

AALL ALL-SIS Student Services Committee Roundtable – July 14, 2014

Three Tables Held Discussions on Various Topics – 23 Participants attended

Table 1

Student Library Advisory Boards

- Two of the five schools had a student advisory board (council) and were able to recruit participants by advertising on Facebook, Twitter, e-mails, posters, etc. Talked about holding a mixer to induce more participants.
- What about Crowdsourcing? Could we pose questions on Facebook and Twitter requesting feedback from students? Have to phrase the questions correctly to invoke a response. Don't want it to turn into a gripe session.

Online Student Services

- During chat discussion, some schools have it, some don't. Not too heavily used at most schools that have it, but one or two report pretty good usage. All are monitored by whoever is on reference.
- One school has a text reference capability, but most receive complaints, such as noisy neighbors, too hot or too cold, etc. via this mechanism.
- One school is considering using Google Voice and another uses Blue Jeans (<http://bluejeans.com/>) for screen capture to share with students.
- Generally all agreed that research is awkward using E-books. Students want the book to be able to easily turn the pages, rather than wait for something to download. They like to highlight a book. Since many publishers have different formats of e-books, it is often cumbersome to move from one to another.

Liaison Programs

- Many schools provide research training to clinics, at the professor's request. May happen once or twice a year.
- Outreach is provided to journal editors by most schools also. At least done at the beginning of school year, but some do it whenever an editor feels a research session would be worthwhile.
- Some schools have an Outreach Librarian, others call it a Student Services Librarian and they offer training and instructional sessions to journals and clinics on a regular basis. Many attend social events with the students to interact on their turf. Many try to work with experiential classes and go into seminars and workshops.

Table 2

Student Library Advisory Boards

- Formal “User Panels” have been held at one institution. Patrons who had heavily used a library for one or more research projects would sit on a panel and discuss the hows and whys of their research.
- Some students are very motivated to involve themselves in their institutions, and they are enthusiastic recruits for a library advisory board.
- If the library already employs law students part-time, those students are a ready-made library advisory board. If the library runs a summer R.A. program, these students may also be consulted.
- At one institution, there are town halls held about library-student issues twice a year. The discussion tends to be a response to issues that have come up recently.
- Student surveys may be used to solicit feedback for the library, but some type of bribery/incentive is necessary to ensure a high response rate.

Research Guides/Tutorials

- At one institution, the library’s research guides are written by advanced legal research students.
- Libraries that create videos as guides should keep them brief (no longer than three minutes) and funny if they want to ensure viewership. Videos are most useful for procedures that involve complicated steps

Other

- Attitude is more important than age when it comes to success as a student outreach librarian.
- Schools without first-year legal research classes may be in special need of a designated student services librarian, so students at least have an obvious go-to person for library matters.
- The adjacency (or lack thereof) of the reference and circulation desks has a significant impact on how students use the library.
- At one institution reference librarians will temporarily take over an office as an auxiliary reference space devoted to a specialized subject during certain periods of the year. Examples included Bluebook advice and brief formatting advice.

Table 3

Liaison Programs

- At SUNY-Buffalo: Brian is the liaison to all journals (as well as the moot court and SBA)
- Cassie (SMU) and Creighton (Washburn U) both said that they've tried to get in with the journals (and at Washburn, to other student organizations), but their efforts have been ignored so far.
- Joe (moderator) said that Loyola has assigned a library liaison to each of its 6 journals, with varying degrees of success. Some journals (including the main Law Journal) have an active relationship (e.g. presence at journal training/orientation sessions), with contact often initiated by the journal staff instead of the library, while others ignore our requests.
- Michele (San Diego) is the ILL and journal liaison. She's run into some resistance from the administrator of their 3 journals, as if she's encroaching on someone else's territory. Despite the resistance, they run two cite-checking sessions for each journal.
- USD and SUNY-Buffalo also reported that they talk to their journal members about topic selection for article-writing, as well as available databases, ILL policy and procedure, Library Web sites.
- There was also talk about presenting to students at SBA meetings. Michele goes in during the announcement portion of USD's SBA meetings (every other week) with three quick bullet points about library events, services offered, etc. Cassie (SMU) attends SBA meetings. Creighton says that at Washburn U, the level of SBA interaction depends on who the President is. They keep trying even in down years.
- Another idea from Michele: USD puts a different student organization on display every month at their library. Their school's Sports Law Society asked the librarians how they could be featured, so people are paying attention.
-

1. Online Student Services (live chat, ILL, E-Resources)

- USD uses Pidgin for chat reference, gets a lot of questions through it, frequently used by cite-checkers. They market chat reference with an "Ask a Librarian" box on their home page, and teach all the 1Ls about it.
- Buffalo uses Library H3lp (from Meebo) for text reference.

2. Student advisory boards

- SUNY Buffalo has a student advisory board, elected positions with 2 1Ls, 2Ls, 3Ls, and LLMs. Elections are run through the SBA. Other schools (SMU, Washburn, Indiana Tech) have Law School-wide Student Advisory Committees that discuss Library issues, but not run by the Library.