



Chapter 2: Collaboration

It is important to remember your library is not alone when it comes to supporting first year students. Forming partnerships with various groups across campus is instrumental in engaging new and existing library users, promoting services, and raising awareness of the library's many resources.

In this chapter, we'll look at strategies and best practices you can use to showcase the value and strengths of your library!

In this section you will find:

- **Collaborating for Student Success Across Campus**
A review of strategies and best practices by Ray Pun, First Year Student Success Librarian, Fresno State University in California.
- **Teamwork Makes the Dream Work: Bringing the Campus Together Around Information Literacy**
A case study overviewing the 2018 Inaugural FYE Award winners' FYE programs and their collaboration with different campus groups.
- **Collaborating Across Campus**
An infographic mapping prospective partnerships and activities to collaborate with different groups across campus.
- **Continue the Conversation**
See what your peers are saying about collaboration!
- **Additional Resources**
Further materials and supplemental reading to help you collaborate with different departments at your institution.



Collaborating for Student Success Across Campus

By Ray Pun, First Year Student Success Librarian, California State University, Fresno

Internal Collaboration Within the Library

Look for opportunities to work collaboratively with your colleagues under the same roof.



Creating engaging displays

You can host a book display featuring wrapped books, where users select books at random to read for fun. This ‘*Blind Date with a Book*’ activity is designed to attract students to the library by promoting leisure reading. A nice touch can be setting this up during a holiday like Valentine’s Day, National Single’s Day, or National Library Week. Best of all, all library staff will enjoy participating.

How can you attract students to the materials in your collections?

To truly make this a team effort, find different roles members within your library can play.

- Technical services colleagues can process selected books and DVDs to be included in the display.
- Public services members can wrap the materials, and promote it as a fun engagement activity.
- Student assistants can brainstorm ways to promote the display to their peers.

Tip: Photocopy each item’s barcode and tape it to the outside of the wrapping so that the student won’t have to unwrap it until they’re ready to meet their new book.

Promoting Diversity Awareness in Library Exhibits

Work with your fellow library staff to increase students’ diversity awareness by creating displays and pop-up exhibits, all while shining a spotlight on the library’s collections. Some popular themes include *International Education Week*, *Black History Month*, *National Women’s History Month*, *Veteran’s Day*, *Asian Pacific American Heritage Month*, and *Hispanic Heritage Month*. Any of these can provide a great opportunity to promote your library content; from maps, to multimedia items, to digital and print books. Your team can also work together on additional resources like bibliographies to showcase your resources.

What are some activities you’ve tried to increase awareness of your library’s diverse collections or cultural artifacts?

[Click here to check out multicultural calendars online for ideas on upcoming themes](#)

Creating Engaging Social Media Content

Social media is a critical tool for exposing library content, sharing resources, and promoting services. Oftentimes, a library’s social media manager is expected to come up with all of this content on their own, however, this can lead to some blind spots. Bringing in other library members can offer a more comprehensive look at what the library has to offer beyond updates to hours, event notifications, and finals-related memes.



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- Feature your colleagues in short, behind-the-scenes stories. This can help humanize library staff, while explaining the roles of different staff members.
- Promote services like open educational resources or course reserves so faculty and students can see how easy library services are to use.
- When a colleague creates a display, encourage a conversation with the social media manager to promote it in a way that provides more than the standard title and picture.
- Brainstorm with colleagues at all levels of the library to gather more ideas, information, and sources to promote.

Teaming Up With Student Groups

One of the primary objectives of any FYE program is to cultivate deeper and more personal ties between students and their institution. It is imperative to tap into student groups on campus to foster those relationships, while introducing many of these students to the library for the first time. Reach out to student groups, clubs, and government, to see if you can find mutually beneficial projects that may serve to broaden the library's role. If given the opportunity, to sit in on students' group meetings, attend their events, or serve as a mentor or advisor.

How can you make students feel valued in the library?

< [Click here to check out this calendar of events and celebrations from The ALA Office for brainstorming display ideas.](#) >

Co-Curating Book Displays

Inviting students to help set up a temporary display is an easy, low-pressure activity to engage various groups. Let the students select which resources will be put on display, design signage, and promote through their social media channels. Below are some questions to consider when brainstorming for potential student collaborations:

- Are there student clubs (e.g. film, anime, horticulture, etc.) who would appreciate the opportunity to share their passion with fellow students?
- Would student government members like to curate books about leadership or politics that influenced and inspired them?
- Can you think of organizations who want to provide a voice for overlooked, marginalized, or underrepresented populations?
- Do you have international students who may want to bring attention to their home country's authors, poets, and history?



