Building a Scholarly Communication Boot Camp for East Carolina University Liaisons

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Building a Scholarly Communication Boot Camp for East Carolina University Liaisons

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Abstract

A growing demand for scholarly communication expertise led two librarians at East Carolina University to create a series of informative and interactive sessions for liaisons. These boot camp sessions covered topics such as open access, citation management, research impact, data management, authors' rights, copyright, digital humanities, and OER. The goal of the boot camp was to familiarize liaisons with these concepts enough so that they might be able to talk with faculty about them. To achieve this goal, the developers of the sessions used active learning exercises and a flipped classroom model.

East Carolina University (ECU) is a doctoral/research university (DRU) and community engagement institution about 90 minutes east of Raleigh, NC. It serves about 22,000 undergraduates, about 5,000 graduate students, and about 2,000 faculty, 55% of whom are either tenured or on the tenure track. The University has two campuses: a medical campus and the main campus. The medical campus has its own library and the main campus has two: Joyner Library and the Music Library. Between both campuses, the library staff numbers approximately 140, including 18 liaisons.

ECU started out with the head of collection development doing some scholarly communication duties such as overseeing The Scholarship, our institutional repository. Then, in 2013, we hired a temporary staff member to make upgrades to The Scholarship. Shortly after that, the head of collection development was promoted to a new position: assistant director for research and scholarly communication. The temporary position turned into a permanent position: the scholarly communication technician. At this point in 2014 we had two full-time employees working on scholarly communications. In 2015 the assistant director for research and scholarly communication was promoted to assistant director for collections and scholarly communications, and the former STEM librarian was promoted to the scholarly communication librarian and was now put in charge of the scholarly communication technician. The most important takeaway from this is that with each series of promotions, the size of our staff dedicated to scholarly communication grew.

In 2015, the library director recognized and explicitly commented upon the growing need for scholarly communication expertise, so the scholarly communication librarian and the head of collection development collaborated and developed a series of seven workshops that they called a boot camp. The Scholarly Communication Boot Camp was attended by liaisons from both the Joyner and Laupus libraries. Beginning in the fall, each boot camp session was offered twice so as to give liaisons a choice as to when they want to attend.

Being ASERL (Association of Southeastern Research Libraries) members, we were aware that they had been producing and archiving webinars for quite a while. We figured other institutions must be doing the same thing, so we started looking on the web for groups like ASERL. We found a few: ASERL, UKSG, and SPARC being three of the most prolific. But we also found a lot of institutions that have produced just one or two webinars that might fit into a scholarly communication boot camp theme. What helped us when trying to choose materials for a session was to first develop the learning outcomes for that session and then screen webinars, blogs, and articles and see how they might contribute to liaisons' understanding of the topics. Don't be afraid to use snippets of longer webinars if that's

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what works best. When evaluating materials you should look at length, speed (if video), clarity, comprehensiveness, and usefulness. Keep in mind that you are never going to find one webinar, video, or article that covers exactly everything you need. Each of our sessions had multiple supporting materials to draw upon.

Internal training for librarians and staff is not a new discussion in the library world. Additionally, it can be extremely costly to bring in external speakers, especially in the era when most libraries are receiving budget cuts every year (Merrill & Lindsay, 2009, p. 85). When planning for our scholarly communication boot camp, we aimed to avoid trainings that required library funds. We looked at similar trainings around campus and at other institutions to help develop our boot camp model.

Due to the ever evolving area of scholarly communication, it is important that training is available to librarians, specifically those in academia. Maria Bonn states that, "Scholarly communication literacy has become a core competency for academic librarians" (2014, p. 132). As topics like open access, data management, and copyright become more important on campus, more librarians need to be familiar with scholarly communication in order to help faculty and students (Bonn, 2014, p. 132). Library personnel training on scholarly communication is also recognized by major associations like the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). In the ARL/ACRL Institute on Scholarly Communication, training programs for library employees is encouraged (Fowler, Persily, & Stemper, n.d.).

