

# Library Instruction: A Peer Tutoring Model

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## 1 - Introduction:

Good morning! The last time I presented at the Depository Library Conference was in April of 1994. I co-presented with Clark McLean and our session was entitled, "Government Information on the Internet: An Introduction." My half of the presentation covered Internet Network Training. My vocabulary at that time included, just to drop a few names, Gopher, Veronica, Telnet, and Lynx. Curiously, eight years later, I find myself once discussing training. Only today, instead of "computer literacy," I'll be discussing how students can participate in helping other students to become information literate. My colleague Dr. Susan Deese-Roberts sends her regrets that she was unable to be here today.

My outline for the next 30 minutes will consist of a brief overview of electronic information, collaborations between libraries and learning centers, define what it means to be a tutor, describe the professional training program that certifies tutors, and provide modules for Library Research content.

## 2 - Technology

As librarians we have encountered many challenges and seen many changes over the past 30 years. Technological advancements have dramatically influenced the way we search and retrieve information. For example, in 1972 Dialog was the first company to offer an online research service.<sup>1</sup> In order to learn the software, librarians and researchers attended a day and a half workshop. The retrieval skills and techniques of those accessing the Dialog databases had to be excellent because access to a single database could cost up to \$500.00 per hour and these costs were passed on to the customer or student. As librarians we formed relationships with those individuals who wanted "us" to conduct an online search for them. We carefully discussed the topic with the student, came up with numerous vocabulary words, used Boolean logic to combine the concepts, offered suggestions as to the best databases to search, and set a maximum price and the number of citations the student was willing to pay. Librarians were the electronic gatekeepers of that information due to the limited patron accessibility of the technology.

## 3 - Electronic Pilot Projects, 1988

In the late 1980's and early 1990's, government document librarians were also serving a role as electronic gatekeepers for the federal government. Beginning in 1988, selected depository libraries participated in five electronic pilot projects. Three of those projects included the CD-ROM (Compact Disk – Read Only Memory) format. The electronic resources included the 1982 Census of Retail Trade by Zip Code, the 1982 Census of Agriculture, Environmental Protection

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<sup>1</sup> The History of Dialog: Transcript. <http://www.dialog.com/about/history/transcript.shtml>

Agency's Toxic Release Inventory (TRI), and the full text of the Congressional Record.<sup>2</sup> Phase one of the project was charged with developing a "gateway" for 18-22 depository libraries' online access to the bibliographic files of the Department of Energy's Energy Research Abstracts and the Department of Commerce's Economic Bulletin Board.<sup>3</sup>

#### **4 - Project Hermes & Supreme Court**

These initial and innovative electronic pilot projects paved the way for others, such as the Project Hermes Bulletin Board which offered full text of Supreme Court Opinions within 8 hours of their release by the Supreme Court and was probably one of the first to offer the availability of 24/7. But only depository librarians had access to the phone number that accommodated X and Y modem protocols at speeds of 1200, 2400, and 9600 baud.<sup>4</sup> The Hermes Project began in 1990, and today the Supreme Court's website includes all the opinions starting with 502 U.S. Reports 1991.

#### **5 - Gatekeepers to Gateways**

We have come such along way in the past 14 years. So somewhere along the way, with the development of the Web, we turned over the keys of electronic searching and created gateways for students, patrons, and clients. Librarians are the information experts and know the valuable resources that are crucial for performing research. Our expertise lies with that knowledge. Since the web, we have transferred the responsibility of searching to the end users.

So what are the best methods for training students to access information and become information literate in today's society? Would it be the one 50-minute instruction session for a class of 25? The 15-25 minute reference interaction? Web tutorials? Individual sessions? One, two, or three credit hour library research classes? All of these are options currently in use today. Another option that has been gaining support throughout various parts of the country is the Peer Tutoring Method for instruction with library research.

