Where They Lead, I Will Follow: Serving Remote Graduate Student Populations

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Where They Lead, I Will Follow: Serving Remote Graduate Student Populations
Penny Scott, MAT, MLIS, Reference Librarian, University of San Francisco

Hey, where did everybody go?

2003: I begin my job at University of San Francisco, as library liaison to the School of Management grads and undergrads. I teach classes, conduct workshops, work with students one-on-one and in groups.

2005: I begin “librarian office hours” in the School of Management, increasing my visibility to grad students

2012: All School of Management masters programs, including students, staff, and faculty, move to a new downtown campus across town. LIBRARIAN PANICS!

Concerns, Obstacles, Realities

What Success Looks Like

• Learning about an event or class to partner with
• Chatting with profs about what they’re researching and teaching
• Students recognizing you from orientation
• Students making appointments with you during your office hours
• Conversations that wouldn’t have happened if you hadn’t been there: ‘I was going to email you, but here you are!’

Benefits of Service

Evolution of Service

2013
• Librarian office hours two hours a week on two different days

2015
• Started with half days twice a week
• Ended the year doing one full day every other week

2016
• Evolved into one full day every week!

Real Talk!

➢ You’ll worry that the students don’t need you anymore
➢ When you reach out to certain program assistants or directors, they won’t respond.
➢ You will sometimes feel very uncomfortable sitting at a table waiting for people to talk to you.
➢ You will be somewhat at a loss about how to measure your success

Best Practices

Start small: Try out an hour or two at first
Build on established connections with students, staff, administrators
Engage within existing structures (events, programs, etc.)
Keep trying! Really

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