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Workshops Mise en Place:

Working with Campus Partners to Cook Up Tech Workshops in the Library

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NUTRITION INFORMATION

Through strategic campus partnerships, small and medium-sized libraries can provide training in the technology and tools supporting scholarly communication across all disciplines. We spotted unmet needs on a campus lacking integrated training and support for early-career researchers. Although the library does not employ a scholarly communication coordinator, and we are novice users of many scholarly communication tools, we successfully established collaborative training with another campus unit. We leverage their expertise in technology and their network of other campus technology experts. Our knowledge of pedagogy and our dedicated teaching space complements the technical skills of our partner, creating a mutually beneficial relationship that enables us to offer a technical resource workshop series addressing early-career researchers' needs.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

- Participants increase their technical skills, such as coding and data visualization, with various software related to scholarly publishing.
- The library creates and sustains inter-departmental relationships with other

campus units, which foster additional collaborations and services.

- More faculty, staff, and students engage with the library by attending targeted programming.
- Presenters perceive the library as a provider of campus service opportunities.

NUMBER SERVED

Number of servings varies. Attendance depends on the size of the available teaching space and local campus population and will increase if workshops are streamed to remote participants. At the University of Maine, typical attendance is 10–50 participants per workshop.

COOKING TIME

Cooking time varies. Expect to gather campus partners and start prepping at least one semester before the initial workshop. Planning for each subsequent semester or year should start at least 6 weeks before the first workshop is offered. Workshops run from 90 minutes to 2 hours, including time for hands-on activities and questions.

DIETARY GUIDELINES

We initiated and continue to maintain this project as part of a departmental effort to

offer programming that increases the campus community's engagement with the library. When following this recipe, we utilize local talent and resources to extend the library's current service level, better serve the research community, and enhance scholarly communication. We also reduce demands on library employees to find the time and funding to develop expert technical skills.

ACRL FRAMEWORK

- Information Creation as a Process: Learners consider the selection of research tools and the impact of decisions regarding information formats and modes of delivery.
- Information Has Value: Through hands-on experience, participants understand the skills, time, and effort needed to produce knowledge, and see themselves as active contributors to the information marketplace rather than solely as consumers of scholarly research.

Data Literacy

Although currently there are no nationally accepted data literacy competency standards or guidelines (Pothier & Condon, 2019), numerous ACRL guidelines and standards address

data literacy competencies. These include four identified by Calzada Prado and Marzal (2013), plus the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Nursing, Psychology Information Literacy Standards, and Visual Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education.

Specifically, most of our workshops extend learner competencies in handling and analyzing data and in presenting quantitative information (Calzada Prado & Marzal, 2013).

INGREDIENTS & EQUIPMENT

- Librarian(s); committee or group preferred
- List of potential campus partners
- Meeting space for workshops group and campus partners
- Means for collaborative file sharing: Box, Google Drive, Slack, etc.
- Means for project management; shared calendars plus checklist will suffice
- Teaching space, ideally equipped with a projector and computers that connect to the campus network
- Marketing materials in print and/or digital format
- Evaluation forms in print and/or digital format
- Optional: Means for digitally recording and/or presenting session for asynchronous or remote attendees

PREPARATION

1. **Assess needs and/or interest.** If possible, survey campus early-career researchers (graduate students and/or advanced under-

graduates) and subject liaison librarians to determine training needs. Otherwise, scan guides and literature on “open” research and digital scholarship to identify technologies commonly used by researchers.

2. **Identify training opportunities.** Examine recently offered and current academic courses (including syllabi, if available) and short-term instruction presented by supporting campus departments. Examples of the latter include academic and/or high-performance computing, faculty development and/or instructional support, the graduate school, information technology, and the research and sponsored programs office.
3. **Select tools outside the scope of training offered by other campus units.** Also consider offering short-term workshops as an alternative or complement to technical tool content in credit-bearing classes.
4. **Find a partner.** Consider the units you examined when identifying training opportunities. Study the campus organizational chart and brainstorm to identify additional potential partners, again including non-academic departments. A good partner can help identify and recruit workshop presenters, provide technical support, and assist in other ways. Communicate with your partner to arrive at a mutual agreement on your respective roles and responsibilities in the collaboration.

COOKING METHOD

1. **Hold a planning meeting.** In collaboration with your partner, determine the

following:

- Responsibility for completing project tasks
- Broad workshop topics based on the needs analysis (e.g., an introduction to R or Python)
- Outline of the workshops schedule for the semester or year, considering the academic calendar and the availability of teaching space
- Potential speakers for each workshop
- Librarian facilitator for each workshop
- Marketing and promotion plan, including design, target audience(s), and media
- Project timeline, accounting for the time needed to arrange speakers, prepare promotional material, and for speakers to design workshop content and materials

2. Arrange workshop logistics.

- Formally contact the speaker and agree on a date/time.
- Schedule the teaching space.

3. Market and promote the workshop.

- Request promotional information from the speaker: a workshop description, any software installation needed pre-workshop, and, optionally, a short bio.
- Edit promotional information as needed.
- Create promotional media appropriate for your campus (or request that your library’s public relations or marketing staff create them).
- Publicize the workshop on the university events calendar, the library events calendar, library social media,

library website, and on other channels appropriate for your campus. (We post print and digital promotional materials 2 weeks before workshops, and repeat social media and email promotions one week before the events.)

