EMBEDDED PEER INQUIRY SPECIALISTS: A Gateway to Information Literacy

University of California, Los Angeles
Halló!

Our Team

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Freshman Clusters at UCLA

▷ Year-long interdisciplinary courses
  ○ Biotechnology and Society
  ○ Neverending stories: Perspectives on Myth
  ○ Mind over Matter: History, Science, and Philosophy of the Brain
  ○ Frontiers of Human Aging
  ○ Sex, Biology, and Society

▷ 2,000 students (30% of the freshman class) enroll in a Cluster
Peer Inquiry Specialists

- Undergraduate students trained in research methods and library resources
- Increase library reach and impact
- Relatable and approachable to peers
- Allow librarians to focus on classroom instruction, mentoring, and faculty collaboration
- Learn research and leadership skills
Five Cluster “alums” were chosen by faculty to be Embedded Inquiry Specialists

Job duties:
▷ Attend lecture & community activities
▷ Lead library orientations
▷ Hold office hours in the library
▷ Provide research and writing consultations
▷ Help students with lecture material and readings
▷ Assist with library instruction sessions
Campus Partners: Responsibilities

Office of Instructional Development
- Salaries for Inquiry Specialists
- Program assessment

Faculty & Teaching Assistants
- Inquiry Specialists included in meetings and social events
-collaborate with librarian liaison to create a work plan for Inquiry Specialist
- Provide 5 grading points on syllabus for library assignments

UCLA Library
- Hiring, training, supervision
- Space and technology for consultations and office hours
- Data collection
- Grading of library assignments

Program Assessment

- Tracking Service Usage
- Pre- and Post- Quiz Scores
- Course Evaluations
- Inquiry Specialists’ Reflections
- Student Survey
- Faculty/TA Feedback
RESULTS
830 students (15% of the freshman class) attended a library orientation

- The Inquiry Specialists led most of the orientations, helping the library reach more students than in previous years
- 57 orientations were provided

Ann and Austin leading a discussion about scholarly and popular sources during a library orientation.
20% of students sought help outside of class time.
Led 249 consultations that served 433 students.
What did students seek help for?

Topics covered with InqSpecs (N=141, responses=361*)
Students can select all that apply, numbers will total more than 100%

UCLA Center for Educational Assessment
What did students seek help for?

Topics covered InqSpecs (N=141, responses=361*) compared to TAs (N=210, responses=663*) and Librarians (N=37, responses=498)
Students can select all that apply, numbers will total more than 100%
Quotes from Students

“If I didn’t go see Reed, I would have failed this course.”
Quotes from Students

“I didn’t go see him.... Maybe if I had, it would have helped.”
Additional Results

**Student Survey**
68% of students said the Inquiry Specialists were “Very Helpful” (36%) or “Helpful” (34%)

**Course Evaluations**
Students in Clusters with an Inquiry Specialist rated their improvement in library and research skills 25% and 19% higher, respectfully, than students in Clusters without an Inquiry Specialist

**Pre- and Post Quiz Scores**
On average, students’ scores on the post-assessment quiz were 9% higher than at the start of the year (88% in Spring vs. 79% in Fall)
…students seemed most confused when differentiating between scholarly and popular resources and between primary and secondary sources. They also struggled with bibliographies and in-text citations.”

- Austin, GE M1: Food and Environment
Reflections from Inquiry Specialists

“I honestly cannot emphasize enough how much I think this service is doing for the UCLA first year community. It not only brings a wealth of knowledge and a human connection to many first years and helps ease their concerns and insecurities; it also is (from my perspective at least) extremely gratifying for the inquiry specialists themselves.”

- Reed, GE 73: Mind over Matter: History, Science, and Philosophy of the Brain
WHAT'S NEXT?
Next Steps

**Continue to Assess**
Analyze feedback from teaching assistants, faculty, and librarians
Merge student survey responses with institutional data

**Expand and Refine Program**
Seek funding to expand program to all 10 Clusters (2,000 students, 30% of freshman class)
Explore expanding to other large General Education courses
Continue to improve training for Inquiry Specialists and documentation of their work
Increase communication and collaboration with teaching assistants
Credits

▷ Funding for the Embedded Inquiry Specialist Program and travel to this conference was provided by the Office of Instructional Development and the UCLA Library.

▷ Presentation template by SlidesCarnival
Takk Fyrir

Any questions?

Slides & contact information:
http://tinyurl.com/EmbeddedInquirySpecialists