Librarians vs. The Machine: Leveraging Relationships to Increase Participation in an Open Access Policy

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INTRODUCTION

A large Midwestern university wanted to determine how liaison librarian intervention affected faculty participation in an Open Access Policy when compared to generic communication by the Library’s Center for Digital Scholarship (CDS). Liaisons know more faculty authors and have stronger ties. These connections may improve participation rates.

METHODS

During a library-wide reorganization, a working group was formed to determine how liaison librarians should be involved in the new, faculty-adopted Open Access Policy (http://openaccess.iupui.edu). Successful open access policy implementations at other universities show that author participation increases when library staff and faculty help to design and deploy the service. The charter group tested a workflow designed by the Center for Digital Scholarship, and offered guidance for refining this workflow and related Open Access Policy services. During this trial period, faculty participation rates from the sample liaison group and the CDS were tracked and compared.

RESULTS

In comparing liaison librarians and the Center for Digital Scholarship, the librarians had better success following one attempt at email communication. Liaisons had a 28% participation rate compared to 19% for the Machine.

CONCLUSIONS

Where We Stand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>Deposits/Articles Published (Scopus)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MIT</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IUPUI (45% response rate)</td>
<td>43% (1,001/2,385)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke</td>
<td>28%</td>
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</tbody>
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Articles deposited in the open access policy collections Jan. 1, 2015 - March 31, 2016

Keys to Success

✓ The OA Policy is a part of our library’s evolving mission.
✓ Our library dean, David Lewis, is an advocate.
✓ We hired a dedicated scholarly communications librarian in 2013.
✓ The Scholarly Communications Librarian archived papers from prolific researchers on campus with their cooperation. This created “embedded advocates” in each department.
✓ Scholarly communications is included as an aspect in every new hire position description.
✓ Subject liaisons have strong ties with faculty authors and assist with outreach.

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Relationships Matter!