

The Convergence of Learning Through Theory and Practice

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Motivations

We have complementary mission statements:

The LIS Department (DLIS) has a mission of educating future LIS professionals

The UNCG Department of Library and Information Studies (LIS) connects people, libraries, and information through research, teaching, and service to enrich living and working in a global environment.

The University Libraries (UL) has many work/study opportunities for LIS students

UL advance and support learning, research and service at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro and throughout the state of North Carolina.

Real Learning Connections

- Stipend paid by UL
- Tuition subsidy paid by DLIS
- Projects were proposed by various departments in the Libraries and only some were funded
- Students chosen by LIS Faculty and Chair and Libraries Assistant Dean and Dean in consultation with project librarians.
- Learning Outcomes Established:
 - UL - Will benefit from research into comparable projects that the student will complete during each phase
 - UL - Will be exposed to theoretical material being taught in course
 - DLIS - Will see practical examination of theoretical concepts related to digitization and metadata for a digital project
 - DLIS - Will have the opportunity to examine issues of interdepartmental collaboration and communication.

Professional Support

ALA Accreditation

- Program presentation on services/resources
- UL Dean on Advisory Committee
- Site visit influences, DE librarian support
- Multiple partnerships and collaborations
- Relevancy and currency of curriculum as related to current practice

ACRL, ALA and NCLA

- Professional development and collaborative opportunities
- Collaboration cited in ACRL Excellence in Academic Library Program
- Open discussion of standards and policies that impact profession
- State level representation and involvement by both units together

Collaborative Learning

University Libraries

- Students learn practical application of librarianship skills
- Librarians learn about trends and technologies impacting libraries today

Dept of Library and Information Science

- Students learn theory, technical overview and historical reasoning behind the values of librarianship
- Faculty learn how it is being applied

Collaborative Examples



Current Professional Environment

Student perceptions (Cherry, Duff, Singh and Freund, 2011):

- Greater emphasis on balance between practice and theory
- Realistic expectations of post graduate professional work
- Emphasis on latest trends in technology and service oriented activities
- Desire for more collaborative or joint programs/projects

Paradigm Shift (Jain, 2013)