4. Provide technical support.

- Install needed software on the computers to be used in the teaching space.
- Encourage presenters to post workshop materials online using shortened URLs.
- Encourage presenters to meet for a rehearsal or run-through, both to get familiar with the teaching environment and to ensure all needed cables, dongles, etc. are available.

5. Facilitate the live workshop.

- Optional: Check in participants if you want to analyze attendance by

department, status, etc.

- Adjust projection equipment, room lights, and temperature, and distribute materials needed for the workshop: handouts, evaluation forms, pens or pencils, laptops, etc.
- Optional: Use a second facilitator to record the session, check in online attendees, and relay questions to the presenter during the workshop.
- Post and/or display URLs for workshop files and last-minute software installations.
- Briefly introduce yourself, the presenter, and workshop; mention the next program or two in the series; remind attendees to install needed software.
- Assist workshop attendees with low-level technical problems during the workshop.
- Conclude the workshop by thanking

your presenter and reminding attendees to evaluate the program.

6. Assess the workshop—essential for creating a successful workshop series. Use online or paper forms (see figure 1) to do the following:

- Collect feedback on each workshop at the end of the session.
- Obtain suggestions for additional workshop topics.
- Create opt-in mailing lists for alerts about future workshops.

7. Debrief the presenter.

- Discuss the teaching experience with the presenter immediately after the workshop, if possible, and provide informal feedback.
- Compile feedback from workshop attendees and send it to the presenter as soon as you can.
- Encourage presenters who received

| | |
|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Fogler Library Event Questionnaire</p> <p>How did you hear about this event?</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer/poster <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook <input type="checkbox"/> Instagram <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Website <input type="checkbox"/> From a friend <input type="checkbox"/> From instructor <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain below) </p> <p>Would you like to be added to our email list to notify you about events at Fogler?</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No </p> <p>If yes, please provide your email address:</p> <p>_____</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Please give us your feedback on today's workshop:</p> |
|--|---|

Figure 1. Double-sided evaluation form
 Courtesy of Raymond H. Fogler Library at the University of Maine.

favorable evaluations to return for the following semester or year.

ALLERGY WARNINGS

Finding speakers for some topics may prove difficult, depending on available campus talent. Faculty and other possible presenters may be off campus for the summer and out of contact until closer to the beginning of the school year. You may need to table proposed workshops for a later date. Advise presenters to aim for interactive workshops, but note that speaker competency with this style will vary.

Avoid offering workshops during the weeks before breaks or final exams, when undergraduate student researchers may need to prioritize other activities. To minimize conflicts, hold workshops on days or at times when relatively few synchronous classes are scheduled.

Alert IT or technical support staff early of any needed software installations on teaching space computers. Some participants want to use their own laptops for a workshop but arrive without pre-installing needed software. Advise workshop presenters to factor in time for downloads and installations or to provide access to the software via a virtual desktop. Start the software and open workshop files on some “spare” computers to meet mid-workshop requests for a replacement device.

Prepare for unresponsive presenters by informing them of publicity deadlines and sticking to them. On rare occasions, you may need to write all content for promotional materials. If a

separate library department creates or distributes your promotional materials, keep them informed about your plans for each semester so they can modify their workflow accordingly.

CLEAN-UP

Good communication with partners and presenters is key to successful collaboration. Share assessment results for each session. At the end of each semester, clean up “leftovers” by compiling collected statistics and analyzing participant evaluations of each session. Carry these nutritious ingredients over to the next semester by sharing assessments with your partner(s) in a brief report.

CHEF’S NOTES

Once partners have a better idea of who is interested in training and why, they might suggest (or better yet, present) additional popular topics. Our partner has proposed and delivered workshops on high-performance computing and cloud data storage. (Table 1 lists all of our offerings.) Attracting potential presenters can be a challenging task; consider pitching workshops as service opportunities for graduate students building their CVs or for faculty compiling promotion

and tenure portfolios.

Expect occasional failures. If a workshop draws attendees but the presenter earns unfavorable reviews, try to find another instructor to present the same tool the next time.

Let your workshop series evolve organically. Through attendee and presenter feedback, you might discover you should offer the same workshop multiple times in a semester or add an intermediate level workshop on a particular tool.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Calzada Prado, J., & Marzal, M. Á. (2013). Incorporating data literacy into information literacy programs: Core competencies and contents. *Libri*, 63(2), 123–134. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1515/libri-2013-0010>

Pothier, W. G., & Condon, P. B. (2019). Towards data literacy competencies: Business students, workforce needs, and the role of the librarian. *Journal of Business & Finance Librarianship*. Advance online publication. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/08963568.2019.1680189>

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|--------------------|----------------------------|--|------------------|
| Introduction to... | MATLAB Python R | Introduction to Data Visualization with... | Python R Tableau |
| | Other technical workshops: | Cloud Data Storage Data Management Planning Formatting a Manuscript in LaTeX High-Performance Computing | |

Table 1. Workshops offered
Created by Nancy R. Curtis

