Library-Supported Scholarship: Increasing Faculty Scholarly Reach with Author Services

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Library-Supported Scholarship: Increasing Faculty Scholarly Reach with Author Services

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Abstract

The researchers' primary goal when working with faculty on the research and publication process is to empower them to independently write literature reviews, deploy surveys, collect data, analyze data, and submit manuscripts to peer-review journals and edited book collections. The authors coach faculty in doing so in a variety of ways, from one-on-one trainings to small group workshops. For faculty who have recently earned their PhD, librarians have worked with them to narrow their dissertation topic into a publishable product. As part of the publishing process, the authors have shown them how to select potential publication outlets by reviewing the journals most cited by those the faculty are citing through using Web of Science and by reviewing journal SJR index scores. To assist faculty with marketing their publications, we surveyed the college's faculty to determine their awareness of authors so that the library can assist them to increase their scholarly reach. Overall, with the exception of Google Scholar Author Profiles and LinkedIn, more than 50% of the college's faculty indicated that they were unaware of the remaining author services. This indicates there is need for librarians or educational technologists to train faculty on the benefits author services provides faculty.

Background

Academic librarians are well known for training and teaching students how to navigate research databases and other electronic resources in information literacy programs and one-shot information literacy training sessions. As directors of the library and learning center and the office of institutional research and training at a small, private, doctoral-granting institution, we led efforts to institutionalize information literacy (IL) at our institution with our information literacy assessment (ILA) program.

Shortly after launching the first iteration of our ILA program during the summer 2015 semester, we partnered with the faculty chairperson of the Arts & Sciences department to extend the reach of the ILA program. With the faculty member's support, during the spring 2017 semester we were able to transition the ILA program from a strictly voluntary basis (i.e., students completed if they choose) and per individual faculty request of the ILA program (i.e., faculty asking if the program could be added to their curriculum on a one-off basis) to a required curricular component of all sections of a first-year composition course. By institutionalizing the ILA program, more of our students have become more confident with and have measurably improved their information literacy skills. With the data we collected, we co-authored several works with that faculty member, who had never published before.

However, our students are not the only constituent at our institution who require training in the research process. Our institution has been primarily a teaching college with no formal expectations of consistent faculty publication until recently when the current president's expectations to increase publication was shared at faculty meetings. To encourage faculty to share their expertise and experiences by publishing in vetted outlets, we have actively trained faculty on research and publishing processes.

Resources such as Sage Research Methods were acquired to assist with our training efforts. For example, this resource has been useful for faculty whose interests have traditionally been more qualitative so that they become more confident with quantitative methods and vice versa or mixed methods. We worked with faculty one-on-one to deploy surveys through Qualtrics for in-class assignments and then analyze and synthesize that data. For many of our faculty, however, an extra encouragement is needed to move beyond data collection and publish their results. Taking the lead on publications and inviting faculty to co-author peer-reviewed articles and edited book collections with the variety of data that has been collected (such as data collected from the ILA program and surveys conducted at the college) has encouraged more publication of peer-reviewed articles and edited book collections by faculty at the college.

The researchers' primary goal when working with faculty on the research and publication process is to empower them to independently write literature reviews, deploy surveys, collect data, analyze data, and submit manuscripts to peer-reviewed journals and edited book collections. We coach faculty in doing so in a variety of ways, from one-on-one trainings to small group workshops. For faculty who have recently earned their PhD, librarians have worked with them to narrow their dissertation topic into a publishable product. As part of the publishing process, we have shown them how to select potential publication outlets by reviewing the journals most cited by those they are citing through using Web of Science and by reviewing journal SJR index scores.

Recently we have added additional related training to previous work regarding the research and publication process—faculty promotion of scholarly output through author services as defined by Shanks and Arlitsch. As our faculty begin to publish more frequently, collaboratively, or independently, the authors, in their role at the college, which has been to train faculty, have a unique opportunity to encourage faculty to promote their publications through citation-based metrics, altmetrics, and PlumX metrics. In addition, we can train faculty to curate author services, so they can enhance the impact of their scholarship.

About Library Outreach: What Others Have Found

Librarians Shanks and Arlitsch believe that faculty should take an active role in the publishing life cycle by marketing their work through fee-based or not-for-profit author services. These services are valuable to faculty who publish as they can potentially lead to more citations and possibly promotion and tenure. They proposed there is a role for librarians to fill by training faculty to utilize author services such as Google Scholar and ORCID as “[T]he current dearth of assistance and expertise in this area forces most authors to struggle [to learn these services] alone.” As subject matter experts of the research life cycle, librarians can train faculty how to actively promote their work through author services.