#### **6 - Observations**

The philosophy of peer tutoring is one student teaching another student and has been used since ancient Greek and Roman times. Library Instruction tutors' duties include providing assistance for peer students on how to find articles in a database, lead a student on how to use the online catalog, give library tours, assist with classroom instruction during the "hands on sections", help students find information in the stacks, and participate with Term Paper clinics and workshops. Most of us have seen the interactions between students in the reference areas where a student will ask a question of the person sitting next to them before coming to the reference desk or will ask a friend for help to find an article for a paper. The idea of a Library Instruction tutor program was first brought to our attention by the writing lab tutors in the Center for Academic Program Support or CAPS, the UNM tutoring center. The members of the writing lab were having difficulty in tutoring writing because the tutees or students did not have the research skills to find appropriate material for their papers. Well, we heard the Writing lab tutors loud and clear. They suggested that a Library Instruction tutor would be a great idea so they could refer their students to them and the student could get help in gathering research.

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<sup>2</sup> Administrative Notes. v.9, n. 13, 1988. p. 8-17

<sup>3</sup> Administrative Notes. v.9, n. 13, 1988. p. 19-24

<sup>4</sup> Administrative Notes. v.11, n. 24, 1990. p. 1-2

## **7 - Most Valuable Renewable Resource: STUDENTS**

As budgets tighten, and additional personnel is unlikely, universities can always rely on our most valuable renewable resource to assist us in libraries. We rely on students in academic libraries for processing materials, staffing circulation counters, shelving books and periodicals, and numerous other duties.

Implementing a Library Instruction Peer Tutoring program consists of collaboration between the Library and a Learning Support Center. The partnership between Libraries and Learning Support Centers can benefit both organizations and increase the success and retention rates for students. There are two separate training components involved in this type of program. One is to train students to be "tutors" and the other is to train students in library research skills and strategies. I will discuss both training modules but first I would like to go over some of the similar purposes that Libraries and Learning Centers have in common, including:

### **8 - Similar Purposes**

#### **Support of academic mission of institution**

The Library's mission is to support, participate in, and enhance the instructional, research, and public services activities of the University by placing a priority on service to students, faculty, and staff.

A learning center's mission is to provide quality out-of-classroom learning assistance to students enrolled in undergraduate courses and promote effective working relationships with faculty/instructors, advisors and student affairs personnel.

### **9 - Out-of-classroom learning**

"Students go to libraries and learning centers when they want to study and learn. They might meet with a librarian or a tutor."<sup>5</sup>

### **10 - Lifelong/independent skills**

This includes the major principles of information literacy and lifelong learning. People need information and evaluative skills to continue lifelong learning. Libraries and Learning Centers are guided by the following principles: learning vs. the teaching paradigm, the organizations are student-centered, the focus is on independent learning, encouragement of active learning, and have a standard for measurable outcomes.

### **11 - Similar faculty contact and relationships**

Librarians are liaisons with faculty and work closely with them in developing collections, providing instruction, and assist with individual faculty research needs. Learning Center staff and tutors also interact with faculty and maintain a close relationship with them. Tutors consult with faculty when they have questions or problems.

### **12 - Class assignments & Homework**

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<sup>5</sup> Deese-Roberts, Susan. Campus News. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico. v.37, no.20, 2002.

Librarians help students who come to the reference desk with class assignments and homework. Tutors assist students with homework in specific content areas whether that is Algebra, Physics, English, etc.

### **13 - Use of Technology**

Libraries rely on technology for access to information. We are beginning new ways to reach our patrons through virtual and e-mail reference. Learning Centers use technology for on-line tutoring as well as using the same technology and software for tutoring in content areas such as statistics and mathematics.

### **14 - Learning Support Center Models**

Learning Support Center Models can take many forms on campuses. Some of these include:

- Centralized/De-centralized
- Academic Affairs/Student Affairs
- Departmental
- Peer Tutoring/Professional Tutors
- Comprehensive/Target Population

### **15 - Definition of a Peer Tutor:**

Peer tutors provide individual and small group tutoring sessions in subjects in which the tutor has attained a grade of A or B. The Peer Tutor facilitates learning as a guide and coach to assist the student to become a successful, independent learner. The purpose of tutoring is to increase and enhance mastery of concepts or applications of a specific course of study. Peer tutors integrate effective study and learning strategies to maximize the tutee's potential for academic progress.

### **16 - Learning Support Center Professional Associations**

#### **College Reading and Learning Association**

<http://www.crla.net/Welcome.htm>

CRLA (formerly WCRLA) is a group of student-oriented professionals active in the fields of reading, learning assistance, developmental education, and tutorial services at the college/adult level. CRLA is inherently diverse in membership. Its most vital function and overall purpose are to provide a forum for the interchange of ideas, methods, and information to improve student learning and to facilitate the professional growth of its members.

