upgrade its facilities and expand the size of class cohorts, the CVM recently constructed a new learning center, which included a new library space. With this new space, CVM administrators suggested that the library consider opening 24/7 once the library moved into the new building. An important facet of our consideration was whether the students' needs justified this change. However, we suspected that asking students whether they wanted a 24/7 library space would generate largely affirmative responses and would not help us determine whether 24/7 library access would truly serve the needs of the students. In addition, we could not find literature to inform what times of day graduate or professional students study. Therefore, we devised a simple and highly visible assessment to understand student study habits and to help inform the operating hours of the FSVL.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Libraries are continuously adapting policies and practices to best serve the communities that they support, and policies on operating hours are no exception. Many libraries, whether public, academic, or otherwise, have shifted their opening hours later, or have adopted a 24-hour open policy, often referred to as a 24/7 or 24/5 policy (signifying 24 hours, 7 days a week or 5 days a week, respectively). As Laaker (2011¹⁴) reported, of the 66 Association of Research Libraries members that responded to a survey about library operating hours, 56% either had a portion of their library open 24-hours or remained open 24-hours during finals, 35% had main libraries open 24/7 or 24/5 most of the year, and only 9% reported no 24-hour access at any time of the year.

Expanding library hours into the night and early morning, however, is no small task for many libraries to implement. As Bowman (2013¹³) noted, many unanticipated challenges cropped up when they moved to a 24-hour model, such as difficulty in staffing when a late-night employee was

unavailable for work and security challenges in establishing consistent walkthroughs by campus police. Other common challenges include budgetary constraints, custodial shifts, facility adjustments, and concern for security of patrons and of library materials (Laaker 2011¹⁴; Adeyemi et al. 2013¹). Other models exist, including swipe-to-access models, in which library patrons can access libraries after hours with an activated key or badge, often to limited spaces (After hours access 2018²). These can bring their own challenges, such as users propping open doors or holding doors open for others who are trying to access the building without authorization.

Another consideration is whether the user population of a library and their needs justify an extension of library hours. Studies have shown that late-night usage varies in libraries that are open 24 hours. Chant (2013⁶) reports that on a weekday at 3 a.m. their university library sees an average of 400 to 600 people studying in the library. Johnson and McCallister (2015¹³) found that at Appalachian State University library, where gate counts top 1.2 million visitors annually, headcounts in 2014 fell from 429 at 11 p.m. to 89 at 3 a.m. Bowman (2013⁵), who conducted a survey of five managerial librarians at 24-hour academic libraries, found that in all but one, "the patron numbers, during the time period of 2 a.m. to 7 a.m., appears to be fewer than five patrons for all participants." Clearly, the need for late-night and early-morning access varies depending on the context.

Understanding patron needs should be a first step in considering library operating hours, but few accounts of the time of day that graduate or professional students study are published in the literature. Students at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Rice University were found to do their academic work primarily between 11:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m. (Bennett et al. 2005), but these may reflect specific habits or needs of these populations. Some studies focus on the amount of time spent

studying. Pychyl et al. (2000) found that 62 undergraduate university students study for a mean of 16-24 hours for an exam in the eight days leading up to the test, and Eliasson et al. (2017) found in a survey of 120 community college students that they spend an average of 2 hours and 41 minutes studying per day. Loyens et al. (2013) found in their study of 106 first-year university students in a problem-based learning curriculum that students reported a mean of 12.86 hours of self-study per week. However, these accounts of amount of time that students spend studying do little to inform at what time of day students study. Therefore, I decided to conduct an assessment to learn more about when veterinary medical students study.

METHODS

When considering a shift to a 24/7 operation, I felt it most appropriate to address student study behaviors and student needs to inform our hours of operation. I needed to assess student study habits in a simple and easy way, and I wanted something that veterinary students could easily contribute to. Students at Cornell's CVM are often surveyed, and I wanted to create an assessment tool that would not contribute to survey fatigue. Thus, I created a poster that students might perceive as easy and satisfying to contribute to (**Figure 1**). This poster, measuring 70" x 48", consisted of 24 columns, each representing one hour of the day, and four rows, one for Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Weekdays (Monday-Thursday). This configuration was the result of testing that I did with four prototypes, each which were created on 8.5" x 11" printer paper: one with all days of the week separated out (for seven rows total), a second with Saturday and Sunday combined (for six rows total), a third with Monday-Thursday combined (for four rows total), and a fourth with Monday-Thursday, and Saturday-Sunday combined (for three rows total). Prototype testing was carried out by presenting each to a group of five veterinary students and describing the

data that I wanted to gather. Through this testing, the students advised me to create a poster with Monday-Thursday combined (for four rows total), the consensus being that this best reflected student weekly study rhythm, and this relatively simple version would encourage more participation while balancing representative results.

