

Developing a Peer-Mentoring Program to Expand Information Literacy Across Campus

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**A Peer-Mentoring Approach to
Research Help?**

WHAT IS A LIBRARY AMBASSADOR?

Li.brar.y Am.bas.sa.dor: (noun)

an undergraduate student hired by the library who has received two semesters of information literacy and research skills instruction and spends their following semesters deployed in academic buildings and computer labs across campus helping students with their research.



WHY A PEER LEARNING MODEL?

Peer learning programs have proven successful in tutoring centers & elsewhere in the university

People from similar social groups, not professionals, help each other to learn and in turn help themselves

Trained undergraduates are ideal for delivering general reference and information literacy instruction

Student engagement, library use, and library instruction all have positive impacts on retention; peer learning addresses each of these areas



The advantages of peer learning also include opportunities for empathy, bonding, and lowered anxiety

Bodemer, B. (2014). They can and they should: Undergraduates providing peerreference and instruction. *College & Research Libraries*, 75(2), 162-178.

Pilot Program Timeline

SPRING-SUMMER

2017



Plan

- How many ambassadors?
- What type of students?
- What interview questions to ask?
- How much training?

FALL

2017



Hire & Train

- Hire Ambassadors
- Begin first semester of information literacy instruction
- Develop Syllabus

SPRING

2018



Train & Specialize

- Last semester of information literacy instruction
- Ambassadors begin to specialize in the databases of their respective majors
- Reach out to academic departments for deployment
- Reach out to satellite campuses for deployment

FALL

2018



Implement

- Ambassadors deployed across campus to help students with research
- Hire 25 new ambassadors for main campus, hire ambassadors at satellite campuses & begin first semester of information literacy instruction

HIRING STUDENTS

- Decide which population(s) and which type of student workers to target
- Some ambassadors will drop out or transfer
- Start small and grow slowly; quality over quantity
- Work with scholarship office or financial aid to find the right students
- Develop strong interview questions; look for students with customer service skills

DESIGNING CURRICULUM

Develop research questions & identify keywords/search terms

Use OneSearch, databases, Google Scholar, and the Web to find quality sources of information

Evaluate sources of information

Differentiate between popular, scholarly, trade sources & primary, secondary, & tertiary sources

Specialize in the databases of their field

Know about campus resources for students experiencing homelessness, food insecurity, etc.



MORE ON CURRICULUM

- Develop a syllabus with student learning outcomes
- Assess often
- You can't lecture all the time (gamification, roleplaying)
- Traditional weekly classes are better than online classes
- Keep copies of assignments and handouts in an online platform for students
- Create a culminating assignment with a reward component
- Textbooks can be expensive; use OERs or develop your own materials

Develop Assessment Instruments



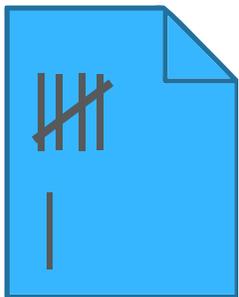
Pre, Mid, and Post Assessment of ambassadors during training



Transaction Data for each research question asked



Optional student feedback survey



Contacts made while deployed

ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS



- Great partnerships come from unexpected places (tell everyone you can about your program; people will want to work with you)
- Set up meetings with chairs and deans whose departments you want to work with; get yourself invited to their faculty or board meetings
- Stay in contact with your partners; send an end-of-the-semester report, email updates

SECURE DEPLOYMENT LOCATIONS

- Think outside the box and go where the students are
- Some locations won't work out
- Each location has its own logistical issues
- Consider a time management system as program grows



Think Big for the Future

- Ambassadors stationed in most academic building, residence hall, and computer lab
- Ambassador programs at all satellite campuses
- Collaborate with area community colleges to hire transfer students into the program
- Collaborate with the CFAA to cross-train ambassadors and tutors in both areas
- Target students on academic probation: hire them as ambassadors
- More staff (teaching and administrative); hire students in spring and fall

