

From Reaching Out to Working Within:
Evolving Toward Embeddedness at the
University of Illinois



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Overview



- Introduction
- Embeddedness—David Shumaker and Laura Ann Tyler, Phyllis Rudin
 - Shumaker and Talley, “Models of Embedded Librarianship,” 9:30AM - 11:00AM, Convention Center, 146B
- My experiences—beginning, middle, current state, future “plans”
- Best practices from Shumaker and Tyler (plus my observations)

What is embeddedness?



- “Anthropological in its orientation, ‘embedding implies a more comprehensive integration of one group with another to the extent that the group seeking to integrate is **experiencing and observing**, as nearly as possible, the **daily life** of the primary group’...”*
- “Two basic takes on the departmental embedded librarian dominate the literature. In the first and more commonly observed approach, a librarian sets up shop in the department for **several hours per week**, while in the second, bolder variation, the librarian takes up **permanent residency** in the department.” *
- “...‘embedded’ because the librarian becomes a **member** of the customer community rather than a service provider standing apart.”**

*Rudin, Phyllis. 2008. No fixed address: the evolution of outreach library services on University campuses. *Reference Librarian*, vol. 49, no. 1, pp. 55-75.

**Shumaker, David. 2009. Who let the librarians out? Embedded librarianship and the library manager. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, vol. 48, no. 3, pp. 239-242.

“Critical Success Factors”*



- “Interpersonal communication skills”
- “Library research and reference skills”
- “Information organization skills”
- “Information technology skills”
- “Knowledge of customer subject domain”

*Shumaker, David, and Laura Ann Tyler. 2007. Embedded library services: An initial inquiry into practices for their development, management, and delivery. A Contributed Paper for the Special Libraries Association Annual Conference, Denver, Colorado, June 16, 2007. <http://www.sla.org/pdfs/sla2007/ShumakerEmbeddedLibSvcs.pdf>, accessed 10 June 2009.

Why might embeddedness be desirable?



- “We need to build relationships so we can gain deeper insights into what our customers are doing and how they will use the information we provide.”*
 - “...establish the relationships that allow us to join their conversations—to identify their unexpressed information needs.”*
- “We need the background knowledge about them and their work that will enable us to perform successfully and establish our credibility.”*
- “‘face-to-face encounters have significant advantages...’ particularly the visibility that the librarians gain, the good will they establish, and the opportunities that networking has availed.”**

*Shumaker, David. 2009. Who let the librarians out? Embedded librarianship and the library manager. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, vol. 48, no. 3, pp. 239-242.

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The Beginning—Library-Based Activities



“It’s a telling fact that in the literature, many embedded library service relationships are established because of customer initiatives or external events.”*

- Master of Science in Finance (MSF) Program
 - ✦ Bloomberg, and specifically certification, is promoted:
 - <http://www.business.uiuc.edu/msf/Bloomberg.aspx>
 - http://www.business.uiuc.edu/publications/news_item.aspx?ID=88
 - ✦ Online certification began in 2005
- The Challenge—becoming certified to advise the students in their own certification efforts
- Successes (what worked)
- Failures (what didn’t)

*Shumaker, David. 2009. Who let the librarians out? Embedded librarianship and the library manager. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, vol. 48, no. 3, pp. 239-242.

The Evolution—Classroom-Based Activities



- Teaching FIN 580 BEL (Fall 2007) and FIN 580 BLM (Fall 2008)
 - The Challenge—incorporating Bloomberg’s certification program into a class, along with the Finance Department’s “desired learning outcomes”
 - Successes (what worked)
 - Failures (what didn’t)

Recommendations from the Fall 2007 Evals



- **Make the class hands-on:**

- “Maybe we can take the class in the Bloomberg lab.”
- “The classes can be divided into smaller batches and can be taken to actual Bloomberg station.”
- “I know it’s limited to do so. But it will be better if we can use Bloomberg while in class.”

- **Make more people show up:**

- “I wish more students were present for the lectures.”
- “Maybe more grades related to the attendance rate.”

- **Make the time more convenient:**

- “Schedule it earlier so that we don’t need to wait for too long.”
- “6:00PM is not a good time for students.”
- “Please keep the course timings in morning.”

Recommendations from the Fall 2008 Evals



- **Make the class hands-on:**
 - “I wish someday students can take course in computer lab with Bloomberg terminal.”
 - “If we can have more terminals, that will be better.”
 - “If it is possible, it would be better if we can have real exercise with the instructor on the Bloomberg terminal.”
- **Make the class more rigorous:**
 - “The course can be designed as more comprehensive and full semester course.”
 - “Should assign the letter grades instead of based on satisfactory / unsatisfactory basis.”
 - “Start with a list of functions to allow sense of accomplishment and understanding how topics fit within Equity/F.I.”
 - “It should be grading class, with pass or fail class we are easily lose our motivation.”

Current/Future—MIL-Based Activities



- Prepping August 2009 workshops, in the Market Information Lab (MIL)
- Prepping Spring 2010 class, also in the MIL
- Informal “Faculty Mentor” role to undergraduate teaching assistants in the MIL
- Become proficient in every resource (!) in the MIL
 - <http://www.business.uiuc.edu/marketInfoLab/softwareResources.html>

Other (Next) Steps



- Earn certification under the new Bloomberg program in Fall 2009
- Learn more about assessment (to complement the AACSB's "assurance of learning" standards)
 - "It is the librarian's ability to understand the customer group's goals and problems that make that contribution valuable."*

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Selected “Best Practices”



- “Begin by establishing the service in a single, well chosen group.”
 - “Interact with the customer group on what they want you to be able to do for them aside from the standard library research services; suggest services they may consider ‘outside the box.’”
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- “Request collocation with the team members to better interact with the researchers involved in the project team.”
 - “Establish specific hours and policies for schedules that ensure your clients know when you are available.”
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- “Regularly survey the team to stay aligned with their assumptions and to proactively address their needs. Try to think like your patron to target what they need.”
 - “Establish a means for quantifying your value to the team for the purposes of evaluating the project and reporting to upper management.”

Final Thought



“In this, as in many other change processes, piloting, reviewing, revising, and gradually expanding are probably the steps on the road to success.”*

*Shumaker, David. 2009. Who let the librarians out? Embedded librarianship and the library manager. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, vol. 48, no. 3, pp. 239-242.