The poster was erected near veterinary student mailboxes, an area that veterinary students frequent and a central location in the CVM complex. This area, which is not in or near a library space, was targeted because 1) I wanted to get feedback from all students, not just library users, 2) I did not want the students to report their study times only as they correlated with the current FSVL operating hours, and 3) I wanted as many students as possible to see the poster. The poster was put up on May 2, 2017, 19 days before classes ended for the spring 2017 semester. I targeted this end-of-semester time so that I could gather information about student study habits when they were at their peak of studying. I sent an e-mail to all veterinary students with a picture of the blank poster, and an appeal to fill out the poster. The text of the message said, "Dear students, The Veterinary Library wants to learn about you... We want to know when you study! We've made a big poster and put it up by the student mailboxes. Next time you're passing by, we'd love it if you take a minute and use the dots to mark when you study. The feedback that we gather from the poster will inform library policies to support you!" Next to the poster I stapled sheets of dot stickers and reiterated the simple instructions sent via e-mail. Although the dot stickers were available to students in a variety of colors, these colors did not have any deeper meaning. The poster was removed on May 16, 2017, 14 days after it was erected.

Students started placing dots within 30 minutes of when I erected the poster, and many had participated within 24 hours (Figure 1). Once the poster was removed, responses were tallied for each cell.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The maximum number of dots in a cell was 26, and with this I can assume that at least 26 students participated, or 5.9% of the Cornell University veterinary student population. Figure 2 shows a graphical representation of the results. The highest study activity was reported on Mondays through Thursdays, during which the most

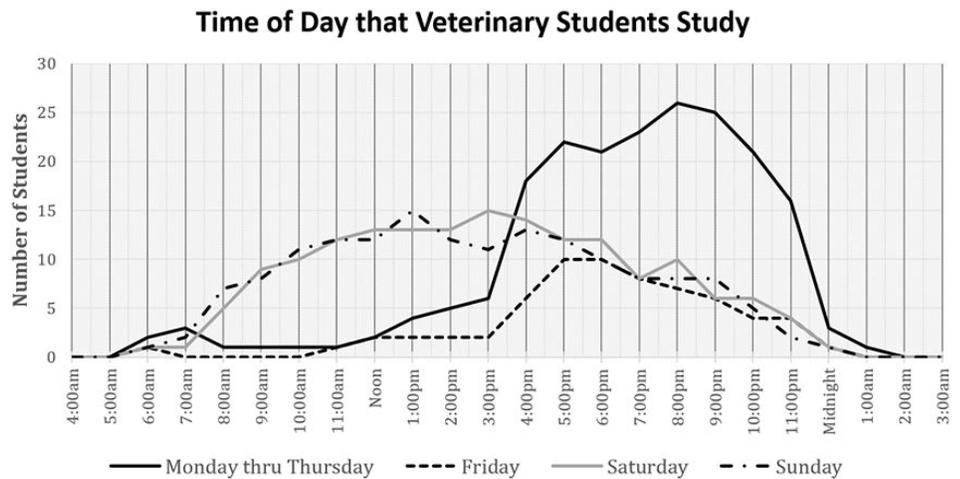


Figure 2: Time of day that veterinary students study.

active study times reported were between 4:00 p.m. (18 students) and 11:00 p.m. (16 students), peaking at 8:00 p.m. (26 students). On Saturdays and Sundays, study times were more distributed across the day, peaking at 3:00 p.m. (15 students) and 1:00 p.m. (15 students), respectively. Students reported fewest study times on Fridays, with study hours peaking at 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. (10 students). No students indicated that they study between the hours of 2:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. any day of the week.

Understanding library users and their patterns can help drive library policies to best support user needs while balancing budgeting, staffing, safety, and other case-specific limitations and concerns (Ravenwood et al. 2015¹⁸). Changing demographics, technologies, environments, expectations or other external factors can influence a need to update library policies (Gardner & Eng 2005¹²; Chizwina et al. 2016⁷). Although libraries may consider 24-hour access now more than ever, this shift may be more the exception than the norm. A 2002 study found that the mean operating hours per week of academic libraries was 102.75, well below the 168 hours that a library would be open at a 24/7 operation (Arant & Benefiel 2002³), but this study needs updating for changes in the last 16 years.

In the context of the FSVL, the literature is varied and may not apply. Scarletto et al. (2013¹⁹) found, in their assessment of undergraduate and graduate late-night access to Kent State University Libraries, that "Undergraduate students make up the bulk of late night library users." In an assessment of later library usage, the University of British Columbia found that late-night graduate student library users valued the quiet

study space and access to computers and printing (Curry 2003¹⁰), a finding that was corroborated at Minnesota State University (Lawrence & Weber 2012¹⁵).

The poster that I created helped to gather and share relevant information about the study habits of an important user population of the FSVL -- veterinary students -- to inform our hours of operation. With it, I found that students study most between 4:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. on Mondays through Thursdays, with none reporting studying between 2:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. on any day. With this information, we were able to infer the daily habits of the students that we support, which helped to inform our library operating hours.