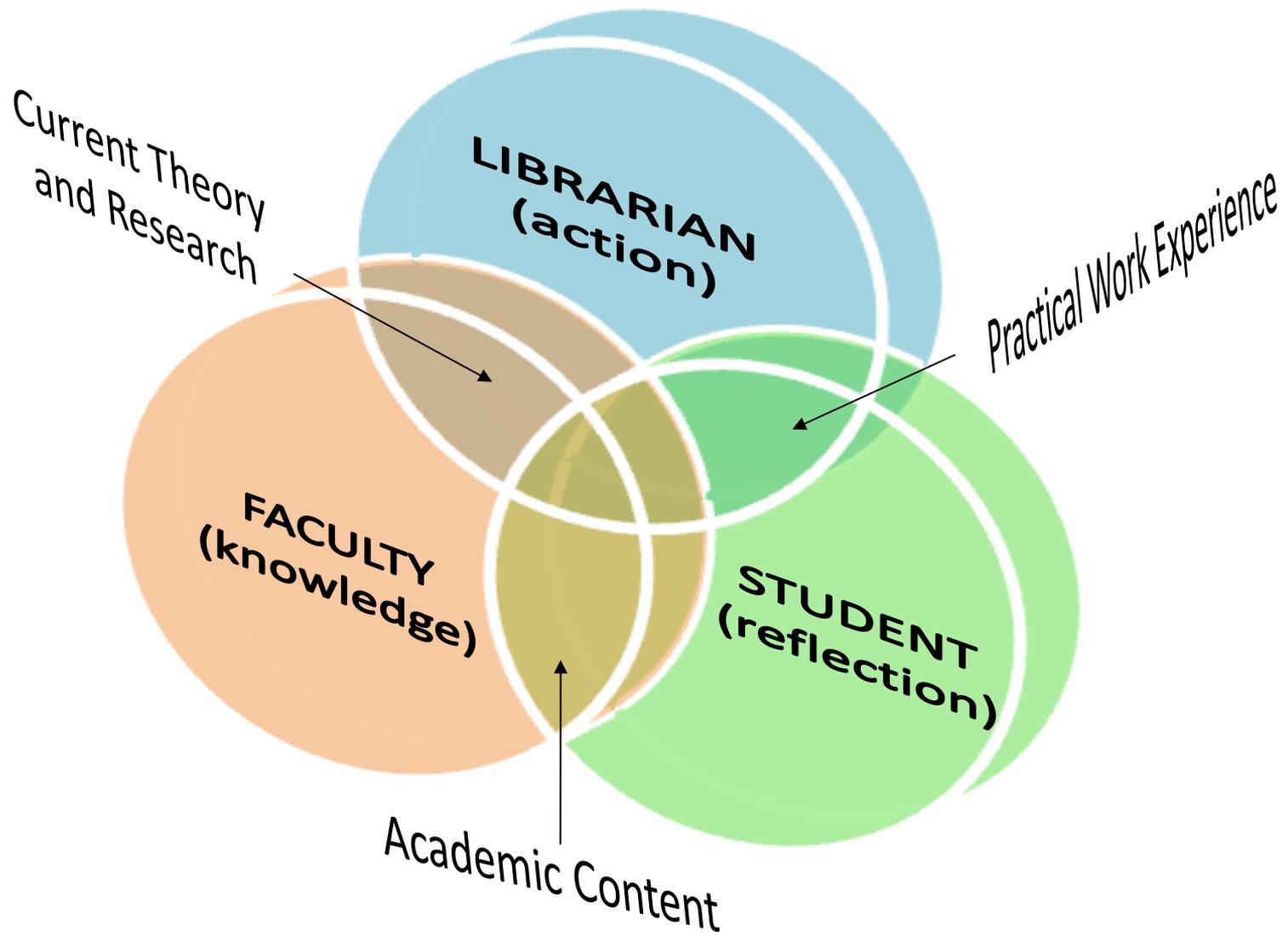
- Key paradigm shift in academic librarianship roles and responsibilities
- Librarianship needs to be a dynamic profession
- Blended librarians, educational partners
- Institutional partners critical for success