Members give practical application to their research and promote the implementation of innovative strategies to enhance student learning. In a spirit of community, members share their own successful experiences with others so that all may benefit.

Any individual who belongs to a faculty or administration of a public or private college or university, and who has an interest in college learning assistance, tutorial programs, reading, and developmental education is invited to join the College Reading and Learning Association.

## **National Association for Developmental Education**

<http://www.nade.net/>

For over 25 years, the National Association for Developmental Education (NADE) and its members have helped learners at all levels of preparedness to realize their full academic potential.

## **National College Learning Center Association**

<http://www.eiu.edu/~lrnasst/nclca/>

The National College Learning Center Association (NCLCA) is an organization of professionals dedicated to promoting excellence among learning center personnel. The organization began in 1985 as the Midwest College Learning Center Association (MCLCA) and "went national" in 1999, changing the name to the National College Learning Center Association (NCLCA), to better represent its nationwide and Canadian membership. NCLCA welcomes any individual interested in assisting college and university students along the road to academic success.

NCLCA defines a learning center as a place where students can be taught to become more efficient and effective learners. Learning Center services may include tutoring, mentoring, supplemental instruction, academic and skill-building labs, computer aided instruction, success seminars/programs, advising and more.

## **Council for Advancement of Standards in Higher Education**

<http://www.cas.edu/>

CAS, the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education, has been the pre-eminent force for promoting standards in student affairs, student services, and student development programs since its inception in 1979. For the ultimate purpose of fostering and enhancing students' learning and achievement academically, psychologically, physically, socially, and in general to promote good citizenship, CAS continues to create and deliver a dynamic and credible "Blue Book" of Standards and Guidelines and Self-Assessment Guides that lead to a host of quality-controlled programs and services. These respond to real-time student needs, the requirements of sound pedagogy, and the effective management of 29 functional areas, consistent with institutional missions.

### **17 - Certification**

The College Reading and Learning Association certifies the tutor training programs. Tutors progress and are certified at three different levels. At each level they are required to have a minimum of 10 hours of training and 25 hours of tutoring. The levels include New/Regular, Advanced, and Master. CRLA has over 500 programs currently certified and your institution may be on that list. <http://www.crla.net>

### **18 -Tutor Levels**

What type of training does a tutor need? If they are already knowledgeable about the content area... What else do they need to know?

**Tutor - New:** The New tutor attends training, and acquires tutoring hours and experience to meet the qualifications of the regular tutor level. The New tutor's main responsibility is to achieve Regular level status.

**Tutor - Regular:** The Regular tutor has completed the required level I training and tutored 25 hours. The Regular tutor's primary duty is to provide quality instruction. Familiarity with textbooks and tutor strategies as well as with the subject matter is required.

Recommended training topics at this level include Basic Tutoring Guidelines, Ethics, Tutoring Do's and Don'ts, active listening and communication skills, and referrals.

**Tutor - Advanced:** The Advanced tutor has completed the level I and II training and has tutored 50 hours. The Advanced tutor assists New/Regular tutors in performing instructional duties including developing material to add to tutoring resource material. Advanced tutors may also give workshops and/or act as facilitators for study groups.

Recommended training topics include Learning Styles, cultural awareness, probing questions, and characteristics of adult learners.

**Tutor – Master:** The Master tutor has completed all required training at all 3 levels and has tutored 75 hours. The Master tutor performs additional instructional duties and/or liaison activities such as coordinating meetings and visiting instructors or classes. Master tutors may be asked to participate in the training of new tutors and to mentor New, Regular, or Advanced level tutors.

Recommended training topics at the Master level include assertiveness training, tutoring target populations, group instruction skills, and how to supervise other tutors. Once tutors are certified they can transfer that certification to another tutoring center that is certified by CRLA.

Tutors receive a minimum of 10 hours of training at each level. This in-depth training prepares them for the challenges and the rewards they will encounter when tutoring. Session Topics include:

### **19 - Overview of Tutoring**

Philosophy, Code of Ethics, Student Centered Behaviors, Mock Tutoring Observation Points, Tips for Tutors, Suggestions from Previous CAPS tutors, Summary of Tutoring Principles and Strategies.