An unanticipated outcome of the poster was that results were highly visible and easy to interpret. Students filled cells from the bottom up so that, as feedback was collected, results represented bar graphs; library and college administrators alike could see the unfiltered data unfolding in real time.

Despite its successes, the technique had some drawbacks. I do not know how many students participated, and the number of students who did participate was likely low, and nothing prevented individuals from skewing the results by placing multiple dots in one cell. Although I cannot be sure that this sample does not include non-veterinary students or other individuals, the CVM complex is rarely visited by other students. Geographically, it is located one-half mile from most other campus buildings and amenities. Although that is not a long distance in many contexts, this distance is a barrier in that students from other colleges and programs rarely enter the CVM complex. Furthermore, the location in which the

» **Another drawback is that this method does not capture the ebb and flow of study behavior over a semester – I erected this poster during one of the busiest times of the year for Cornell veterinary students, and if I did so at a different part of the semester, I might gather much different information about their study habits.**

poster was erected was one that veterinary students frequent, but not one that individuals from non-CVM contexts would visit. While the results are most likely representative of the veterinary student population, this cannot be guaranteed.

Another drawback is that this method does not capture the ebb and flow of study behavior over a semester -- I erected this poster during one of the busiest times of the year for Cornell veterinary students, and if I did so at a different part of the semester, I might gather much different information about their study habits. In addition, because the poster combined Monday through Thursday, it is difficult to know how participants interpreted this combination or whether variation between Mondays through Thursdays was properly captured. However, prototype testing helped to minimize interpretation confusion, and given these drawbacks, the information gained still helped to inform an understanding of veterinary student study behaviors.

With this technique, I was able to better understand when veterinary medical students study. Academic libraries can use this simple assessment technique to gather information about when students study to inform their operating hours. Ultimately, as informed by 1) the literature, 2) this assessment and 3) in consultation with CVM administration, we decided that the challenges of maintaining a 24-hour space (such as staffing, budgetary and security constraints), did not warrant a 24-hour operating policy at this time. Instead, we have continued with our current hours of operation. ■

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Erin R. B. Eldermire (erb29@cornell.edu) is the Veterinary Outreach and Scholarly Services Librarian at the Flower-Sprecher Veterinary Library at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.

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Developing Weeding Protocols for Born Digital Collections

BY ATHINA LIVANOS-PROPST

ABSTRACT

As collections continue to be digitized and even be born digital, the way we handle collection development needs to also shift towards a digital mindset. Digital collections development are not so much concerned about shelf or storage space, as expansion can be as simple as procuring a new hard drive. Digital collections, when not archival, need to focus on issues of access and accessibility. For a born digital library, quality and usefulness must be the primary factors in the collection development policy.

This article will walk through the steps taken by one digital library (PBS LearningMedia.org) to assess their collections with an eye to quality and user experience as well as a multi-phase deaccessioning project that occurred and is ongoing.

The process, including the multi-iteration drafting of subject specific rubrics, targeted to the needs of the site's core audience. It also included the quantitative assessment of thousands of items in the collection and the distribution of qualitative and quantitative data to stakeholders across the country. Special attention to the setting of minimal required standards and the communication of those standards was paid.

Finally, as this process is now an ongoing review schema for LearningMedia, the article will discuss the issues faced in this project, recommendations for other organizations attempting their own digital weeding/deaccessioning projects, and the plans for the future of the project.

INTRODUCTION

In 2018, PBS LearningMedia (an online destination offering free access to thousands of classroom-ready resources, made possible through a partnership between PBS and WGBH) took on a project to review

EI	EJ	EK	EL	EM	EN	EO	EP
PASS TOTAL	NEEDS WORK TOTAL	FAIL TOTAL	AVERAGE SCORE	SUPPORT MATERIALS PRESENT	FACTUAL	OVERALL SCORE	HOT BUTTONS
13	3	0	0.9375	Present	Review	FAIL	0
13	2	1	0.91666667	Present	Review	FAIL	0
13	3	0	0.9375	Present	Review	FAIL	0
11	4	1	0.875	Present	Review	FAIL	0
8	1	1	0.9	Missing	Review	FAIL	0
4	2	4	0.66666667	Missing	Review	FAIL	0
14	1	1	0.9375	Missing	Review	FAIL	0
7	6	1	0.80952381	Present	Good	NEEDS WORK	No
8	4	1	0.846153846	Present	Good	NEEDS WORK	No
12	0	1	0.948717949	Present	Good	PASS	No
9	4	5	0.740740741	Missing	Good	FAIL	No
15	5	0	0.91666667	Present	Good	PASS	No
19	1	0	0.983333333	Present	Good	PASS	No
15	4	1	0.9	Present	Good	PASS	No
17	3	0	0.95	Present	Good	PASS	No
12	1	0	0.974358974	Present	Good	PASS	No
6	8	0	0.80952381	Present	Good	NEEDS WORK	No
11	9	0	0.85	Present	Good	NEEDS WORK	No
20	1	0	0.984126984	Present	Good	PASS	No
15	2	4	0.841269841	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	0
15	2	4	0.841269841	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	0
13	0	3	0.875	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	no
13	0	3	0.875	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	no
13	0	3	0.875	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	no
16	1	4	0.857142857	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	0
13	0	3	0.875	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	no
13	0	3	0.875	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	no
13	0	3	0.875	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	no
13	0	3	0.875	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	no