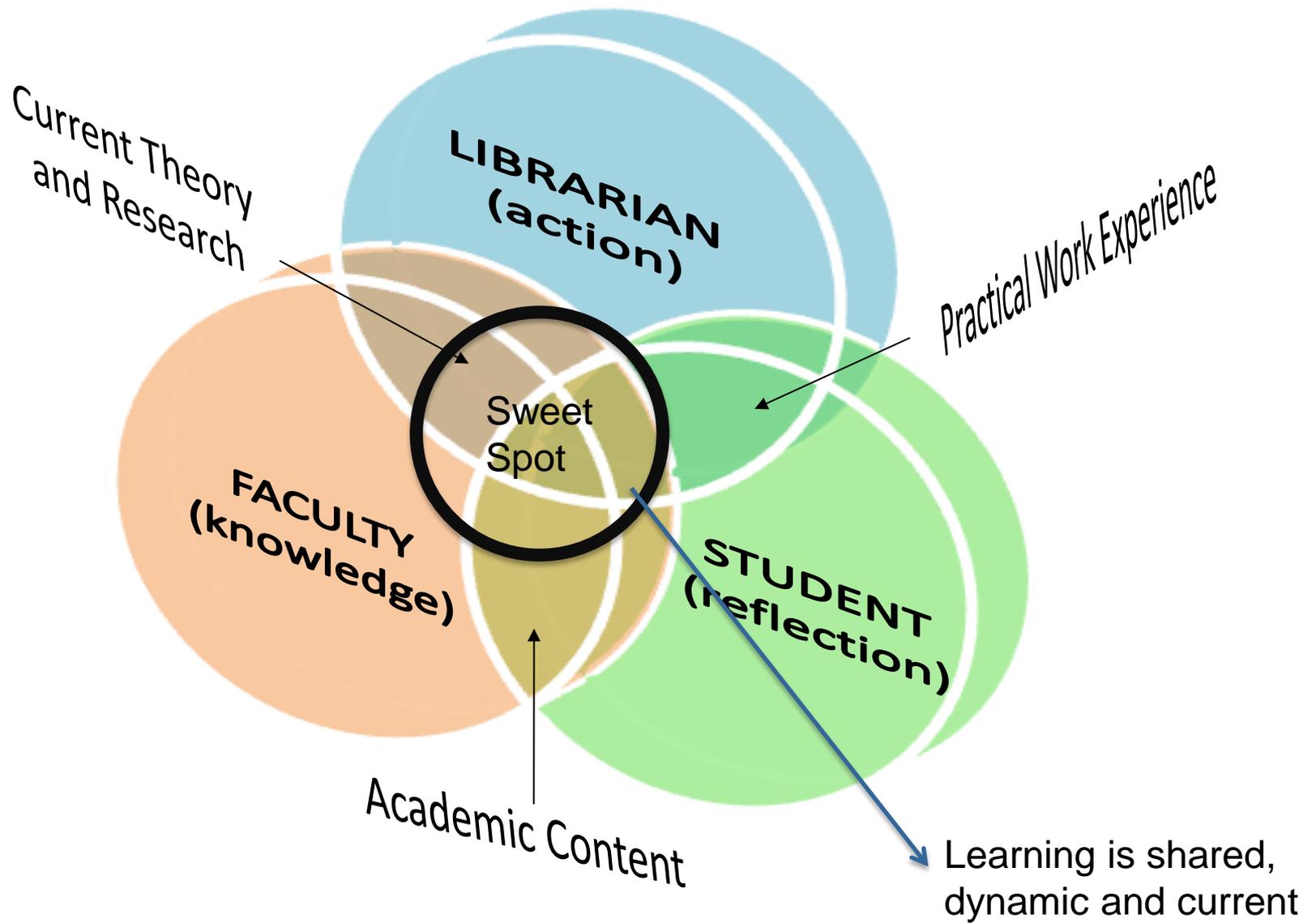
Sacchanand's 3 PC Strategies (2012)

- **Policy, People, Process**
 - Policy – shared goals and objectives sanctioned by larger higher education institution
 - People – congenial attributes and atmosphere of trust between units
 - Process – coordinated level field for interaction that is sensitive to the organizational culture
- **Communication, Commitment, Credibility**
 - Communication – open forum for sharing of knowledge within both formal and informal venues
 - Commitment – approach collaborative projects with commitment for sharing resources, responsibilities as well as benefits
 - Credibility – by developing trust through resource and information sharing, credibility becomes cornerstone of collaborative efforts