Faculty marketing or promotion of their scholarly publications and other academic accomplishments has long been an accepted practice to gain respect by peers, obtain grants from government, and to achieve tenure by hiring institutions. Consequently, author services have emerged such as Google

Scholar, ORCID, and Impact Factor, to name a few, to actively promote faculty's scholarly work. Despite this, librarian-led training to faculty regarding how to utilize author services has not been well documented in the literature. Nor has there been significant publications related to author services training for faculty led by educational technologists or instructional technologists.

Methodology

All full- and part-time faculty teaching during the spring 2018 semester ($n = 79$) were invited to complete an online survey regarding library services using Qualtrics, an online survey tool. The library services survey contained five questions: three related to faculty satisfaction with library services and two related to researcher services (the responses to which are discussed in this article).

Of the 79 faculty invited to participate, 32 faculty responded, yielding a response rate of 40%.

Results

Faculty Awareness of Researcher Services

Faculty were asked to indicate their level of awareness with seven commonly used researcher services:

- Google Scholar Author Profile
- figshare
- ImpactStory
- LinkedIn
- ORCID
- Researcher ID
- Scopus Author ID

The service that faculty indicated they used most was LinkedIn with just under half of the faculty indicating that they used this service ($n = 14$; 48.28%). Google Scholar Author Profile and Researcher ID were the two services that faculty most indicated they were aware of but did not use with 48.28% ($n = 14$) of faculty indicating awareness but nonuse of Google Scholar Author Profile and 34.48% ($n = 10$) of faculty indicating the same with Researcher ID. Overall, with the exception of Google Scholar Author Profile and LinkedIn, more than 50% of faculty indicated that they were unaware of the remaining author services listed, as illustrated in Figure 1.

#	Field	I use this service	I'm aware of but I do not use this service	I'm not aware of this service	Total
1	Google Scholar Author Profile	17.24% 5	48.28% 14	34.48% 10	29
2	figshare	0.00% 0	13.79% 4	86.21% 25	29
3	ImpactStory	3.45% 1	13.79% 4	82.76% 24	29
4	LinkedIn	48.28% 14	31.03% 9	20.69% 6	29
5	ORCID	3.45% 1	24.14% 7	72.41% 21	29
6	Researcher ID	0.00% 0	34.48% 10	65.52% 19	29
7	Scopus Author ID	0.00% 0	24.14% 7	75.86% 22	29

Figure 1. Awareness of researcher services: The following are various research-specific and social networking services that researchers have been known to use to promote their publications. Please indicate your level of use for each of the listed services.

Faculty and Researcher Services Training

Faculty were asked to indicate if they would like to have training for any of the previously identified researcher services. Of the faculty who responded ($n = 29$), Google Scholar Author Profile ($n = 6$; 13.04%) and Researcher ID ($n = 5$; 10.87%) received the most requests for training. Slightly more than one third ($n = 18$; 39.13%) of the faculty were not interested in receiving training on any of the services, as illustrated in Figure 2.

Implications for Librarians

Those who train faculty about library-related technology, like librarians or educational/instructional technologists, can take an active role in facilitating awareness of the advantages and disadvantages of author profiles through training and informational sessions. Prior to conducting the library services survey, the authors facilitated a face-to-face and live streamed workshop for our faculty with presenters Arlitsch and Shanks about the importance of

Figure 2. I would like training on the following researcher services (please select all that apply).

utilizing author profile services to promote faculty publications. (See Figure 3.) As many librarians have likely experienced, attendance at this workshop was rather low, with one full-time faculty member and one senior administrator attending in person and five individuals attending online (one administrator from our institution and four others in various administrative/library roles from other institutions around the country). In our survey we asked faculty ($n = 30$) to indicate if they wanted to have access to the recorded online workshop; 19 responded they wanted us to send them the recorded online workshop. In addition, as some faculty have indicated interest in these tools, we will include face-to-face training on author services in our bi-weekly lunch-and-learn sessions.

Limitations

While our faculty expressed a limited interest in training about author profiles, we surmise this lack of interest is a result of their lack of knowledge on the impact that author services increase citations, grant funding, and collaboration. Shanks and Arlitsch have successfully outlined the various tools at a point in time, which could greatly benefit the majority of our faculty. Posting their article in our internal discussion group (Yammer) for faculty to read is one way to create awareness.

Conclusion

Additional research needs to be conducted to gauge faculty's perceptions of author profiles. Studies should be conducted at other institutions to gauge faculty's (who publish more frequently) perceptions, knowledge, and need for training as a comparison to

Figure 3.

the study conducted at this small, private teaching-focused college. In addition, studies about librarians' perceptions and knowledge of author profiles will need to be conducted as well, if librarians or educational/instructional technologists intend to play an active role in curating author services for faculty. Once author services are set up, faculty will then be able to market their research online and through social media to obtain promotion and tenure from their institution, grants from government, and greater readership by the scholarly community.

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