Chapter 9

Publish or Perish:
Librarians Collaborating to Support Junior Faculty to Publish Within the Academic Environment

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ABSTRACT

This chapter describes a new and emerging type of research and writing support for junior faculty members. The Academic Writing Institute was born of a collaboration between academic librarians and tenured faculty at the campuses the library supports. Grant funded, the purpose of the academic writing institute was to: 1) provide junior faculty with an overview of the services offered by the library that can help to facilitate their research processes; 2) introduce methods for documenting research findings in the 21st century publishing environment; and 3) provide a forum, led by tenured faculty, to enhance participant knowledge about the publishing processes associated with their specific disciplines. This new paradigm allows for other academic librarians to explore new methods by which the campus library can support faculty members with the research and publishing components of their promotion and tenure requirements.

INTRODUCTION

Collaboration has become an important way of achieving successful outcomes in the contemporary academic environment. When the term "collaboration" is used in presentations at professional library conferences or in other venues hosting library professionals, the discussion almost immediately focuses on two different categories of the concept. The first category is collaboration among library colleagues within the same library - or perhaps at different libraries - to offer resources, programs, or services. The second category is collaboration with faculty toward the goal of enhancing student learning outcomes.

Collaborations between librarians and tenured faculty that are not focused on student outcomes are more unusual and are rarely discussed in the academic library. This is especially the case when the goal of the partnership between the library and faculty is to support junior professors on their path to tenure.

When queried about their interests in and needs from library-hosted workshops and events, junior faculty members consistently reported that their primary concerns involved assistance with the publication process as well as charting a course to tenure. Academic libraries, as scholarly hubs, are certainly well positioned to assist junior faculty members in navigating the world of academic writing and publishing. Paramount to maintaining a successfully publishing faculty is providing junior professors with a nurturing research environment while assisting them in addressing their unique publishing needs.

In late 2014, the Atlanta University Center (AUC), Robert W. Woodruff Library offered a new and emerging type of research support by hosting a two-day academic writing institute to address the research and writing needs of junior faculty affiliated with the four Historically Black Colleges and University campuses the library serves (Clark Atlanta University, Interdenominational Theological Center, Morehouse College, and Spelman College). Funded by a grant from the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Library Alliance, the purpose of the academic writing institute was to:

1. Provide junior faculty with an overview of the services offered by the library that can help to facilitate their research processes.
2. Introduce methods for documenting research findings in the 21st century publishing environment.
3. Provide a forum, led by tenured faculty, to enhance participant knowledge about the publishing processes associated with their specific disciplines.

This chapter describes the ways in which librarians developed the writing institute in direct response to the need for research and writing support as demonstrated by junior faculty. This form of direct outreach was enhanced by a unique collaboration between librarians and tenured faculty members. Based on the range of subject areas of both junior faculty attendees and tenured faculty panelists, the writing institute also necessitated a breakdown of the walls of strict disciplinary discourse. The current iteration of the institute and future plans for upcoming writing institutes will be discussed in this chapter.

The academic library aims to support the research needs of its faculty. The goals of this writing institute were realized because librarians targeted their services to best support the needs of junior faculty participants while collaborating with tenured faculty to elucidate the publishing process. Librarians helped junior faculty members feel fluent with library resources and also shed light on issues such as intellectual property rights and new and emerging publishing trends such as open access and white papers. Tenured faculty role models from across the four campuses worked with groups of junior faculty to discuss publishing from a practical, experiential point of view.

The academic writing institute answered a direct need as stated by junior professors. It brought together early career scholars with mid-to-late career mentors in a librarian-mediated environment that provided an open forum for considering all issues related to publishing, from research resources to publication types and venues. This collaboration allowed the academic library to offer a much needed service to junior professors at critical points in their careers, something that would not have been as successful had it just been librarians working with them in the absence of more senior faculty members. By adding the dimension of librarians, tenured faculty, and junior faculty collaborating together, the institute was enriched. This chapter will be informative for librarians who may wish implement similar collaborative initiatives and institutes in their own academic libraries and will demonstrate how another library can

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