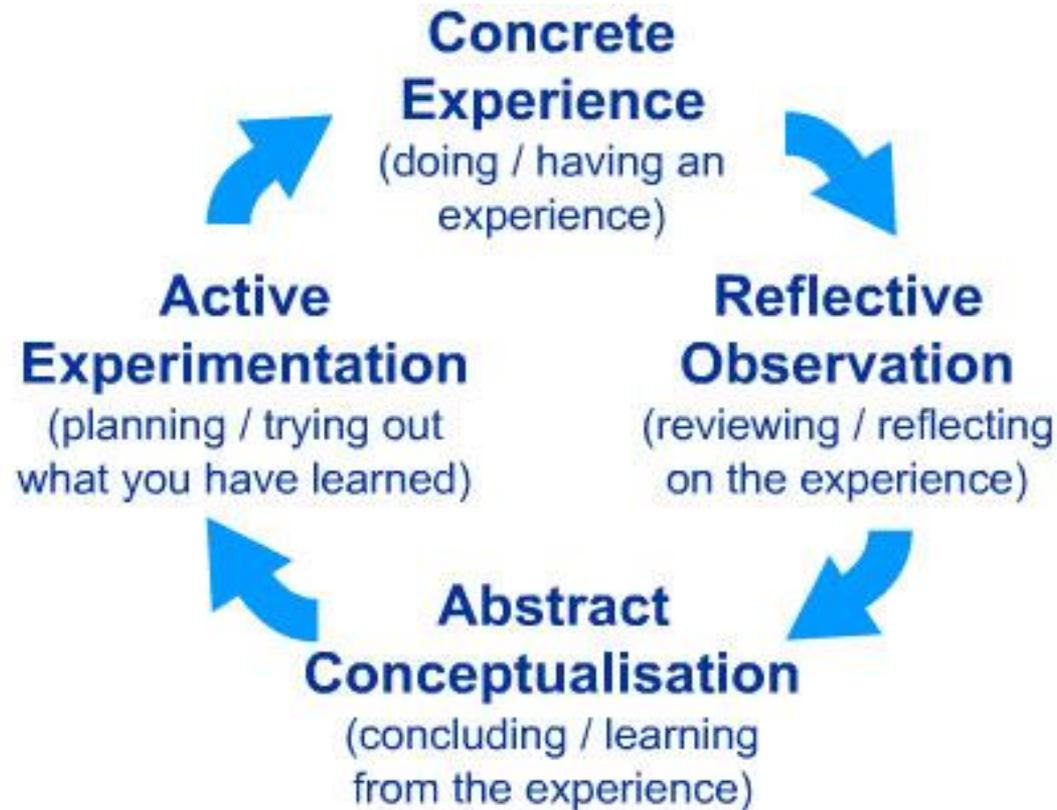
Experiential Learning: Considerations

- Can collaborative activities benefit the theory and practice elements for faculty members and practicing librarians thru shared learning?
- Creating meaning via direct activities
- Learning through meta-reflection and discussion
- Facilitating learning through experience and education
- How is this related to community engagement for the larger institution?