Figure 1. A more condensed summary tab was also provided for a quick assessment of the materials.

and refresh its library of teacher-focused, born digital materials. What follows is an overview of the process that was undertaken by PBS LearningMedia. It is possible for organizations of any size to adapt the process to their own non-archival digital collections. The software utilized are generally accessible and open to librarians at many different levels of technical expertise.

PBS LearningMedia was launched in May of 2011. At launch, the site's goal was to make PBS's media and teacher materials accessible in one digital destination, as well as to distribute high-quality educational resources from PBS member stations and other organizations. These materials included full length videos, clips, documents, still images, games, and lesson plan. The editorial standards and policies when the site was founded were carefully crafted to ensure that the collection would be robust and beneficial to patrons. Since then, editorial standards have shifted to include a requirement for contextualizing video clips, a desired reduction in linking to external sites, and combining small pieces into larger,

more robust teacher materials.

In the summer of 2017, the collection reached a critical mass, surpassing 100,000 available resources. The content team realized that due to the acquisition policy shifts, the full collection was no longer up to the current editorial standard. A full-scale audit of the content collection began to weed out materials that were no longer up to current editorial specifications and to inform stakeholders of the removal of those materials and the reasons for removal. The collection had also never been previously reviewed with deaccessioning in mind. To that end, a process was developed to review and assess the materials and begin this process for the first time.

CONSIDERATIONS & RATIONALE

At 100,000 resources, the collection was too large for users to easily navigate and find the high-quality resources needed for their classrooms. A few choices were made at the beginning of the process. The nearly 45,000 resources that were single images would not be assessed. These pieces were

subject_area	number_of_views	number_of_favorites	PASS TOTAL	NEEDS WORK TOTAL	FAIL TOTAL	AVERAGE SCORE	SUPPORT MATERIALS PRESENT	FACTUAL	OVERALL SCORE	HOT BUTTONS
Health and Phys	2445	116	6	5	4	0.71111111	Missing	Good	OK	0
Social Studies	170	11	16	3	2	0.88888889	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	0
English Language	7858	61	17	0	0	1	Present	Good	PASS	no
Health and Phys	330	2	9	5	1	0.84444444	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	no
English Language	2275	44	17	0	0	1	Present	Good	PASS	no
English Language	2342	48	17	0	0	1	Present	Good	PASS	no
English Language	2160	43	17	0	0	1	Present	Good	PASS	no
Health and Phys	432	14	11	4	0	0.91111111	Missing	Good	NEEDS SUPPORT MATERIALS COVERED BY SOURCE	no
Health and Phys	129	6	12	2	1	0.91111111	Missing	Good	NEEDS SUPPORT MATERIALS COVERED BY SOURCE	no
Health and Phys	618	42	8	6	1	0.82222222	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	no
English Language	1776	41	17	0	0	1	Present	Good	PASS	no
Health and Phys	1480	39	7	7	0	0.83333333	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	0
English Language	2293	52	17	0	0	1	Present	Good	PASS	no
Health and Phys	224	11	11	3	1	0.88888889	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	0
English Language	2435	49	17	0	0	1	Present	Good	PASS	no
English Language	2368	50	17	0	0	1	Present	Good	PASS	no
Social Studies	365	10	16	3	2	0.88888889	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	0
Health and Phys	933	36	7	8	0	0.82222222	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	0
English Language	2916	43	17	0	0	1	Present	Good	PASS	no
Health and Phys	333	17	9	6	0	0.86666667	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	0
Social Studies	508	23	16	3	2	0.88888889	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	no
English Language	189	14	16	0	0	1	Present	Good	PASS	no
English Language	381	57	16	0	0	1	Present	Good	PASS	no
Social Studies	430	39	17	2	2	0.90476190	Missing	Good	NEEDS SUPPORT MATERIALS COVERED BY SOURCE	0
Social Studies	362	42	19	2	0	0.96825396	Present	Good	PASS	0
PreSchool	592	65	13	1	0	0.97619047	Present	Good	PASS	no
Social Studies	430	24	15	5	1	0.88888889	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	0
Social Studies	164	15	16	4	1	0.90476190	Missing	Good	NEEDS SUPPORT MATERIALS COVERED BY SOURCE	no
English Language	916	62	16	0	0	1	Present	Good	PASS	no
English Language	1236	55	14	0	2	0.91666667	Missing	Good	NEEDS SUPPORT MATERIALS COVERED BY SOURCE	no
English Language	530	25	15	0	1	0.95833333	Present	Good	PASS	no
Social Studies	170	16	15	4	0	0.87301587	Missing	Good	NEEDS WORK	0

Figure 2. The data for each score section was also depicted in a series of charts.

used minimally. Therefore, it was decided that select image collections would be removed from search, but still accessible via direct links.

