Changing learning, changing roles: Collaboration at every angle

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When I look out into this audience I see a room of campus leaders – by the very nature of our professional expertise and training – I see generalists who think broadly about student learning – who see the connections between disciplines as well as between research and teaching – and between learning that happens within the classroom and external to it – I see organized, articulate, service oriented professionals who know how to facilitate – who are committed to group process – who are task oriented – product driven – and creative -- I see strong collaborators – that’s why I want to talk to you about collaborating at every angle – and how in that process - we are leaders in helping others rethink roles and restructure learning on our campuses..
Specifically, I am going to tell you about a project I launched at UC Berkeley that is as much about library leadership in reinventing undergraduate education as it is about information literacy.

I am going to share my thoughts on campus partnerships in support of student learning.

And I am going to briefly address how librarians can step up to take leadership roles in undergraduate education initiatives.
The project I am going to tell you about...
First, the Berkeley climate - probably not too different from some of your own institutions - although they think it is.
- Library pre-eminence
- Collections-centered
- Value of subject specialization
- Library silo

Library culture -- unique to the largest of the large research libraries
Basically the library culture looks (or looked) like this -- it’s a traditional model that was shared at an ARL/OCLC Strategic Issues Forum a few years ago.
The new model proposed at that meeting was user centered...

with functions and services designed in support of the user..

But the model is too extreme for Berkeley - which would have trouble accepting the status of collections in this model.
Many of you who know my background know my interest in the education role of libraries -- after 1 year at Berkeley - added second AUL hat - for collections -- responsible for those millions of dollars -- saw all too well our responsibility to connect our community of users to our rich and deep and largely lost collections.

So I developed a model based on what I think is most pressing in large research universities - the importance of connecting users to collections and how the ed role is a lot more than about teaching - about library instruction – it’s about the placing all these functions in a broader pedagogical framework.

This represents the culture shift I was trying to make happen in the Berkeley Library.
At the same time, a larger culture shift was happening in undergraduate education in research universities -- catalyst was the Boyer report...

Much in this report forms an environment ripe for information literacy

Less about curriculum than about teaching and learning strategies..
The campus focus on Undergraduate education and the focus on research-based learning was an important catalyst for us in the libraries as well. As Berkeley was thinking strategically about how their research strength could be leveraged to improve the undergraduate teaching mission, we seized the opportunity to align ourselves with the broader campus teaching priorities, to leverage our strength as a research library, to underscore our role in helping the undergraduate education initiatives succeed. In this environment:

- The library shifts its focus from “center of campus” to “center of learning”;
- The traditional library instruction sessions -- so difficult to scale up in any sustainable way - could be connected to a broader undergraduate research effort where faculty own learning outcomes for inquiry and discovery, for research skills and abilities, and librarians participate in assignment design and syllabus revision.
- As campuses emphasize lower division large enrollment courses to achieve the most impact, it became clear to us in the library that we needed to work together with others responsible for teaching and learning - (the GSI T and L Center, the Office of Ed Development, Educational Technology Services..)
And individual faculty were also thinking about what it means to have undergraduate research experiences within the course. Here’s a perspective from a senior faculty member who was experimenting with the meaning of undergraduate research.
And another voice from a faculty member who had a major aha moment about her students readiness.
For all the facets of inquiry - research based - active - problem based learning environments? All those elements of course design, technology, information literacy, assessment?
In this pre-Mellon traditional model for who owns the course

Strongest relationship is between the instructor and the students - the instructor may or may not consult with learning support opportunities -- teaching centers perhaps for syllabus design, classroom teaching challenges, maybe assessment issues, student services for tutoring, writing center, technology for classroom technology as well as course.. LMS - website design, etc... Library for reserve reading, class instruction session,

But also in the traditional model - two of those structures have direct student impact -- libraries and student Services

In this model - primary responsibility for design is with faculty - others MAY be consultants - little or no knowledge of what each other is doing...
Effective, collaborative models of academic support on leading campuses urgently need to be developed and explored from a variety of perspectives

...Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Models of Academic Support

So we had the research U library environment - trying to shift the culture to an educational role motivated by the need to connect users to collections

--we had Boyer making its mark on undergraduate ed initiatives

-we had faculty thinking about research based learning

-we had silos of academic support

At about that time, Mellon met with five newly appointed ARL directors -- said above --

What an opportunity!