THANK YOU

QUESTIONS



PEER-LEARNING RESOURCES

SESSION: SHERROD LIBRARY AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

PEER-LEARNING IN LIBRARIES: FURTHER READING

BODEMER, B. (2014). THEY CAN AND THEY SHOULD: UNDERGRADUATES PROVIDING PEER REFERENCE AND INSTRUCTION. COLLEGE & RESEARCH LIBRARIES, 75(2), 162-178. [HTTPS://DOI.ORG/10.5860/CRL12-411](https://doi.org/10.5860/CRL12-411)

DEESE- ROBERTS, SUSAN & KEATING, KATHLEEN. (2001). LIBRARY INSTRUCTION: A PEER TUTORING MODEL. ENGLEWOOD, CO: LIBRARIES UNLIMITED, INC.

WHELAN, J. (2018). STUDENTS LEAD THE LIBRARY: THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ACADEMIC LIBRARY. SARA ARNOLD-GARZA AND CARISSA TOMLINSON, EDS. CHICAGO: ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGE & RESEARCH LIBRARIES.
DOI:[HTTPS://DOI.ORG/10.5860/CRL.79.5.713](https://doi.org/10.5860/CRL.79.5.713)

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

INFORMATION LITERACY (TEXTBOOK)
[HTTPS://WWW.OERCOMMONS.ORG/COURSES/INFORMATION-LITERACY-2](https://www.oercommons.org/courses/information-literacy-2)

INFORMATION LITERACY MODULE FOR EARLY COLLEGE STUENTS:
[HTTPS://WWW.OERCOMMONS.ORG/COURSES/INFORMATION-LITERACY-MODULE-FOR-EARLY-COLLEGE-STUDENTS](https://www.oercommons.org/courses/information-literacy-module-for-early-college-students)

INFORMATION LITERACY GAMES

SEARCH & DESTROY (DATABASE SEARCHING CARD GAME):
[HTTPS://WWW.THEGAMECRAFTER.COM/GAMES/SEARCH-DESTROY](https://www.thegamecrafter.com/games/search-destroy)

TRUST ISSUES (SOURCE EVALUATION CARD GAME):
[HTTPS://WWW.THEGAMECRAFTER.COM/GAMES/TRUST-ISSUES](https://www.thegamecrafter.com/games/trust-issues)

PEER-LEARNING IDEAS



SESSION:

Sherrod Library Ambassador Program



WHAT STUDENT POPULATION MIGHT YOU RECRUIT?



WHO MIGHT YOU PARTNER WITH AT YOUR INSTITUTION?



WHAT ARE SOME POSSIBLE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES?

Sherrod Library Ambassador Program

In an effort to address declining university retention rates and to reach students who may not make it to the library for research help, Sherrod Library faculty have developed a peer-mentoring program. This program is one way the library can help the institution in its efforts to raise student retention rates and improve student success. Peer learning programs have proven successful in tutoring centers and elsewhere in the university for decades, and research has shown that trained undergraduates are ideal candidates for delivering general reference and information literacy instruction to their peers (Bodemer, 2014).

ETSU's Library Ambassador Program, a two-year program, entails hiring APS undergraduate students each fall and offering them two semesters of information literacy training with a specific focus on learning the databases within their respective fields. During their 3rd and 4th semesters, after training is completed, ambassadors are deployed in the academic buildings of their majors to help students with library research and to connect students requiring in-depth help to librarians. Every fall the library plans to hire 20 additional ambassadors to continue to meet the needs of the university. It is the library's goal for the Library Ambassador Program to continue to grow each fall until ambassadors are stationed in each computer lab, residence hall, and academic building on campus and at ETSU's satellite locations.

The library ambassadors will:

- Help students define their information needs.
 - Show students how to find background information on their topic
- Be able to assist students in determining the appropriateness of materials for use with academic assignments
 - Peer-review process
- Show students how to use the library databases to complete academic assignments using
 - Online databases
 - OneSearch
 - LibGuides

- Know when to refer information request to librarians

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Library Ambassador Program

Sherrod Library

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Student Engagement and Instruction Librarian

Sherrod Library