It was also decided that the weeding review would only look at materials that had been added to the collection prior to 2015. Because the acquisition and editorial standards became better enforced around that time, that would be the area of the collection that would likely experience the largest loss during the weeding process.

With that narrowed scope, that left 7,457 resources to be reviewed in the humanities and 6,827 in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and math).

The process that will be outlined here is focused exclusively on what was done to review the humanities materials. The STEM materials were reviewed by a partner organization and followed a different process. Organizations wishing to perform their own assessment of born digital content should note that the humanities process is not exclusive to the humanities and could be readily adapted to the sciences.

The process occurred in two primary phases. The first would be the development of a rubric tool with which we could

assess the content on the site. The second phase would be the actual utilization of those rubrics by members of the content team to perform the assessment itself. The results from phase two would then be shared with the appropriate contributor as a tool for requesting and making changes to bring the resource materials up to the editorial standard.

DESIGN & ITERATIONS

It is vital when undergoing any weeding process to consider your patron community. In this case, our community was educators, which have different user needs than other patron groups. Our first step was to develop an impartial tool to grade each resource that kept the needs of our patron community at the forefront.

Multiple weeding guidelines for physical collections were reviewed (see Further Reading at end). We selected six primary areas to focus on for the structure of the resource review: Accuracy, Currency, Appearance, Relevance, Contextualization, and Usage.

For the purposes of this review and assessment, each of the terms was defined in the following manner:

- Accuracy

- Is the information presented in the resource technically accurate and factually correct?
- Example: Shakespeare was a famous writer in his time.
- Example: Jackson Pollock did large scale, semi-performative abstract paintings.
- Example: An explanation of the sounds letters make to teach chunking.
- Currency
 - Is the resource balanced? Are there missing perspectives due to when the materials was made? Was this accurate at the time, but no longer reflect current understanding?
 - Example: Does the resource state that Lincoln freed slaves, or is a more nuanced approach taken?
 - Example: Does the lesson on Uncle Tom's Cabin include both the inspiration it gave abolitionists as well as the backlash from the African American community?
- Relevancy
 - Is this easy for teachers to use? How well is the resource aligned to standards? Does the wording of the intro paragraph aid in the usage of the materials?
 - Example: The standards listed under the resource all make sense.
 - Example: Resource approaches a standard topic, but via a pop-culture lens to encourage interest in students.
- Appearance
 - Does the video quality meet current standards? Is the audio quality intelligible?
 - Example: Is the video quality distractingly granulated?
 - Example: Are there images of technology or fashion that are so outdated it could cause a distraction

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from the learning material?

- Contextualization
 - Does the resource have support materials attached? Are there contextualizing questions and/or activities ‘baked in’ to the primary resource? What is the overall quality of the contextualization efforts?
 - Example: The resource has support materials for handouts, quizzes, and discussion questions.
 - Example: The resource incorporates a quiz within the media itself.
 - Example: Do the support materials call for simple recall tasks or for a larger understanding and interpretation?
- Usage
 - How often has the resource been viewed? How often has the resource been favorited?
 - Raw numerical counts based on the information listed on the resource page.

After primary areas of focus had been established, the next phase of the review process was able to begin. This stage involved hiring a series of subject matter experts (SMEs) to make specific rubrics, one for each subject area that PBS LearningMedia covers. These experts were teachers from across the country, who could speak directly to the content needs of our primary patron base.

The SMEs were contracted to deliver three iterations of rubrics during the development process. For each iteration, the subject specific rubrics would be tested by a small group of internal team members. The internal team would grade two resources per subject in accordance with the rubric draft provided. The SMEs were then able to take the grades in front of them and see how they, as teachers, would have assessed the same materials. In this manner, we could test to see that the language for the rubrics both meant something concrete to teachers and was understandable for those outside the education field. We could also be assured that our standards for retaining content were in line with usefulness to our core user base.