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This can be a fun exercise for students to learn about library resources and feel engaged because they contributed to a public display. If they need help selecting a theme, consider events like “*Banned Book Week*” in September or “*Picture Book Month*” in November. Students may even have suggestions of books you should add to your collection as well!

Lights... Camera... Library!

With the recent drop in costs related to video creation and editing, **Library Video Contests** have emerged as a fun and affordable way to engage students. Academic libraries like [UC Irvine Libraries](#) have promoted this type of contest to increase student engagement and participation.

Some popular FYE takes on video contests include:

- Sharing a library success story
- Solving a research assignment mystery
- Travel guides to your favorite library spots

If your library lends out video equipment, all the better. If nothing else, you can point students toward library materials on topics like film, editing, and cinematography to inspire them. Make sure your contest guidelines focus students on highlighting the library space and resources and set clear limits on run time, file type, and participation.

Partnering With Teaching Faculty

When Credo conducted an informal booth survey at the 2017 ACRL Conference, [librarians spoke to their frustration](#) in attempts to collaborate with faculty. **71% said the biggest obstacle to engaging with faculty was, “faculty underestimating the value of the library.”** Below are some programming ideas to go beyond the conventional information literacy one-shots and course reserves. Some of these ideas may help faculty realize the value of the library.

Building Information Literacy Standards for FYE

Information Literacy is becoming an integral part of instruction in first year student courses. More and more, librarians are being asked to support IL initiatives. The case study in this chapter reviews how the libraries at Bryant University and Dickinson college changed the culture around information literacy at their institutions. In both cases, partnerships with campus departments were essential to their success. Starting communication with your teaching faculty can open the gates to a collaborative teaching environment.

Do your teaching faculty members know about information literacy standards, outcomes, and frameworks?

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Consider meeting with faculty members who teach FYE (especially in the English or Communication Studies departments) to brainstorm ways to introduce IL resources. This will make their lives easier—nobody wants to grade a pile of bad research papers—while raising awareness of library resources and services. You can provide additional support by working with them to build an information literacy rubric for assessing first year students. This can help build relationships with teaching faculty and enhance the library’s role as a credible teaching partner. Start small, using informal lunch meetings to discuss how information literacy can be incorporated in the FYE.

Organizing Research and Writing Awards

Undergraduate research is listed by the AAC&U as one of ten [“High Impact Educational Practices”](#) known to increase student retention and engagement. They suggest the excitement that comes with “working to answer important questions” is extremely beneficial to students. Recognizing outstanding student research is



a way to build upon this practice, while simultaneously raising awareness of the role your library plays in the research process.

Many libraries including [UC Berkeley Library](#), [University of Maryland Libraries](#), and [UCLA Library](#) have joined with faculty to host annual awards contests to recognize students with the best undergrad research papers. The key is combining research techniques and processes learned in the library with writing instruction in the classroom.

Tip: Have students include a reflection paper on how they defined their topic, conducted their research, and used library resources. This insight can help improve instruction, library services, and resources.

Inviting Poster Presentations and Conferences

Physical space is one of your library’s greatest assets—take advantage of it to entice faculty members to use the library during class time! Whether for student presentations or organizing a mini-conference, this resource can give faculty the opportunity to enhance students’ experiences. Hosting events in the library can entice community members or other students to visit the library. While tricky in terms of size and logistics, these activities demonstrate how the library supports faculty efforts.

Does your institution offer classes where students have to present in groups, particularly in the STEM fields?



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Joining Forces with Student Affairs

Student Affairs or Student Services is a great but often overlooked ally for librarians supporting the FYE. Coordinating with them can offer several opportunities to increase student engagement.

Partnering with Writing/Tutoring Centers

Writing and tutoring centers and the library's goals are often similar if not the same. Librarians and tutors working together to co-teach research skills is a great partnership to form! Expanding the library's role as a teaching partner can help introduce yourself and the library's services to a broader group of new students.

To further support these centers, libraries can organize "pop-up events" or "write-ins", where students can gather, write, and discuss what they're working on. If the writing/tutoring centers are not in the library, offering the library as a space to work with students, especially during midterms and finals, can help place students closer to the resources they need to write their best papers.