I made the table - approached others on campus - dangled possibility of funds - led planning - wrote the grant -

Here’s how ...
As I started to conceive the grant proposal I created a campus partnership - starting with the Library and the Division of Undergraduate Education - and moving on to several units committed to working with faculty on teaching and learning -- Educational Technology Services, Office of Educational Development, GSI Teaching and Learning, Undergraduate Dean, L&S

We agreed to a common set of objectives that I proposed - based upon my knowledge of their priorities -- I had to know what they were thinking about - what concerned them - so I could bring something as a starting point.

- To support a community of faculty serving as change agents for teaching within the academy
- To strengthen collaboration among campus partners in support of instructors and instruction
- To strengthen Fellows’ commitment to undergraduate research opportunities
- To engage students through research-based learning
- To increase the use and appreciation of libraries and library collections
- To assess the impact of undergraduate research assignments on student learning and faculty teaching
- To create a scalable and sustainable model for promoting changes in courses and curricula.
We received first $138,000 pilot and we learned a lot. Then we received a 4 year $749,000 grant. We wanted to strengthen research based learning and we wanted to place library collections firmly within in the courses. We also wanted to develop approaches that could be scaled to other courses, across the disciplines, and that could be sustained after Mellon funding was gone.

The grant has two fundamental strategies:

The first strategy is to create a cohort of faculty change agents. We wanted to select a group of individual faculty: and we wanted to link them together into a community, giving them a forum for exchange with colleagues across departments. Our assumption was that they would then influence colleagues in their home departments and across the campus. This approach could function as a powerful force for change on a campus that is very faculty driven and where change often happens from the bottom up rather than the top down.

Our second strategy was to create a campus collaboration of academic partners. We wanted to bridge the administrative silos that provide academic support. We hoped this would enable us to leverage services and make them more accessible to faculty. We also hoped that the collaboration that emerged would have a ripple effect. We hope that the “silos” would develop the habit of collaboration and that this would carry over into other projects and activities.
So, what exactly did we do?

Started with the collaboration - I went to VPUE - then we brought together staff experts from academic support units. We worked together to develop the project centerpiece - a three-week Summer Institute, an experiential, immersion experience that turned the Faculty Fellows into students. Each Fellow was asked to redesign a syllabus to incorporate undergraduate research assignments that use the library’s print and digital collections.

Campus partners developed the curriculum for the Institute together - starting with overall outcomes, daily outcomes, etc. We wanted a single curriculum not coordinated pieces.

We also developed a strategic recruitment plan. We wanted to intentionally shape the cohort - rather than a haphazard group of self-selected individuals. In the first year, we targeted large enrollment, high impact courses. We identified key courses and the VPUE and I met with targeted department chairs to enlist their help to encourage participation from key faculty. We dangled money. In addition to individual faculty stipends, we allocated funds for departments who most closely met our recruitment criteria and who showed most promise for institutionalizing changes in the curriculum.

Fellows committed to teach their course the following academic year. Fellows also made a long-term commitment to serve as on-going ambassadors to the larger campus community and to participate in assessment efforts that would help evaluate their effectiveness as change agents.
Let’s go back to the objectives
Objective - To support a community of faculty serving as change agents for teaching within the academy.

Students function very well inside the box...tell us the facts - we will learn those facts - and we will demonstrate through examination that we know those facts...we weren't doing a very good job getting them outside that box...getting them to think more, not simply memorize...to acquire new information and draw their own conclusions...

Dick Malkin, Biosciences
Mellon Library/Faculty Fellow for Undergraduate Research, June 2003

I wanted to bring inquiry-based learning into my course, but the challenge was how to do it in a large course... An introductory course...