All SMEs provided first drafts of rubrics that covered every point of which they could think, both about the quality of the materials and the quality of the site itself. The SMEs threw all potential points on their grading forms. This was both beneficial and problematic. It was beneficial in that it

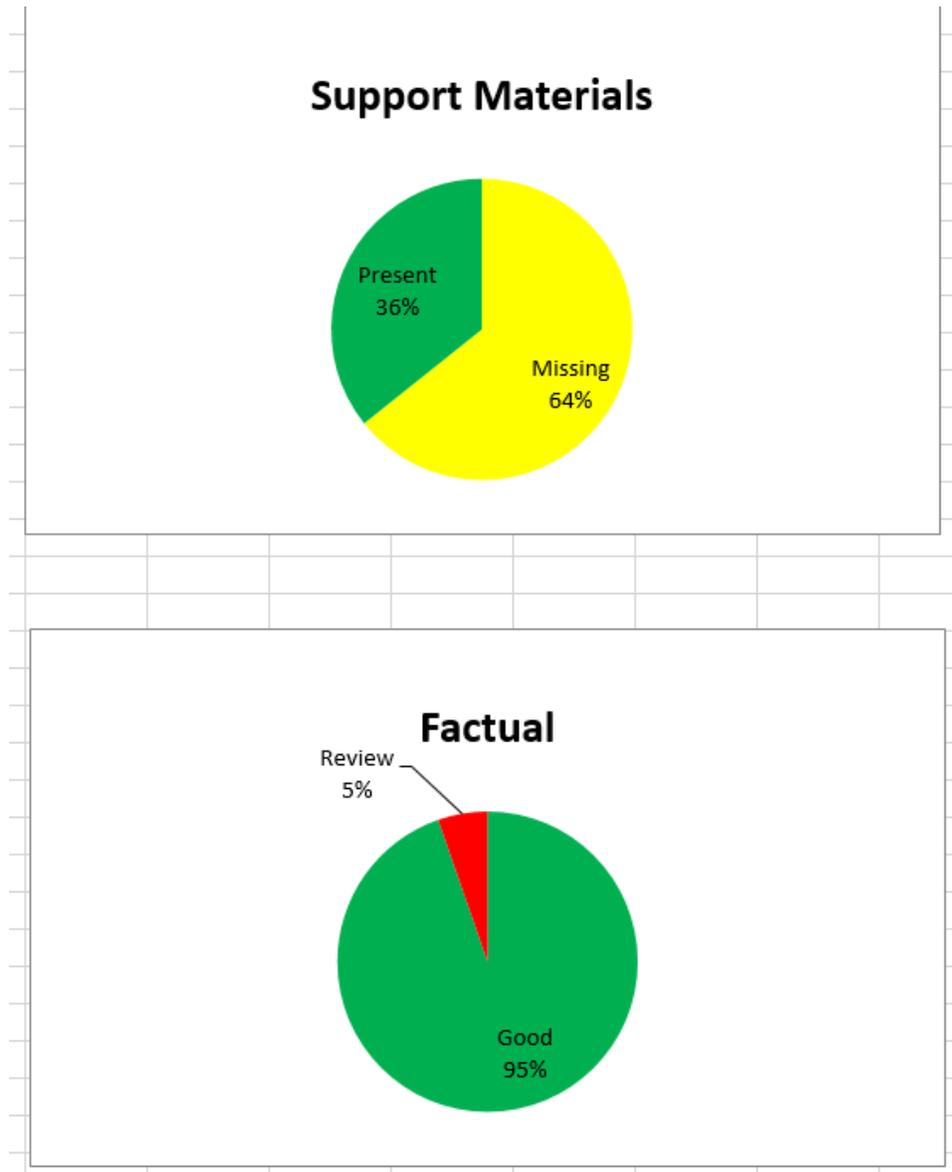


Figure 3. Sample view of the executive summary tab, intended to convey key information to report recipients.

allowed the SMEs to ask all their questions and get a better sense of the limitations of the system. SMEs asked questions about accessibility features that were already integrated into the site, colors, text size and formatting, and similar issues. These systematic issues for the site, while important, were not a part of the resource quality review. It was problematic in that the SMEs had to be strongly course-corrected away from being bogged down by formatting of the site itself instead of classroom focused needs. It was also useful, in that it allowed for detailed notes on site design that were passed along to the usability design team, working on a different, yet parallel, project.

The second iteration of the rubrics was more focused on a resource’s viability in the classroom. The questions brought forward on this rubric draft from the SMEs

focused on areas of content and technical specifications that were able to be edited by either the PBS LearningMedia content team or the contributors themselves. In retrospect, it would have been helpful to have the SMEs more fully prepared about the site’s existing specifications and adaptability. That would have allowed for the first draft to be more focused.

The second iteration also saw the largest change in approach to the project overall. At the suggestion of one of the internal team members, we opted to transition from a grading system that allowed for huge amounts of variation to a stripped down three tier option. Each question would be assessed on the simple scale of “Pass,” “Needs Work,” or “Fail.” Resources would either be good enough, fixable, or below our standards.

