

The Writing Librarian

The First Year

Why have a writing librarian?

- Writing “subject specialist”
- Streamlining engagement with composition faculty
- Ability to create information is as vital as ability to consume
- Thinking strategically: how can the library help students become better writers?

Programs and Initiatives

- Peer-to-peer tutoring
- Teaching through collections: fiction and zines



Peer-to-Peer Tutoring

- Partnership with UCLA Undergraduate Writing Center (new location in library)
- Training peer writing tutors in basic research skills
- Next step: train library peer research consultants in writing



photo credit: Caleb Adams/Daily Bruin

Peer-to-Peer Tutoring

Successes:

- Low effort, high impact
- Training went viral!

Challenge:

- Students didn't associate library location with research help

Lessons learned:

- Training as cross-pollination rather than intensive investment

Fiction and Zine Collections

- Reading fiction decreases “discomfort with ambiguity” and prevents “seizing and freezing” on premature conclusions about information*
- Zines promote self-publication and democratic information landscape

* Djikic, M., Oatley, K., & Moldoveanu, M. (2013). “Opening the closed mind: the effect of exposure to literature on the need for closure.” *Creativity Research Journal* 25(2), 149-150, DOI: 10.1080/10400419.2013.783735



photo credit: Danielle Salomon

Fiction and Zine Collections

Successes

- Healthy circulation rates
- Coverage by student media

Challenges

- Impact on information literacy difficult to assess
- Hard to guess what students want to read

Lessons Learned:

- Involve students in selection process
- Promote, promote, promote!

Other Initiatives

- “Research for creative writers” workshops
- Special Collections sessions
- Readings, workshops, and other events
- Online instruction modules
- Student-curated “community” collections

Thank you!

jglassman@library.ucla.edu