Student staff feedback – competencies, training, partnerships, and evaluations in the User Services Department of Musselman Library

Musselman Library
Gettysburg College
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BACKGROUND
User Services staff decided to survey student colleagues to glean from them training topics and information about their work that they want to learn. The survey tool used was below:

Training plans and outcomes from student responses

Core Competencies designed:
• Understanding of library's service values
• Familiarity with physical layout of library / locations (collections) / stickers / abbreviations
• Familiarity with scope of library's collections / LC by subject / items that we lend, do not lend
• Familiarity with departments and staff in the library / work flow chart
• Finding items in library / search strategies
• Tools / Software / Systems
  • MUSCAT
  • Sierra (check in / check out)
  • LC Easy
  • Homepage navigation
  • ILL web
  • Lib Analytics questions
• Re-shelving area
• Knowledge to refer questions to whom
  • Library equipment
  • ILL
  • Research
  • Special Collections
  • Reserves
  • Media Services
  • Technical Services (donations, acquisitions)
• Campus Information (CUB desk, print, technology assistance )
• Familiarity with Emergency procedures / Fire alarms / power outage/ partial and full closure/panic buttons
• Sweeps and Straightening

Survey Responses

Check off all topics that you would like to learn more about:

Understand the concept
- of library's services
- Physical layout of library
- Scope of library's collections (what we lend, how the collections are organized, etc.)
- Other departments and staff in the library / what they do
- Finding items in the library
- Library systems (MUSCAT, Sierra, etc.)
- What goes where in the re-shelving area
- When and who to refer questions to
- Emergence procedures (panic buttons, leaks, fire drills, etc.)
- Sweeps procedures
- Straightening procedures

What other topics are you interested in learning about?

Training for student colleagues:
User Services staff set up training stations in the library, at our assistive technology computer station, microfilm/life reader station, and the public scanners--to introduce student colleagues to unique areas in the building that sometimes cause patrons issues. The training was held on two afternoons, as paid time.

The User Services students were paid to meet at the campus IT Center, and were shown the available technology there. They became familiar with other campus services and ‘ambassadors’ for that Center.

Training plans and outcomes from student responses

RESULTS
A central plank of the library’s strategic plan is to support lifelong learning on campus. We believe that an important way to contribute to that plank within the User Services department is through our work with student employees. We continuously strive to provide student staff with work that fulfills a needed function while being a learning experience for them.

Assessment tool for student staff -- as revised to respond to expanded training opportunities:

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CONCLUSIONS
• Asking our student staff what they want to learn, and learn more of -- has resulted in stronger training and collaboration in our User Services department.
• Cross training opportunities have been recognized and deliberated within our department as a result of the assessment.
• Partnerships with campus departments outside of the library have been established, and are growing.
• Collaboration with the library’s Technical Services department is stronger as cross training on specific project tasks has evolved.
• Assessment conversations with student colleagues in the User Services department have resulted in stronger workplace relationships, and contribute to the retention rate of student staff.