LILAC: The Information Literacy Conference, April 24-26, Nottingham, UK

Workshop Proposal

Librarians as Teachers: Reframing our Professional Development

Sheila Corrall[1], Mary Delaney[2], Ann Cleary[3]

1. University of Pittsburgh, USA
2. Institute of Technology Carlow, Ireland
3. Dundalk Institute of Technology, Ireland

Keywords:

Digital capacity
Professional development
Reflective practice

Professional development for their teaching role continues to be a big issue for librarians, who frequently report receiving little or no formal teacher education and feeling underprepared for their work as teachers and learning facilitators. As many commentators have observed, "Sometimes librarians feel confident and well-prepared for this role; often, they feel intimidated, ill-equipped and insufficiently trained" (McGuinness, 2011). Professional associations, special interest groups, and communities of practice provide valuable support through conferences, journals, education programs, and other resources; but librarians continue to struggle with their professional development as teachers, particularly the challenge of continuing their learning in a meaningful way alongside the demands of their jobs on a day-to-day basis.

In 2016, the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Ireland launched a new framework to support professional development for all staff who teach in higher education. This Framework breaks new ground in its commendably inclusive approach: first, it explicitly covers everyone involved in both teaching and facilitating learning, not just academic faculty; second, it goes well beyond the knowledge, skills, and abilities typically covered by such documents, giving due attention to other aspects of professional development, such as professional identity and values, professional communication and dialogue, and personal and professional digital capacity; and third, it offers its own typology of professional development activities and forms of professional learning that makes it easier for practitioners to see how development can be integrated and embedded into their day-to-day practice.

In 2017, funded by the National Forum, three Irish libraries began a two-year exploration of the Framework to field test its application in libraries. This workshop provides an opportunity for LILAC participants to share our experience of working with the Framework.

Intended learning outcomes

Participants will:

- understand the project findings and insights gained;

- reconsider their own CPD practice in the context of this framework;

- compare its practical utility as a professional development framework with other tools, such as the ACRL (2007) *Standards for proficiencies*, ACRL (2017) *Roles and strengths of teaching librarians*, and *The UK professional standards framework* (HEA, 2011).

Workshop plan

1. Introduction and orientation (10 minutes). The workshop leader will summarize objectives for the session, outline planned activities and timings, and provide an overview of the Framework, highlighting its key features and potential library applications.

2. Individual and group activity (35 minutes). Participants will receive copies of the Framework at their tables, with workshop handouts containing questions for individual reflection and group discussion on its potential use in the information literacy community, and caselet examples of its actual use by librarians, individually and collectively.

3. Facilitated plenary discussion (10 minutes). We shall invite participants to report back from their tables and share their thoughts about the strengths and weaknesses of the Framework as a professional development tool, and opportunities for personal and workplace use.

4. Reflections and conclusions (5 minutes). We shall wrap up the workshop by reviewing feedback on the Framework, learning points from the workshop, and suggestions for follow-up work.

References

ACRL (2007). ACRL Instruction Section Proficiencies for Instruction Librarians Task Force. Standards for proficiencies for instruction librarians and coordinators: Approved by the ACRL Board, June 24, 2007 [ACRL standards & guidelines]. *College & Research Libraries News, 68*(9), 570-575. doi:10.5860/crln.68.9.7871. https://crln.acrl.org/index.php/crlnews/article/view/7871

ACRL (2017). ACRL Standards and Proficiencies for Instruction Librarians and Coordinators Revision Task Force. Roles and strengths of teaching librarians: Approved by the ACRL Board of Directors, April 2017. *College & Research Libraries News, 78*(7), 364-370. doi:10.5860/crln.78.7.364. https://crln.acrl.org/index.php/crlnews/article/view/16698

HEA (2011). The UK professional standards framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education. York: Higher Education Academy. Retrieved from https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ukpsf

McGuinness, C. (2011). *Becoming confident teachers: A guide for academic librarians*. Oxford: Chandos Publishing. doi:10.1533/9781780632711

National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (2016). National professional development framework for all staff who teach in higher education. Dublin, Ireland: National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. Retrieved from https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/publication/national-professional-development-framework-for-all-staff-who-teach-in-higher-education/