Serving as Advisors for At-Risk Students

There are many ways to encourage students and help them manage their academic journey. One approach is through Student Affairs departments like Fresno State's [SupportNet](#), "an early support program where faculty and staff can refer students who need academic and/or personal assistance." Librarians can serve as referrals to help students who are deeply struggling with their research papers and are embarrassed to ask their professors or peers for help. Providing support and counseling to these students supports Student Affairs' efforts, and promotes retention and success.

Helping Meet Students' Most Basic Needs

Last year *The Chronicle of Higher Education* published [an article](#) about college students who have to choose between buying food or textbooks. In it, they cite several surveys revealing staggering numbers of college students who are experiencing hunger. Many schools have introduced hunger and food security programs where students can receive free food without question.

What role can the library play with students who face socioeconomic challenges?

Libraries can provide access to food and alleviate textbook costs by:

- Working with Student Affairs to establish food banks
- Advocating for more OER content with teaching faculty
- Purchasing digital textbooks for multiple usage

Note: If your institution has an [upward bound program](#), you can coordinate with Student Services to ensure those students receive the support they need.



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Community Partnerships for Success

Don't be afraid to go off campus to look for partners who can help enrich your FYE initiative.

Public Library Collaborations

To foster a partnership with your public library, consider reaching out to offer a visit to your space and sign up eligible students and faculty for library cards. This is a win-win situation; they'll appreciate the opportunity to increase their membership, while students and faculty will benefit from learning about community programs and resources. This kind of introduction can present an opportunity for the public library to enlist students to help with literacy initiatives, technology services, and more.

Engaging with Other Universities, High Schools, or Community Colleges

Conferences like ALA and ACRL can provide great networking opportunities, but setting aside time to meet with outside institutions in your community is a great way to forge relationships and share ideas. You can organize short trips with your colleagues to visit surrounding institutions and learn about their students, ideas, and programs.

If you work at a large public university, have you spoken to librarians at the feeder schools and community colleges that often send students your way? Learning about students' needs and challenges can help you prepare and plan for the best way to support them at their current levels. Vice Versa, if you work for a community college, learning more about the local university library can help you prepare students who decide to transfer.

Do you know the history of your community? How can you uncover your history/stories?

Working Together to Build Community Archives

Many academic libraries, such as the [University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill](#), have organized events on oral histories and community archives to support and preserve local histories. Partnering with teaching faculty and their classes, along with a community group, is a creative way to organize and build an oral history or digital storytelling archive. Students can have roles too, serving as interviewers and transcribers. This activity requires several key partners including colleagues in special collections, community groups, and teaching faculty to ensure the activity is accurate; and stories can be used for future research.

Collaboration can be a fun and exciting way to reshape, reimagine, and reconfigure how we present our libraries. Our support for teaching, learning, and engagement can lead to stronger and more fruitful relationships with teaching faculty, student groups, community members, and other campus partners!

Collaborating Across Campus

Map out prospective partnerships to benefit your library and students. Click on each building to explore potential collaborative activities.



Teamwork Makes the Dream Work:

Bringing the Campus Together Around Information Literacy

Information literacy works best when it is applied across multiple settings and consistently to all students. That being said, this isn't something a library can do on its own. The following case study features libraries and librarians who have forged diverse partnerships to cultivate stronger IL skills across the first year experience.

Building Relationships for Consistent Instruction at Dickinson College



Dickinson College's Waidner-Spahr Library attributes the success of its IL program to the spirit of continuous and collegial collaboration between the library and its campus partners. In particular, they have focused on three strategies:

- 1 Teaching FYE faculty how to embed IL in their assignments
- 2 Working with administrators to optimize instruction
- 3 Using the library space to host events and entice new opportunities

Teaching the Teachers

In partnership with the Writing Center, the library co-sponsors a workshop for FYE faculty, during which they discuss best practices for writing and research. One concept they brought to the faculty was "stealth lessons" in IL. For example, early in the semester students were required to read a scholarly article and answer questions about it. The catch was students had to retrieve the article on their own (after reading instructions or watching an online tutorial), rather than having it handed to them. This simple change in pedagogy has supported the library and helped students by acclimating them to the library's website, providing hands on research experience, and allowing librarians to focus on more advanced topics during in-class sessions.