Other libraries have also explored training programs for liaison librarians and other library employees on scholarly communication topics. Julie Rodriguez discussed a training program at Oakland University on open access (p. 397). Her approach to internal training included an elevator pitch presentation for liaisons to develop a short explanation of open access (Rodriguez, 2015, p. 401). Additionally, library employees were invited to open access week events like a brown bag lunch and featured webinars on open access-related topics (Rodriguez, 2015, p. 401). Librarians at the University of Colorado–Boulder (UC–Boulder) explored the scholarly communication needs of their librarians by completing a needs assessment (Bresnahan & Johnson, 2013, p. 414). The UC–Boulder librarians identified the importance of scholarly communication topics and felt these topics would continue to grow in importance over the next five years, especially the topics of copyright and open access (Bresnahan & Johnson, 2013, p. 420). Bresnahan and Johnson also asked their colleagues what type of training they would like to receive on these topics. Most of the librarians felt a workshop, panel, handouts, or even an informal discussion would work well (p. 422). However, most did not want a multi-day training session (p. 422). Merrill and Lindsay used a different model for their internal training program. They started with an overall presentation and followed up with group discussions and shared readings (Merrill & Lindsay, 2009, p. 85). We incorporated a variety of these methods for internal training into our boot camp to fit the needs of the librarians at our institution.

One of the main reasons we created our own was we wanted the flexibility to present the information in the ways we chose. We were able to make it completely relatable to our liaisons' job duties this way. We could have conversations with them about why Altmetrics matters to the humanities or why digital humanities matters on the health science campus. Plus, we wanted to make the boot camp interesting and fun, but at the same time, not juvenile. Another reason was cost. We simply did not have the budget to send people away to other programs, nor was that scalable to the large number of liaisons we wanted to expose to these scholarly communication ideas. Our sessions were also time-effective. Rather than taking a large number of people out for training for a whole day at a time, we spread the time-loss for our participants out over seven months. And finally, it was important that these sessions be portable, since we did have two campuses to reach.

The first session was part of a regular liaisons' meeting and touched briefly upon citation management and open access. We discussed RefWorks, which our library subscribes to, Mendeley, Zotero, and EndNote. For open access we looked at Open Access Explained! by Piled Higher and Deeper (PHD Comics; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L5rVH1KGBCY). We talked about Gold and Green Open Access and then also about self-archiving. We kept this session very short because we felt our liaisons were familiar with both of these topics already.

The second session was about research impact. This session, like the ones that followed, was an hour long. In it, we discussed journal, article, and author level measures. We spent the most time on journal level impact factors. We talked about Journal Citation Reports and their inherent problems. We moved on to the Eigenfactor, SJR (SCImago Journal Rank), SNIP (Source Normalized Impact per Paper) through Scopus, and Harzing's Publish or Perish. When we talked about article level factors we started the chat with a discussion about citations, and this segued nicely into our Altmetrics conversation. Finally, we ended the hour with a demonstration of how to calculate the H-index.

Next, in October, we tackled data management. We used a wide variety of sources for this one. First we recommended liaisons become familiar with our Data Management LibGuide: http://libguides.ecu.edu/DataManagement. Next we asked them to view a short video "The DMPTool: A Brief Overview": https://dmptool.org/video. We also asked them to watch the short video "Data Sharing and Management Snafu in 3 Short Acts" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66oNv_DJuPc&feature=youtu.be) to gain an understanding as to why data management is important. And finally, we asked them to view twelve minutes of ASERL's Data Management 101: https://vimeo.com/71525999, by Jen Doty and Wendy Mann.

We moved on to authors' rights for November. The first resource we had liaisons look at for this was Pascal Lupien's PowerPoint entitled "Publishing, authors rights and copyright in the age of open access: common author questions and concerns": pkp.sfu.ca/pkp2013.paper/view/420. We asked them to be familiar with Allyson Mower's presentation on this topic, located at scholarworks.sjsu.edu/oa_digitalrepos/Program/Sessions/3/. We felt that in an ideal world, faculty would know to consult with us before signing away their rights. One way liaisons could help them is by suggesting they use the SPARC Authors Addendum: www.sparc.arl.org/resources/authors/addendum. This resource page talks about why it's important to retain some control over how a work is used, and it links to the Authors Addendum. However, we recognize that it is much more likely that liaisons will deal with faculty who have already signed away their rights. We wanted to let them know that all hope is not lost. Many publishers allow some form of self-archiving. To find out what level of self-archiving a particular publisher allows, liaisons were directed to look up journals on SHERPA/RoMEO: http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/.