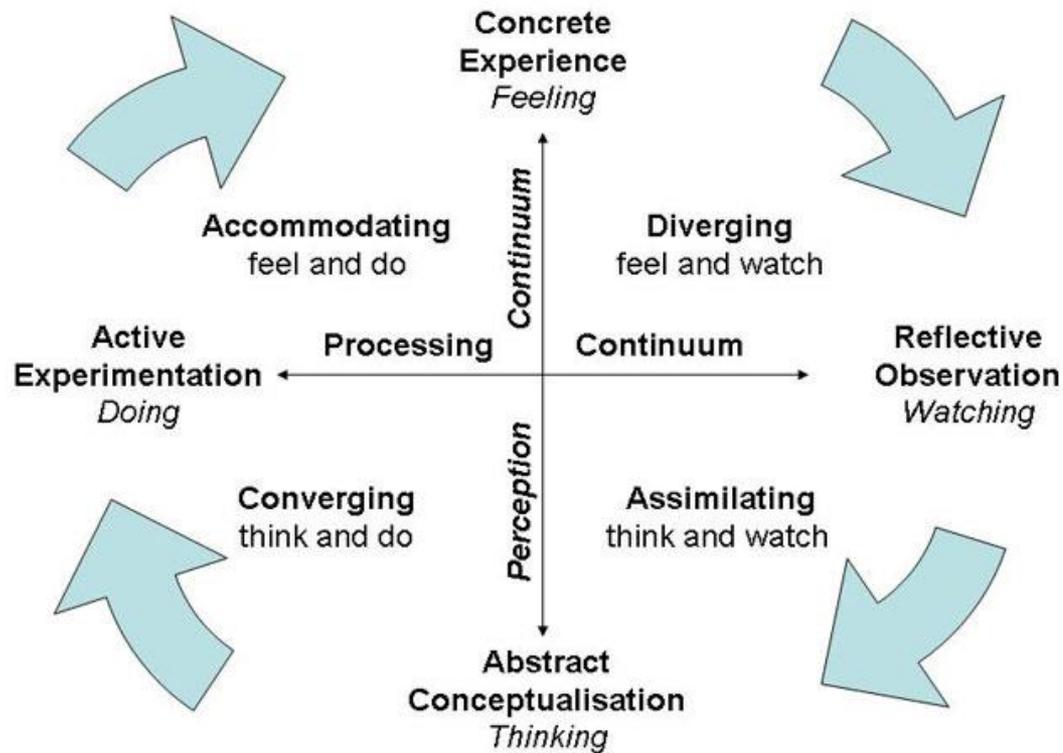




Experiential Learning Cycle



Learning Styles



Institutional Learning Outcomes

- For UL:
 - Renewal of learned theoretical concepts not used since academy
 - Bridges for expanding current practices
 - Insights into efficiencies and “better” practices
- For DLIS
 - Awareness of applicability or limitations of theory
 - Renewal and relevance of curriculum
 - Provides insights for new research questions to be pursued

Student Learning Outcomes

(associated with selected collaborations)

MLIS Student Learning Outcomes	Primary	Secondary
1. The student assesses the philosophy, principles, and ethics of the library and information field.	RLC	Lecture
2. The student identifies, evaluates, conducts and applies current research and thought in library and information studies and in other fields.	RLC	Lecture
3. The student applies and values user education principles in the teaching of information literacy.	RLC	Lecture
4. The student designs services to meet the information needs of all users and communities.	RLC, ACE	Lecture
5. The student engages in professional development and service and identifies specializations and related professional organizations as relevant to individual interests.	ACE	Lecture
6. The student applies appropriate technology for effective information services.	RLC	Lecture
7. The student applies advocacy, marketing, and communication principles for entrepreneurial leadership.	ACE	Lecture
8. The student effectively collaborates for the achievement of individual, organizational, professional, and societal goals.	RLC	Lecture

Student Success Driven Goals

- Prepares students for successful professional careers through programs of exceptional quality that integrate theory with practical experience.
- Pioneer in the case-study method of instruction, recognized for scholar-practitioner faculty who bring real world problems and events into the classroom.

Significance

- Internships lead to reported gains in retention and graduation (Gregory, 1990).
- Need to evaluate the kinds of learning outcomes attained, impact on personal and cognitive development (Kerka, 1990).

Outcomes

- Are what assessment is designed to measure.
- Learning outcomes best measured at the program level.
- Clear and concise measures on which the student will be evaluated.
- Measures should include methodology to get there.
- Specific goals are better than “do your best”.

Questions and Issues

- To understand more about the internship experiences of students, we collected data to examine what happens in the internship experience.
- We wanted to understand: What constitutes a quality internship experience?

Study Conducted

- To examine the perspectives that students have about their internship experiences.
- To identify methods of evaluating students' academic performance as it relates to their internship experiences.
- Overview of Study

Research Questions

- What relationships exist between the content students studied in courses and the work students performed in their internships?
- How do students believe they should be academically-evaluated for the work they do during an internship?

Research Questions

- What information (i.e., grading, work expectations, competencies) are students provided before they begin their experience?
- What are the most significant factors related to learning that students experience while they are working?

Outcomes

- **Participants reported that the internship experience should be an opportunity to apply concepts from the classroom to the work setting; however, not every internship opportunity allowed students to apply what they had learned.**
- **Participants reported various learning experiences that were related to professionalism.**

Outcomes con't

- **Participants exhibited a sense of “cognitive complexity” in their interviews, which may have been related to the processes of the internship experience, and not necessarily to the content of the experience.**

The Case for Apprenticeship

- Mode of Learning
 - Active and interdependent engagement
 - Construing from experience, creating value
 - Share in remaking of occupational attributes
 - Person-dependent learning
- Model of education
 - Processes for creating the learning opportunities

Practice Theory

- Practice theory argues that everyday actions are consequential in producing the structural contours of social life
- Practices produce organizational reality
- Explains emergent constitution of socio-material world through micro-dynamics of everyday life

-Feldman & Orlikowski

Internship Objectives

- I gained skills in the job search process, including how to write an effective resume, interview successfully, and research employers.
- I had the opportunity to test and examine my ideas and expectations about my chosen career field.
- I gained confidence in my ability to prioritize work, meet deadlines, and make decisions in the work place.
- I improved my ability to manage time effectively.

