Journal Club

# Community ENgagement

Notes

* On the CE website, there is a section where input is solicited but there is a requirement for the submitter to declare a faculty. Hilde brought this issue up and now there is an “Other” option.
* In the Sciences, there are classes where students work with community groups using interdisciplinary resources.
* UBC Library’s level of community engagement is at the “Informed” level
* There is a spectrum of CE and all are valid methods
* UBC Library is currently involved in co-developing services with public libraries and connecting people to the university.
* AskAway is an example of a service that engages with the post-secondary community, supports research and teaching and empowers users.
* Library workshops fall under the “Collaborate” level of CE.
* *Action idea:* UBC Library needs to collect and evaluate existing services/activities because we already fulfill CE objectives on many levels.
* CE can also include being active in professional associations and taking an interest in the professional development of staff.
* The definition of CE is fluid.
* Unfortunately, libraries are rarely the face of CE services because they mainly play a supportive role. However, there are growing opportunities for libraries to be at the forefront of CE such as the Chinese Canadian Stories (CHRP) Project.
* *Action Idea:* There might be interest in creating a mini-table outlining the Library’s CE activities based on the one created for the CE discussion paper.
* *Action Idea:* It might be helpful to create a one-page description about CE contextualized for the Library.
* *Action Idea:* How do we measure the success of CE? How do we capture the stories of CE?
* *Action Idea:* There needs to be discussion about maintaining relationships with the communities we engage.
* Currently, there is value associated with different communities i.e. students vs. alumni, etc.
* There is additional funding to support activities that fit into UBC’s strategic goals.
* *Action Idea:* We should collect examples and articulate units that support the strategic plan.
* Upper management should collect this information.
* There is uncertainty about service fees and resources for helping non-UBC individuals.
* *Action Idea:* There has been a lack of discussion or information shared about how to support CE initiatives financially
* There is a need for funding in order to do these activities and resources in terms of staff, space, etc.
* *Action Idea:* Examples of acceptable CE activities/services would be great for FAQs
* This is a good time to be having this discussion
* *Action Idea:* We should identify cross-cutting themes that could illustrate the Library’s impact in different areas/audiences
  + What are we doing already?
  + Showcase what we are planning to do
* Possibilities include pairing with community groups to further community research and collaboration with other Library units
* UBC Library is already teaching the research skills so there may be synergies with other units
* It is important to take a step back from existing mental models to ask what the communities want from us.
* *Action Idea:* We need to find common language and common goals.
* CE is messy, chaotic and time-intensive; there is no easy way to do CE work.
* Library has to be willing to let go some control at times to enable shared solutions.
* Liaison librarians can often become overwhelmed because CE work can involve multiple units.
* It is difficult for one person to make commitments on the behalf of staff from other units.
* *Action Idea:* We need institution-wide support (policies, resources, etc.) to feel comfortable in taking on this work.
* *Action Idea:* The Library needs to be flexible to give staff more opportunities to participate, and create a mini-infrastructure to support CE work.
* *Action Idea:* This Journal Club could be the beginning of a formation of a Community of Practice within the Library.
* *Action Idea:* The Community of Practice could relay organizational knowledge of CE without being prescriptive or limiting.
* *Action Idea:* Community of Practice could be a conduit to senior management and resource base.
* Library staff has to feel okay with giving realistic answers to requests i.e. we don’t have to say “Yes” to every CE event/activity.
* We have to be properly resourced in order to support these activities; we can’t do everything. We need clarity around:
  + Scale
  + Focus of control
  + Priority
* Support staff has to be included in this effort as well.
* High School outreach
  + These are our potential students.
  + There is fear of opening the “floodgates”.
  + Past experience has been messy and chaotic.
* Visitors
  + Need for more guidance/policies.
  + Priorities need to be set.
* CE is potentially limitless.
* We also need to consider how we can use technology to support this type of work.
  + Virtual tours
* Space Issues
  + Demand is there
  + Balancing act