### **20 - Scheduling**

Guidelines for scheduling, Calendar for Team Meetings and General meetings.

### **21 - Ethics**

"Can you meet me at my apartment to work on calculus? I'll cook dinner."

"I'm going to fail this class and flunk out of school if you don't tell me what's gong to be on the test."

"I'm having dreams about you and..."

## **22 - Learning Process Information:**

Six factors that influence learning, Levels of Understanding, Basic Study Cycle, Philosophy of Adult Education. Active listening is also included and consists of encouragement, paraphrasing, reflecting, and summarizing.

## **23 - Referrals**

Student Mental Health Center/ Counseling & Therapy Services

Student Health Services

Wellness Center

EEOC

Student Support Services

## **24 - Students with Learning Disabilities:**

Campus Resources, Students with Learning Disabilities, Guidelines for Tutoring Students with Learning Disabilities, other Services.

## **25 - Standards and Evaluations**

Standards, Evaluation Purpose, Tutor Standards and Evaluation.

## **26 - Content Area: Library Research Skills**

The biggest challenge of creating such a program was to come up with the "content" and training program for the Library. The tutors are responsible for the knowledge of the "content" area they are tutoring, whether it is Algebra, Physics, Writing, the Navajo language, or Art History. The tutors must have received a grade of A or B in the course in order to tutor the subject. They also work closely with the faculty who are teaching the course and can go to them for assistance.

But if there isn't a 3-credit hour Library Research class for them to take, a training program can be developed by the librarians.

## **27 - Library Curriculum Development**

Library Involvement

Needs Assessment

Question to ask: What library skills and strategies does the "Introductory Student" need to be a successful researcher at our University?

Faculty, Staff, & Students

Survey Learning Support Center students

Analyzing Data

## **28 - Library Instruction Tutor Conceptual Curriculum**

The curriculum included Library Services and Policies, Search Strategies, Boolean Logic, Vocabulary (Controlled vs. Word), and Database Configuration.

## **29 - Library Strategies Rainbow Book**

Contents included: Library Descriptions and Library Services, Research Strategies, Classification Systems, Online Catalog, Electronic Resources and Databases, Computing Resources on Campus, Citation manuals, Internet Browsers, Directories, Search Engines, and Meta Search Engines, and Evaluation of Information.

## **30 - Continued Training During the Semester/Year**

Team meetings were conducted and met seven Friday afternoons from 2-3 during the semester. Library Instruction tutors met with the team leader and discussed referrals, database changes and updates, and other work-related issues that occurred.

## **31 - Course Related Instruction**

A frequent scenario that students might have would be to attend a 50-minute course related instructional session with a librarian.

## **32 - Student signs up to meet with a Library Instruction Tutor**

At the end of the session the student who is unfamiliar with database searching or would like some extra help in learning the databases will go to the Learning Center and sign up to meet with a Library Instruction Tutor.

## **33 - Library Instruction Tutor with Student**

The Library Instruction tutor will guide/coach the student on their individual research needs, in either a 30 or 50-minute session.

## **34 - Building a Program**

Contact the Instruction Librarian at your Institution

Contact the Learning Support Center at your Institution

Survey students, faculty, & staff

Create a Library Curriculum

Set limits on what information and databases library tutors are responsible for

## **35 & 36 - Further Reading**

Deese-Roberts, Susan and Kathleen Keating. 2000. *Library Instruction: A Peer Tutoring Model*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.

Downing, Karen E., Barbara MacAdam, and Darlene P. Nicholes. 1993. *Reaching a Multicultural Student Community: A Handbook for Academic Librarians*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.

MacAdam, and Darlene P. Nichols. 1989. Peer information counseling: an academic library program for minority students. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 15(September):204-209.

Klavano, Ann M. and Eleanor R. Kulleseid. 1995. Bibliographic instruction: Renewal and transformation in one academic library. In *Library Instruction Revisited: Bibliographic Instruction Comes of Age*, edited by Lynne M. Martin. New York: Haworth Press.

Stelling, Prue. 1996. Student to student: Training peer advisors to provide BI. *Research Strategies* 14(Winter):50-55.

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### **37 - Students, Students, Students**

The reason for this program... Students, Students, Students.