Librarians as Practitioners

- More than task driven
- Mentors for new professionals
- Shared knowledge over new theoretical approaches
- Social engagement with departments, committee assignments, etc.
- Project/goal based

Librarians/Staff as Learners

LIS/Students

- Experiential learning through internships, etc., very task oriented
- Need for reflection on complex problems per Schon
- Valued as colleague not seen as subordinate

Incumbent/Practitioners

- Traditional mindsets and skills routed in time
- Burnout excludes learning new skills
- Willing to exchange ideas, experiment with new skills, reflect on optional methods

Silos of Individual Activities

- Limited skills
- Focused knowledge
- Narrow benefits
- Economically unsustainable

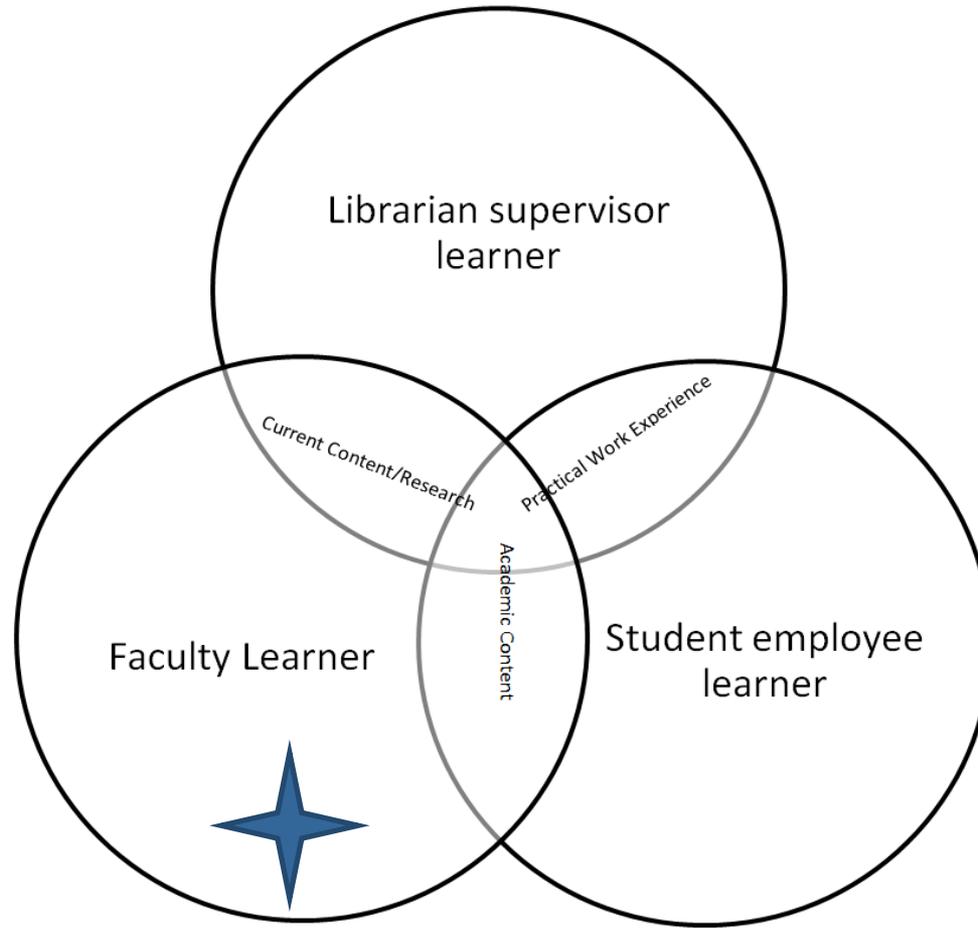


Shared Journeys

- Environmental scan
- Strategic planning
- Benefits of collaboration
- Rewards of convergence



