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ABSTRACT

In September 2016, McMaster University Library piloted an event for graduate students that was unlike the traditional offering of drop-in presentations or workshops.

This poster will describe how a teaching “rounds” activity to present key information about the library’s services, collections and resources, was planned, promoted and implemented. Graduate Research Rounds, a collaboration between the Library and the School of Graduate Studies, proved to be a worthwhile activity for both the library staff and the students. Observations and feedback will also be shared.

INTRODUCTION

- Pilot a new library event to graduate students during September orientation
- Determine funding required and submit a proposal to the University Librarian and Library Leadership Group
- Work with staff in the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) to schedule and promote the event and to manage the online registration

OBJECTIVES

- Increase the outreach efforts of the University Library towards grad students
- Engage in face-to-face interaction with grad students
- Introduce grad students to library administrators, librarians and other library staff
- Create an opportunity for grad students to meet and interact with each other
- Introduce some of the library’s collections, services and resources in a limited time i.e. 5 minutes!
- Offer an active, engaging and fun activity to incoming grad students
- Showcase the Lewis & Ruth Sherman Centre for Digital Scholarship



STAGING THE ROUNDS

- Secured funding for the cost of supplies, refreshments and prizes
- Worked with staff in the SGS to incorporate the event in the orientation plan for September and manage the registration
- Determined the stations and contacted possible station leaders
- Met with the station leaders (in the event space) to discuss objectives, layout and logistics for the activity
- Created a planning document for the event and incorporated feedback from station leaders
- Enlisted the aid of other library staff for on-site registration
- Set-up a white board with post-it notes for students to provide anonymous feedback
- Purchased 3 gift cards valued at \$25.00 each from the Campus Store
- Requested assistance from staff in Facilities to help set-up the space and the mobile display stations
- Asked participants to rotate through 7 colour-coded stations
 - Archives & Research Collections (orange)
 - Collections (green)
 - Learning Support (purple)
 - Maps, Data, GIS (light blue)
 - Scholarly Communication (red)
 - Services (dark blue)
 - Sherman Centre (yellow)

RESULTS

- 68 grad students registered and there was a waiting list
- 28 grad students attended incl. 4 students who registered in-person
- Engineering, Health Sciences and Social Sciences well represented



Research Rounds in action! Sept. 15, 2016, 10:30 am–12 noon



Matthew Davis, Postdoctoral Fellow, speaks about Digital Scholarship and services offered in the Sherman Centre.



Myron Groover, Archives and Rare Books Librarian, speaks about resources in the Archives and Research Collections.



Gabriela Mircea, Digital Repository Librarian, speaks about Open Access and the library’s open journal presses.

FEEDBACK & LESSONS LEARNED

- “Organized! Effective! Not one wasted minute. So pleased to have met staff in person.”
- “Informative and useful.”
- Informal feedback was also very positive
- Regularly monitor online registration; contact registrants to confirm attendance
- Number the stations to avoid confusion on rotation
- Post event pictures on the library’s social networking sites e.g. Instagram, Snapchat
- Refreshments are appreciated!

CONCLUSIONS

- Event viewed as valuable by the participants; plan to offer next September
- Consider a different layout or location for the event
- Consider increasing the rotation time from 5 min. to 7 min.
- Expand the event to include another station e.g. the Health Sciences Library

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- Librarians at Baylor University, Waco, Texas, who shared the materials for their Grad Reception event including the “Speed Geeking” activity
- The University Librarian and Library Leadership Group for providing funding, space and other support
- Staff in the SGS for promoting the event, managing the online registration and posting pictures on social media
- Librarians and library staff who acted as station leaders and who helped with the set-up and on-site registration

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