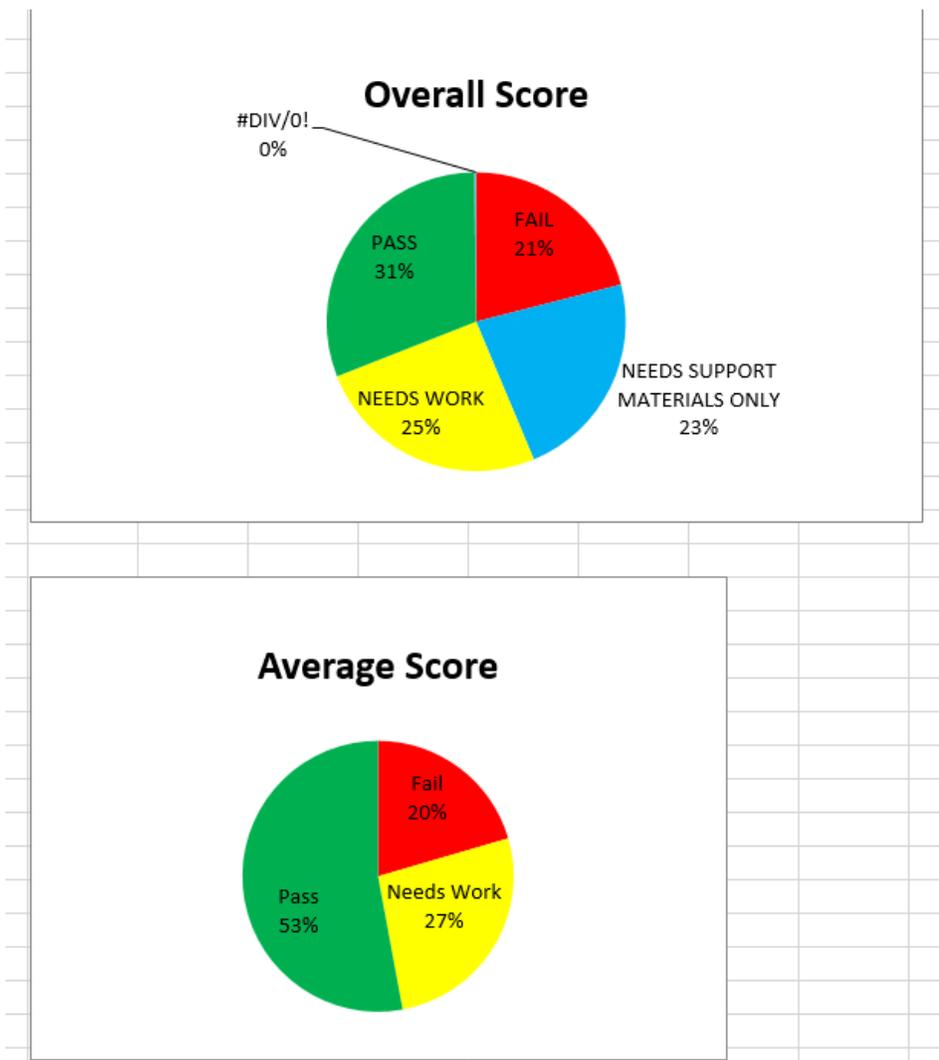


Figure 4. Graphic breakdown of full data, showing the scores in key areas as well as the overall score.

The third and final iteration of the rubric process focused predominantly on getting our SMEs to write out what “Pass,” “Needs Work,” or “Fail” would look like for each question in their subject area. The descriptions for what was good enough, what a teacher could somewhat work with, and what a failure looked like were highly valuable in communicating educator needs to non-educator content producers. It was this final step that allowed our production teams to know what they were looking for and to more accurately assess if the materials on the site were meeting teachers’ needs.

Once the rubrics were developed, the first major hurdle of the weeding project was overcome. We now had a tool with which to assess the born digital content that would be understandable by any user, while ensuring value to our core patron base.

The rubrics were loaded into a single, combined Google form. The questions that

applied to all pieces, regardless of subject matter, were asked first, then a pointer question that led to the the subject-specific questions, with a final section of data metrics and ‘nice to have’ features completing the form. The combined form came in at just under 37 pages. That was spread out over seven subject areas, so each individual resource went through only a small portion of the complete rubric.

Each subject was assigned to an individual with some level of subject expertise in the given area. Library staff with the right backgrounds were pulled in from other projects as well as retaining three of the SMEs from the rubric writing. Each individual was given a list of resources to review that had been published on the PBS LearningMedia platform prior to 2015 and tagged to their designated subject area.

Reviewers were tasked with reviewing what PBS LearningMedia defines as a “single resource page,” that is watching the video(s) that were on each given page as well as any

accompanying documentation and teacher support materials. Each review took, on average, 10-15 minutes to complete and enter results into the Google form.

The phrase two review process took four months. During that time, small corrections were made to the form, mostly clarifications of terms and combining and moving of questions. During the first two months of the review, weekly check-in meetings were held. These meetings allowed for consistent interpretation of the rubrics across all team members. After the first two months, the team’s work was consistent and of high enough quality that it was determined that the hour-long meeting time each week could be better spent doing the review work itself.

