Ending the Turf War

Circulation, Reference, and Instruction on One Team
a presentation at the Access Services Conference 2010
by Ken Johnson & Susan Jennings
ASU context
• 16,500 students
• part of the UNC system
• new library building in 2005
• gate count over 1.2 million
• 41 library faculty
• 49 staff members
back in the day
Organization

- traditional organization
- access services
- reference & instruction
- independent service standards
Service Culture

- dated and rigid policies
- enforcement mentality
- no food or drink
- strict fines model
- inflexible library hours
Access Services Team 2007
1 Library Faculty, 11 Staff

(1) Access Coordinator

(2) Document Delivery Staff
(2) Stacks Maintenance Staff
(1) Reserves Staff
(1) Circulation Staff
(2) Periodicals & Microform Staff
(3) Night Supervisor Staff
Reference & Instruction Team 2007
9 Library Faculty, 2 Staff

(1) Ref & Instruction Coordinator

(6) Ref & Instruction Library Faculty
(1) Web Librarian
(2) Support Staff
(2) Part-time Librarians
foundations for change
Impact Factors

- new building in 2005 - "Library and Information Commons"
- new strategic plan
- reorganization
- student led movement for a 24 hour library
Strategic Plan 2008-2013
new mission statement
renewed focus on:

- customer service
- expanded services
- extended hours
- use of physical space
The mission of the University Library is to provide materials and services which are integral to the educational, scholarly, and intellectual goals of the students, faculty, and staff of Appalachian State University, as well as other members of the community and region.
The mission of the Appalachian State University Library is to assist those who pursue knowledge.
Reorganization 2008 guiding principles:

- improve communication
- better decision making
- innovation
- service orientation
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(2) Part-time Librarians
Learning & Research Services Team 2008
11 Library Faculty, 7 Staff

(1) LRS Coordinator

(1) Lead Information Literacy Librarians
(6) Information Literacy Librarians
(2) Part-time Librarians

(1) Lead Desk Services Librarian (NEW)
(3) Desk Managers: Circulation, Reference, and Lower Level

(1) Microforms Staff

(1) E-Learning Librarian (NEW)

(3) Night Supervisor Staff
initiatives
Combined Team Focus

- work together to address public services issues
- develop new and tweak existing services for a more user-centered organization
- engage more librarians in day-to-day service activities
- develop blended services through training
Major Priorities

- evaluate and revamp policies
- train librarians, staff and students at 3 public service points
- change enforcement culture
- add new services
- remove unnecessary barriers
- collaborate across teams
- emulate outside-the-library successes
successes
Our Successes

- engaged more librarians into the day-to-day operations
- introduced staff to new service roles
- cross trained and shared 40 student assistants
- centralized scheduling
- collected desk statistics uniformly at all service points
- created a 13-member student advisory group
Examples of Service Improvements

- "humanized" circulation policies
- added service “outposts” to the 2nd and 3rd floor
- connected tech support via walkie-talkies and IM
- improved chat service and added a texting feature
- eliminated the no food policy
- transformed to a 24/5 hour facility
Key Factors

- administrative support
- a core of believers
- coordinator that understands the big picture
- lead librarian that understands and can figure out the mechanics and details
- motivated staffer to take on student training initiative
- develop trust and coach the new way
- open communication
challenges
Our Challenges

- culture shock - guardians vs. free access
- appropriate roles for library faculty members
- outside perceptions
- occasional service issues
- keeping 18 team members engaged and up-to-date
- determining appropriate training levels
- staying ahead of the curve
what's next?
Future directions?

- consolidation of service desks?
- different model of reference?
- following the needs of our users?
Bottom Line

- stay relevant and essential
- let go of control
- anticipate needs
- don't BE the barrier to service or collections
- don't be afraid to change a policy for the better
- and most of all... be fearless!
"Don't wait for ideal conditions, assess the current situation, make informed choices, take creative risks, and move ahead expeditiously."

Thank you. Questions?
ASU context

foundations for change

initiatives

challenges

back in the day

LRS

successes

what's next?