Reaching Out to Administrators to Enhance Learning

With academic integrity being of the utmost importance to the college, the Waidner-Spahr Library was asked to work with the Provost's office to teach academic integrity and plagiarism avoidance via an online tutorial required of all new students. Following this successful engagement, the library teamed up with Academic Advising to give remedial help and additional support to struggling students. Some other relationships that have yielded meaningful results for the library include:

- **Academic Support Offices:** working to improve instructional librarians' teaching styles and learning spaces to better accommodate all students
- **Race and Ethnicity Center:** helping staff members recognize and avoid implicit bias
- **Disability Services:** broadening accessibility of spaces and resources for all users

Teamwork Makes the Dream Work:

Bringing the Campus Together Around Information Literacy

A Hub for Collaboration

The library at Dickinson is a hub where student success across academic divisions and extracurricular activities is highlighted, helping the building function as an important gathering space. Students from all class levels can participate in library-sponsored events such as awards ceremonies, poetry readings, internship panels, and art displays. These outreach efforts maximize student exposure to library services while keeping the library staff engaged with the community.

When surveyed about the effectiveness of library instruction in the First Year Seminar, **95% of faculty reported that students applied some or all IL skills to the extent expected.**

Library Leadership: Actively the FYE at Bryant University



Bryant
UNIVERSITY

Bryant University is known for its rigorous academic programs, first year student experience, emphasis on students problem-solving in creative ways, and a campus-wide focus on student success. The Douglas and Judith Krupp Library embraces this with its own culture of flexibility, experimentation, and collaboration.

Innovating Within the Library and With Campus Departments

In 2012, Bryant University launched the First-Year Gateway Program. When the library was chosen to help identify the skills deemed most important for graduates, librarians advocated for IL to be included as one of the program's five key learning outcomes. This proved an essential framework for what came next. The library helped create a Writing Workshop for all first year students, establishing an embedded librarian in each section of the course, and enabling the library to see all first year students within the course.

Forging Partnerships for Student Success

Bryant developed its summer bridge course with input from the Associate Director of Library Services, an E-learning specialist, and subject matter experts from Undergraduate Advising and the Academic Center for Excellence. The goal was to build an engaging online experience that would help transition incoming students through issues such as university jargon, navigating the learning management system, joining a scholarly community, and more. As the program has progressed, different campus groups have been included to provide continual assessment, improvements, and updates.

Students have reported feeling more knowledgeable, engaged, and at ease with their transition after taking the course.

When the library extends its reach across campus, everybody wins. Faculty learn about more and better resources for their discipline; students become more integrated into the academic community while building essential IL skills; and institutional goals like retention, graduation, and employability all benefit too.



Continue the Conversation

Interested in learning more about what your peers are working on? Fill out a quick survey below to find out more!

See results in real time with this quick, live-results [survey](#).

 Keep the conversation going using the Twitter hashtag [#LibraryFYE!](#)

Additional Resources

Looking for more helpful tips and tricks? Here are some additional viewing and reading materials to help you collaborate with different departments at your institution.

- [Collaborative Librarianship](#): *This quarterly journal came to fruition around the scholarship of collaboration and sharing of resources and expertise within and between libraries.*
- [Collaborating with Student Affairs for Student Success](#) by Ray Pun: *Tips for partnering with Student Affairs in order to increase outreach and engagement with first year students.*
- [Agents of Change: Librarians Innovating in the FYE Space](#): *FYE Innovation Award winners Laura Kohl of Bryant University and Chris Bombaro of Dickinson College discuss how they partnered with individuals and departments to implement effective FYE programming, and how you can replicate their efforts.*
- [Building Successful Faculty Engagement Programs](#): *Librarians from three different institutions talk about how they've engaged faculty for better partnerships and improved student outcomes.*
- [A Culture of Collaboration: Library Innovation in the FYE at Bryant University](#) by Laura Kohl: *How librarians were able to assume leadership positions and advocate for information literacy in the FYE.*
- [It Takes a Campus: Successful Collaboration Strategies for Teaching Information Literacy](#) by Chris Bombaro: *How Dickinson College's legacy of cross campus collaboration has helped to implement consistent and comprehensive information literacy programs.*
- [Credo in Action: Faculty Collaboration](#) by Credo: *Quotes and stories from academic librarians about the ways in which Credo supports their collaboration efforts with teaching faculty.*
- [Overcoming Roadblocks To Faculty Collaboration: Librarian Solutions](#) by Credo: *Condensed notes from an ACRL conference session where librarians spoke up about challenges with faculty collaboration and offered tips based on their own experiences.*