Basic Model



Faculty Learner

Learning Goals:

- A “special collection” in an academic archive
- Role of Oral Histories in academic archives
- Oral Histories as digital objects (transcription, abstracting, tagging)
- Creation of a digital project – conception through implementation in ContentDM
- Academic library assessment activities

Examples of Lessons to be Applied for consideration in curriculum

- From project feedback:
 - Discuss oral histories as potential objects in a digital collection
 - Copyright issues with music and the identification of rights-holders
 - Techniques for batch uploading into ContentDM
 - Assessing space for collections
 - Importance of policy statements
 - Roles of the archivist/librarian/curator
 - Incorporating more alternative formats

Credit-earning Experiences for Students

- Course related projects
- Service Learning I
- Internships
- Practica
- Independent Study Opportunities
- Thesis Projects
- Other considerations:
 - MOU's
 - Learning Objectives
 - Solving Issues

Considerations

- Convergence is about a healthy organization
- It should be part of a strategic purpose
- Its emotional, individuals like their specialization
- Question of individual differentiation vs. embracing benefits of convergence

Experiential Learning

- Creating meaning in learning via direct activities
- Learning through reflection on learning
- Engages learner at a more personal level
- Creating an experience where learning can be facilitated

"For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them." -- Aristotle

David Kolb on Experiential Learning

- Learner must
 - be willing to be actively involved in the experience;
 - be able to reflect on the experience;
 - possess and use analytical skills to conceptualize the experience; and
 - possess decision making and problem solving skills in order to use the new ideas gained from the experience.

Donald Schön

- "In some fields, the question of professional artistry has come up in the context of continuing education. Educators ask how mature professionals can be helped to renew themselves so as to avoid 'burnout,' how they can be helped to build their repertoires of skills and understandings on a continuing basis." p. 15
- "In the terrain of professional practice, applied science and research-based technique occupy a critically important though limited territory, bounded on several sides by artistry." p. 13

Critical Reflection – DEAL Model

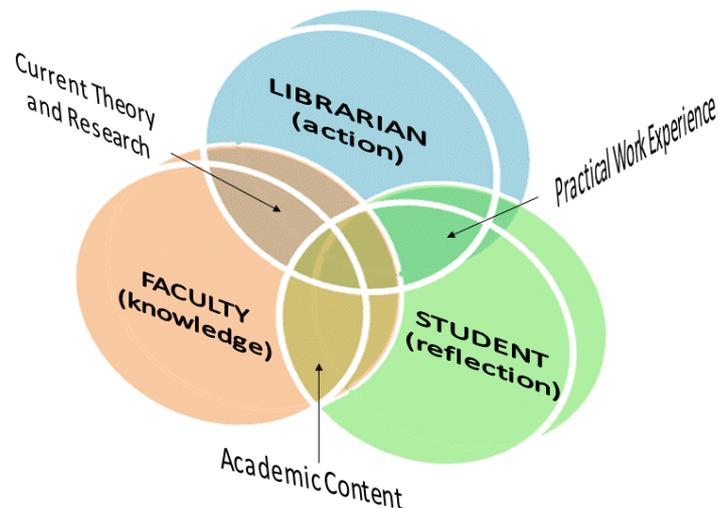
- Describe Experience Objectively
 - Big picture, significant experiences
- Examine from personal perspective
 - Feeling generated
 - Past experiences, expectations, bias
 - Personal skills, strengths and weaknesses
- Learning
 - What was learned and how
 - What was important and why * need reference

Real Learning Connections

Projects that Matter

Faculty gains:

- Modification of curriculum
- Reconnection with practitioner functions
- Scholarships generated
- Adjunct expertise involved



Librarian Gains:

- Refresh skills
- Learn new technologies
- Collaborative partners
- Refresh of broader professional view

