

ALL-SIS Student Services "Question a Day" – February 9-13, 2015

1. Does your library do anything to help students pass the bar exam or find internships/careers? Or help them become practice ready? If so, how do you advertise your services, and how successful have your efforts been? If not, do you have any ideas you'd like to see implemented?

Colleagues:

Since the message included internships, I have been able to identify my library for an internship/externship for at least one other law school this past two years. I have had three students in the summer write a paper and assist in some of my research projects. It has worked out well for the students and the faculty adviser at the law school has been satisfied with the students' work. The students have received from one to three credits depending on the number of credits the student is interested in obtaining.

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Colleagues:

After I sent the message I realized that I should have said that the Allegheny County Law Library is serving as the host for the internship, not Duquesne's Center for Legal Information. Other state, county, federal libraries might be interested in such an arrangement, but I know of no others now.

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1. Every librarian and staff member in an academic law library is a student services librarian. Since the mission of every academic law library is to support the school's curricular and scholarship goals everything we do from arranging the books on the shelves, providing a usable and relevant catalog, good service at the Circulation Desk, buying relevant books, teaching, and reference is part of the total package of student services.

2. This last year we offered a well-publicized practice bar examination and posted a research guide outlining library resources geared toward passing the bar. We also began an effort to buy more bar exam related study aids and practice-oriented print materials - these are featured in our New Books section. We are in the process of preparing and posting a new research guide

that features the "new lawyer" materials we have required - how to open your own office and avoid ethical pitfalls and we will be exhibiting those materials at a library table day.

3. Finally, the Library maintains a presence on the NJ State Bar Commission for Professionalism where we are a part of the team implementing a state-wide mentoring program for newly graduated attorneys. Although it is a little early to be absolutely certain, it appears that there will be an initial symposium for students and new practitioners this May at the bar convention. If that is successful we anticipate that it will be slightly reworked/revise and then go on the road for presentations at the three state law schools. Although this is not a "library" function we are pleased to be part of the process.

- Lee

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The library has a research guide on Job & Internship Resources. We also hold Jumpstart sessions for students before they start their summer jobs which are tailored to their jobs and location. We advertise these sessions in the 1L Legal Research and Writing class, through email, through social media, and on the library's digital sign. Attendance varies from year to year--last year was small, but the year before we had to add extra sessions.

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2. Does your library have or want an embedded librarian (in the clinic, journal offices, elsewhere)? If you have an embedded librarian, how successful has this been? Do you have any advice for other libraries planning to embed a librarian?

I am the liaison for the journal students and also for faculty research assistants. This position is new, so I'm working on developing a relationship with both groups. I am interested in being an embedded librarian for the clinics, but the library has been rather uninvolved with the clinics in the past, so I'm not sure if my attempts will be successful.

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In response to the Day 2 question: we've had an embedded Librarian at certain times e.g. when we'd scheduled a Librarian for a particular amount of time each week in clinic to answer questions. The statistics showed that there wasn't much traffic during those times, regardless of whether the librarian roamed around and assisted the students or sat at her station.

Using the clinic example, I think it might have been a more successful endeavor if one could, say, offer some quick 3 or 5 minute research demos at a whiteboard a couple of times during when they as librarians were scheduled in order to feature some research strategies or tips useful to a particular clinic section e.g. tax or tribal law issues.

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3. What non-traditional items does your library circulate (i.e., items other than books, periodicals, or CDs/DVDs, such as computer chargers or computers)? What's the most popular? Is there anything you don't currently offer, but wish you did?

At SMU we circulate quite a few things already and are actually in the middle of brainstorming new ideas...

Current items include:

- Phone and computer chargers (very popular)
- Umbrellas
- Laptops
- Headphones (also popular)
- Audio and visual recording equipment

Wishlist:

- A bike
- bike lock, bike pump
- board games (checkers, jenga, the peg game from cracker barrel)
- sports equipment (frisbee, football)
- Bocce ball set

We plan to approach the SBA about funding/helping to fund these non-traditional circulation items.

Sort of related, we had a new Keurig system installed in the lobby area and sell K-Cups at cost from the circulation desk. Not exactly a circulation item, but a service that is handled through the circulation desk.

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We don't have many non-traditional items available for circulation. We do have a charging station in the library for phones and tablets. I'm interested in getting laptop chargers for circulation and also board games for stress relief during exams.

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4. What student-focused special events does your library host? Do you time them to coincide with National Library Week or Banned Books Week? How popular are the events?

No responses

5. Does your library use surveys or focus groups to determine student needs? Does the library have a student advisory board? If so, how do you recruit participants? Does your library liaise with the SBA president or other student leaders to determine what students want from the library?

We held one focus group last semester and will probably hold two this semester to solicit more in-depth feedback from our students. I have also begun informally surveying students once a week or so at our library's Peanut Butter & Jelly Bar. I ask a few simple questions and record their answers while they are waiting to make their sandwiches. We are also putting up a suggestion box to hear from students who feel more comfortable commenting anonymously.

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At Southern Methodist University, we utilize an annual survey and provide candy bars to those students who complete the survey.

This past year, I started going to every other SBA meeting (roughly, sometimes less) to announce library updates. I've found this to be particularly helpful because students will often ask questions or offer other suggestions while I'm there that they probably wouldn't take the time to otherwise send our way. They are always especially nice to me when I stop by and seem grateful that we take the time to share developments and listen to their ideas.

We also just implemented a new email, lawsuggestions@smu.edu. In the month or two it's been active, we've had a handful of emails. While it hasn't been overwhelmingly popular, we have actually implemented one of the suggestions it so we feel that overall it is a success and provides just one more avenue for students to communicate their needs.

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