Ruth Tringham, Anthropology
Mellon Library/Faculty Fellow for Undergraduate Research, June 2003

First some quotes - from our former dean of biosciences -- experimented with a class of 800 students - Bio One...

Ruth - senior faculty -Professor -- has also given paper at her professional association about her change in teaching
The remarkable success with these two courses is that they are in disciplines that considered “research” to be in the lab or in the field -- Many scientists had trouble thinking about other aspects of research based learning and how to create assignments that can scale to very large courses...

Here’s a model they can relate to...

Alberts underscored step 5 -- and the need for undergraduates to be directed towards sources -- that experts are well connected to the research in their field - but that undergrads are outside of the scholarly communication cycle and need to learn how to connect to it.
Objective - To engage students through research-based learning

and here’s Victoria sharing her views about engaging students through research-based learning - listen for her own revelation of inquiry learning

Victoria Robinson, Ethnic Studies
Mellon Library/Faculty Fellow for Undergraduate Research, June 2003
Objective - To strengthen Fellows’ commitment to undergraduate research opportunities

Ingrid Seyer-Ochi, Education
Mellon Library/Faculty Fellow for Undergraduate Research, June 2003

Here is Ingrid (Professor Seyer-Ochi) sharing newly developed insights about undergraduate research
Instructional innovation has often been the result of efforts by individual faculty entrepreneurs. The Mellon project allows us to expand that strength by linking faculty with librarians, instructional technologists, assessment experts, graduate student instructors — all of the partners who together can have a greater impact on student learning than each can alone.

.........Christina Maslach  
Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education  
University of California, Berkeley

Even the Vice Provost realized the importance of shifting ownership for the course out from the faculty to include a team of experts working together...
Let’s talk about this collaboration a moment. You might recall that an overarching strategy was to “create a campus collaboration of academic partners that can be a catalyst for change and create infrastructure for faculty.”

This did not happen easily. And the idea for it was the culmination of a career of “partnerships”.

In a typical faculty support model, the instructor is at the center - experts from the various units may work together - to greater and lesser degrees...

for example - library and student services - as the two units who work directly with students in addition to working with faculty - can align services to create a seamless program -- this might manifest itself as anything from a single “learning center” concept - to sharing services or facilities - tutoring spaces
We frequently see partnerships develop between librarians, IT, and instructor for course redesign -- as a matter of fact - Mellon awarded millions of dollars to regional consortia of liberal arts colleges to foster partnerships between librarians and IT and instructor - to develop info lit - or info fluency.. In these cases, the products are usually customized for the single course --- and many times there is no presence of the teaching centers involved...
Relationship I have always advocated - where I started - because the focus is on pedagogy - not technology - is with the teaching Center - they are excellent partners for course and assignment redesign -- syllabus development - and experimentation with teaching strategies.
Some partnership models are extremely inclusive, seeking out and including any unit on campus that participates in the faculty development mission -- varies with each campus - but could include units or experts involved in faculty development, such as...focus of support is still Instructors - units coordinate activities to greater and lesser degrees... - some level of partnership - mutually supportive - minimally they refer a lot...
Here’s an example from Mellon again - this happened in our pilot year - and we learned a lot from it.

Example of motivated, well informed instructor who took advantage of academic support services - worked with various units: library - teaching center - TA teaching center - student services

show video

... no indication of cross unit relations -- spokes in a wheel with instructor at center... in reality - may receive differing advice - different message - particularly because of what is happening within those units - not just at Berkeley - but nationally - redundant skill sets - overlapping expertise.

This experience influenced a restructure of the approach - intentional creation of cross silo teams to support course redesign.
What we knew was that there is a duplication in expertise across administrative silos - a redundancy across units -

-- Librarians are trained in, hired for, and engage in professional development and contribution in: instructional design, online learning, pedagogy and assessment

-- instructional technologists are trained in pedagogy and assessment and are course designers for technology rich classrooms and online learning environment

-- teaching and learning centers, long time experts in pedagogy, have seen their domain both expand with educational technology, and overlap with the creation of other learning support positions (assessment, general education, service learning)

And by the way, these changed roles are reflected nationally -- in position descriptions and job ads, professional association conference topics and trends, graduate education and professional development
We created a new model

- focus is not the instructor - but the course.. and the instructor works with experts from various campus units to reinvent the course.