Student Gains:

- Presentation/publishing opportunities
- Committee work in practice
- Professional exposure
- Real application of skills

Academic Year	2010-11		2011-12			2012-13			2013-14			2014-15			2015-16		
Librarian Supervisor Department	Special Collections University Archives	Electronic Resources and Information Technology	Special Collections University Archives	Electronic Resources and Information Technology*	Administration	Special Collections University Archives	Digital Media Commons	Cataloging and Technical Services (2)	Digital Media Commons	Special Collections	Reference	Electronic Resources and Information Technology	Special Collections and University Archives	Reference and Instruction	Access Services	Reference, Outreach and Instruction	Administration
Projects	University archive processing and reference	Instructional Technology Toolkit for librarians	Oral History Collection	Digital Collection on Cello Music	Assessment Activities	Arranging artifact collection	Establishment of a new service	Instituting new ILS	Incorporating Digital Literacy into Instructional Design	North Carolina Lit Map	Social Media	Web Usability Study	Community Outreach through Special Collections	Social Media	Multimedia Training	Information Literacy	Organizational Engagement
Academic Course Match	Independent Study	LIS 635 Media Production Services for Library Programs	Independent Study	LIS 644 Digital Collections	LIS 650 Library Management	LIS 640 Organizing Library Collections	LIS 635 Media Production Services for Library Programs	LIS 640 Organizing Library Collections	LIS 635 Media Production Services	LIS 640 Organizing Library Collections	LIS 620 Reference Services	LIS 636 Web Production Usability	LIS 688 Archives Management	LIS 620 Information Resources	LIS 600 Foundations	LIS 620 Reference Resources	LIS 636 Management
Faculty Participant Focus	Collection Management	Information Sources and Services	Oral History in Academic Libraries	Digital Collections	Assessment in Academic Libraries	Revised course focusing more broadly on GLAM institutions	Implications of Digital Media Commons for LIS education	Discovery systems and their impact on library workflows	Digital Literacy into the Curriculum	Developing a Digital Collection	Understanding social media use in libraries	Process of study and use of results	Application of materials into K-12 curriculum	Impact and presence of social media for libraries	Paraprofessional training activities and needs	Scope of LI training on library instruction	Use of librarian expertise as resource

Conclusions

- Enhanced learning for students
 - Course design to incorporate experiential learning that complement academic theory
 - Relate curriculum to practical aspects of related occupations
- Design learning outcomes for practitioner mentors
- Create feedback cycle to bring back to curriculum development real needs

Questions??????

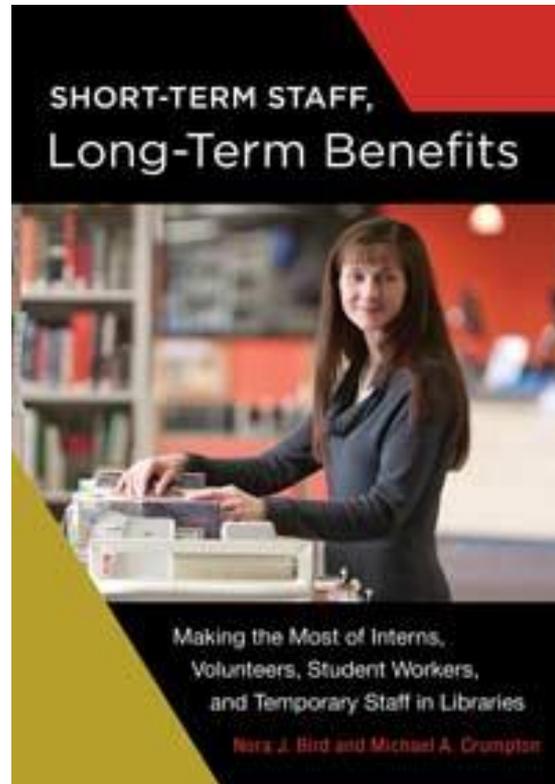
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More to Come.....



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