Building a Successful Liaison Program From the Ground Up
Karen Stanley Grigg, Science Liaison Librarian
University of North Carolina at Greensboro Library and Archives

Challenge:
Newly created Science Liaison Librarian position. Instruction and Outreach must be built from the bottom up. Departments had assigned library staff who already had full time positions outside the department, so challenging for them to embed.

Where to start?

First steps:
• Looked at instruction stats and talked to librarians who interacted with departments. Identified “champion” from each department- started there. Not always “official rep” or department head.
• Scheduled meeting with “power users”, library faculty rep, and department head, if possible
• Immediately requested time in faculty meetings
• Curriculum mapping. Looked for writing intensive courses. Cold called, or asked for introductions
• Tried to think like a marketer. Asked “When can I schedule a library instruction session this semester?, not “Do you want instruction?”
• Attended lectures, events, anywhere faculty might be present
• Community engagement- looked for volunteer opportunities

New position, so some departmental relationships must be built from scratch.

Advantage- UNCG Libraries offers outside the box services
• Citation Management Tools
• Mobile apps
• Visualization tools
• Course management software
• Instructional design
• Data Management Services
• Open Textbook Initiatives
• Scholarly Communication
• Help with repository

Building a following with students
• Individual consultations promoted and YouCanBookMe widget on all Libguides that links to calendar
• Individual chat queue
• Embedded instruction, offer to create research assignments
• Offer special tailored workshops- EndNote, Zotero, SciFinder Scholar, etc.
• Custom Libguides for all departments and every course session delivered.
• Teaching in departments, if possible- I will be teaching ENV 300 this Fall.

Nurturing Faculty relationships
• Requested time in faculty meetings twice a year.
• Bring in guest speakers on topics such as Library Grants to faculty, Scholarly Communication, Repository
• Participating in HHMI Grant (application in progress) with Biology Department
• Attending tenure recognition ceremony each year and other events
• Keeping track of departmental changes. One department head was not receptive. The next one was. I started marketing immediately
• If a faculty member turns you down for a class and someone else teaches it, offer again
• Delivered/Market faculty-focused workshops on tools like Zotero and Scopus
• Product demos, such as Mendeley

Caution!
Slow build at first- tempting to overmarket! May have “too many takers” all at once. Try piloting services, one department at a time.

Patience! Rome wasn’t built in a day. You will be building on successes., Accept that it may take a few years to fully integrate, and some departments and faculty will not be interested.