We skipped December so copyright fell in January. We used an ASERL (Association of South Eastern Research Libraries) webinar by Anne Gilliland and Christine Fruin entitled "Helping Students Make Sense of Fair Use," which is #2 in a Copyright & Fair Use 101 Series: www.aserl.org/archive/. We had a lively discussion on the "Four Factors of Fair Use": purpose and character of use, nature of the work being used, amount being used, and effect of the use upon the market.

For the digital humanities chapter we had liaisons look at the Stanford Humanities Center's Digital Humanities page: http://shc.stanford.edu/digital-humanities. We liked this page because it is very well done and it presents a wide array of digital humanities projects. It covers seven different projects. The first is Geography of the Post, which is a geospatial program that maps where post offices were and when they were there. Next is Lacuna Stories, an annotation platform that has been used in certain classes at Stanford University. Writing Rights is about the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. Enchanting the Desert looks at Henry Peabody's slideshow of the Grand Canyon from 1905. Text Technologies covers the long history of the text. And, finally, the Çatalhöyük Living Archive collects data from a long-term dig in Turkey. What we did with this hour session was talk about the depth, breadth, and variety of what's currently falling under the moniker of digital humanities, so this Stanford site was a perfect way to get into that.

The final session featured open educational resources (OER) in the academic classroom. The group was asked to watch a recording of a campus presentation featuring OER projects from faculty members at the College of William and Mary and Old Dominion University. Additionally, we asked liaisons to review the library OER research guide. We also asked liaisons to watch either the ASERL webinar "Your Invitation to Join the Library—OER Community Lessons from the Field" or read blogs and articles related to OER initiatives in higher education and libraries. Since there had been an ongoing discussion about OER in the library this year, we did a short review and update on using OER or alternative textbooks at ECU.

Our philosophy when planning these sessions was simple: flip the class and pay for nothing. We felt that we were working with a group of very bright people who would bring great insights and questions to these sessions, as long as they had quality study materials from which to work. And we felt that other very bright people had done webinars or written articles or blogs on the topics we cared about. It was our work, as the organizers, to pull together the best of the free resources out there and create cohesive classes with them.

We also wanted to make these sessions as painless as possible. One thing we did is run a raffle. For every session a liaison attended, he or she got a ticket. At the end of the series in March we drew one winner for a $50 gift certificate sponsored by the organizers. We also tried to play a game that emphasized active learning with each module. There wasn't really enough time with open access and citation management. We honestly couldn't think of how to turn research impact into a game. But there was a Jeopardy-like game with data management. We played SHERPA/RoMEO red light-green light with author's rights. We did a riff on four square with the four factors of fair use for copyright. We worked out an idea for digital humanities that would allow liaisons to map out their own digital humanities projects based on made-up data we gave them. And then for OER, in March, we played a review game covering all categories.

In the future, we'll have to deal with what happens when a new liaison comes on board. Will we try to recreate the sessions for just one person? Will we simply have the new liaison watch and read the materials assigned previously? Or will we do something else entirely? We think it will depend, at least partially, upon the expertise of the new liaison. We have a good test-case coming up with the arrival of a new STEM librarian. Since the STEM fields are some of the most advanced in terms of scholarly communication, she will need to become familiar with the content of our sessions quickly. At the same time, we do not want to overwhelm her as she is a new librarian and there is much she must learn.

In the course of doing these boot camp sessions we have learned some lessons. First, we learned to always have a back-up plan for complicated subjects. For example, when we tackled impact factor we had a slideshow prepared to help us in going over the main concepts. It turned out to be very helpful for both presentations. This may also reflect that some people are visual learners. Regardless, it aided us in structuring a very difficult topic. We also learned to have a set of discussion questions handy, in case participants didn't have anything they wanted to talk about. Overall, we learned that in order to pull something like this boot camp series off, everyone must be willing to work hard and to prepare sufficiently.

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