In this model, experts cannot and are not limited by the organizational structure.

Most important is the need for cross silo communication and team building - to present a consistent message as the course is redesigned...

So we knew we wanted to create cross silo teams to work with the instructor on course redesign - but we learned that we couldn’t just throw people together and call them a team - tell them to collaborate - they needed to develop respect for each other - what skills and backgrounds each has and what each brings

--- just as the Planning group had done over the previous year designing the Institute- we had to continually learn not to put each other in our silos..and that was true at all levels in the organization - for our staffs- so we created structure and process around the teams - we had a kickoff retreat -- focus was on learning about each other - we needed a collaborative workspace before wikis and blogs - we used Blackboard - we took from the health field the case management approach - each team member who consulted with the instructor recorded the interaction for the others on the team - point person to ensure coordination - seamless for instructor - and with a consistent message
What I learned at Berkeley -- collaboration had to happen at different levels in the organization

Senior Administrators (co-PI's)
  message, culture, Deans, Department Chairs

Heads of Resource Units
  planning - leveraging resources - setting expectations -
  providing support for staff - rewarding staff

Expert Staff -- between and with faculty
  I-teams -- respect - learn - support - improved product...
Although experimental projects are common in introductory chemistry courses, library-based research projects are not... integrating such a project into the huge course –1300 students in 43 sections –was daunting... several colleagues said it could not be done....I was only able to pull it off because of the help I received from my Mellon implementation team... I was fortunate to have a great team to help me to implement the projects on a grand scale. Everyone had a different contribution and together we made rapid refinements.

Michelle Douskey
Mellon Library/Faculty Fellow for Undergraduate Research, June 2004

Here’s a quote from another Fellow - who teaches Chemistry 1A, had already tried integrating a research project into her course before she became a Mellon fellow.
Starting from Scratch

1998 at a Loex meeting - I challenged instruction librarians to get off the soapbox and invert your thinking -- put THE campus issue first -- show how info lit helps their agenda succeed --from...[click through]

start by learning to speak their language

--identify the professional organizations - - visit their websites routinely- scan their journals-most important - read their reports - respond to their conference calls for papers - or even poster sessions...
Step up to Leadership Roles

--on campus
--in professional associations

Get involved in the campus issues - use your committee seat to take a leadership role

• from a seat on a working group on developing a first year experience -- I ended up contributing to the textbook - collaborating on the design of the root syllabus - doing faculty training -- and teaching the course...

• from a seat on the curriculum committee I ended up with a sequence of required library instruction sessions linked to core courses for lower division and within majors -- approved by faculty senate

• from my work on an accreditation committee at Berkeley I created the foundation for the Mellon partnership

• and in professional associations -- I was the first librarian involved with the Reinvention Center - the Director was so excited to have me there that they have been actively encouraging librarians to participate - and this past year - I recommended two other librarians for the undergraduate ed conference

• at AAC&U - first I was invited as an adjunct faculty member for the Greater Expectations Institute - they invited me to be a permanent faculty member

• and last year I keynoted POD (more than 800 teaching and learning center personnel)
And this is what I created at UNLV - after one year -- initiated through a small group of campus partners - brought through Deans Council - charged by Provost -- includes 12 members from across campus -- I am chairing the first 2 years - spun off two working groups - on using clickers in classroom and academic integrity -- and main group working on a campus wide semester of events around topics of capstone...

I am not special.

I am going to end where I started. When I look out into this audience I see a room of campus leaders – we just need to learn to speak their language and bring the rest of our skills and abilities to bear on the issue-- we need to rethink our roles and develop the professional confidence to realize the expertise that we have and that we can bring. Embrace the strengths that makes us librarians.

They make us special on our campuses