ASSESSMENT

Once the review phase was completed, the task of assembling and assessing the data began. We used the fact that Google Forms automatically outputs to Google Sheets to our advantage. The raw data was downloaded from Google to compile individual sheets for each organization that had contributed to the database.

Scores for resources were calculated into the following fields:

- Rubric score
 - A simple percentage score based on how the resource performed in every Pass/Needs Work/Fail question answered on the rubric
 - Three points were awarded for a Pass, two for a Needs Work, and one for a Fail
 - Formula to assess graded areas for each resource line

$$=COUNTIF(G2:EI2, "Pass*")$$
 - Formula to calculate overall percentage score
 - $$=(AVERAGE((EJ2*3)+(EK2*2)+(EL2*1))/SUM(EJ2:EL2)/3)$$
- Factual
 - A check on a question in the universal section of the rubric, designed to ensure that only Pass level factual materials will be approved
 - Formula for results check on factual question
 - $$=IF(COUNTIF(P2, "Pass*")+COUNTIF(AY1, "Pass*")+COUNTIF(BC1, "Pass*")+COUNTIF(CC1, "Pass*"), "Good", "Review")$$
- Support Materials Present
 - A check on a several cells that checks if the resource has been given support

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materials in any format

- Formula for check of presence of support materials, multiple questions
 - =IF(SUM(COUNTIF(AA2, {"Pass*";"Needs Work*"}),COUNTIF(AB2, {"Pass*";"Needs Work*"}),COUNTIF(AK2, {"Pass*";"Needs Work*"}),COUNTIF(AW2, {"Pass*";"Needs Work*"}),COUNTIF(BD2, {"Pass*";"Needs Work*"}),COUNTIF(BG2, {"Pass*";"Needs Work*"}),COUNTIF(BJ2, {"Pass*";"Needs Work*"}),COUNTIF(BP2, {"Pass*";"Needs Work*"}),COUNTIF(CF2, {"Pass*";"Needs Work*"}),COUNTIF(EC2, {"Pass*";"Needs Work*"})), "Present", "Missing")
- Overall Score
 - Pass:
 - Rubric score, 90% or above
 - Factual, positive result
 - Support materials, positive result
 - Needs Work
 - Rubric score, 80% or above
 - Factual, positive result
 - Fail
 - Rubric score, below 80%
 - Factual, negative result
 - Formula to assess final score, dependent on above scoring results
 - =IF(AND(EM2>=0.89,EN2="Present",EO2="Good"),"PASS",IF(AND(EM2>=0.89,EN2="Missing",EO2="Good"),"NEEDS SUPPORT MATERIALS ONLY",(IF(AND(EM2>=0.8,EN2="Missing",EO2="Good"),"NEEDS WORK",(IF(AND(EM2>=0.8,EN2="Present",EO2="Good"),"NEEDS WORK",IF(AND(EM2<0.8,EN2="Missing",EO2="Review"),"FAIL","FAIL"))))))))

Additionally, all results were color coded, as well as all notes fields in the results panel itself.

The prepared sheets were sent to each contributor who had added material to the site prior to 2015. Even though much of the feedback was that many materials would have to be pulled due to the elevation in standards, contributors were mostly positive in their response.

They readily accepted that their materials would not be hosted indefinitely, and they were open to making now required changes on existing materials. Many contributors were also very thankful to have a list of questions they could ask of their own materials before adding new pieces to the collection.

There were some contributors who took the feedback as an opportunity to reorganize, restructure, or rearrange their existing materials to allow for educational goals to be met. In this way, many resources that originally scored poorly could be spared by combining them together to create a larger narrative that was able to achieve a passing score.

Another benefit of sending out the result forms was that it encouraged several lapsed contributors to become interested in adding to the platform once again. We have seen a spike in potential users signing up for training session about how to utilize the database for uploading new content.

NOTES

One of the issues that we planned around was the awareness that our collection numbers would drop significantly. All resources that received a grade of “Fail” would be removed from the website, and all that received a grade of “Needs Work” would be un-indexed in search, but still available to users with a direct link.

We tied the launch of the weeding project results to align with an overall site

redesign. The thought was that the materials on the refreshed site would all align to the new acquisition standards. Timed with the new look and feel, both changes could be positioned as the new and improved PBS LearningMedia. This choice proved to be a wise one, as we had minimal reports from users asking about the reduced resource count.

Moving forward, we are continuing to review content that was added to the site after our initial cut off point of January 1, 2015. The current plan is to be able to review materials as they hit three years of age in the system. We have reduced the review team to 1.5 full time staffers, who are able to review an average of 500 resources per month.

We also hope to be able to convert the forms being sent to contributors to an automated form. ■

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Athina Livanos-Propst is a Digital Librarian for PBS Education, overseeing the metadata implementation and strategy for PBS LearningMedia. She earned her MLIS from The Catholic University of America, where she specialized in cataloging and special collections. Her primary focus is born digital collections and supporting linked data.



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