**IGALSIS Midwinter Virtual Meeting**

2/4/20

Hosts:

Olga Hart

Katy Webb

Minutes: Meredith Knoff

Number of participants: 23

**Agenda**

[Link to recording](https://youtu.be/lxwnLM66nGw)

1. What is most exciting/interesting about the role academic libraries play for international students?
   1. Olga: Libraries fulfill a non-academic need, a home away from home. It’s a place for people to meet and connect with others. American academic libraries can vary greatly from their home culture
   2. Jennifer: the library can provide a bridge between faculty and students
   3. Aditi: a safe space to meet
   4. Brett: A place to get assistance for academic needs
   5. Stephanie: provide a trusted contact for assistance
   6. Kathleen: We are the people they feel comfortable asking for help
2. Deborah West asked the question: do many libraries provide textbooks
   1. Stephanie: a professor has shared that some students from China and India expect tuitions be included in tuition
   2. Jacqueline: I work at a small private university. We do have a small (about 80) textbooks-on-reserve section. I purchase textbooks for our core classes and request donations from students at the end of the semesters which is how I get most of those textbooks.
   3. Several faculty members are moving to open access items to reduce reliance on bought textbooks
   4. Robin: work for a community college that is connected to the City University of New York. We buy textbooks for reserve
   5. Leila: We have a ESL collection for these students and faculty who teach ESL uses the space for their teaching
   6. Helene: recent novels, graphic novels, movies we have acquired in foreign languages for instance. A staff member changes the displays regularly.
   7. Jennifer: We purchase some pleasure reading materials from some of the countries our students come from. These are displayed at times
3. Olga brought up Aditi’s comment about libraries being safe spaces
   1. Olga: We have prayer rooms in the library
   2. Katy: Duke University has a diversity statement
   3. Aditi: We have an international commons that allows students to use the space to study and they are hosting a book display. We have themes every month for the display) to inform students about the culture, history, current events, etc. Could be country based, religion, and also an effort to let them learn about Canada
   4. Kathleen: Our Science Library also has the office of international education and classrooms for intensive English learning. So, the students naturally gravitate to this building.
   5. Diane: We make a concerted effort to hire int'l students; they bring a lot to the library and we love them!
4. What are some of the most significant challenges international students face?  How can the library help them surmount those challenges?
   1. Olga: Non-academic challenges like visa requirements. They’ve hosted workshops with international services to raise awareness of resources.
   2. Helene: Challenge: very specific English vocabulary for things (think "call number" for instance) students may not be familiar with.
   3. Deborah Mixed teaching styles/expectations depending on profs.
   4. Kathleen: Citations are a challenge
   5. Jennifer: One need students have is getting all their paperwork lined up (e.g. getting health insurance, driver's licence). Our library helps with scanning documents and navigating the government websites/uploaders
   6. Helene: Challenge: working over the summer. Huge restrictions. At my university we now have graduate internship program which has enabled us to hire grad students who had no summer teaching to work on campus and make money.
   7. Katy: I teach for ESL students who are conditionally in the university but need to bring up TOEFL. I teach them about copyright which varies widely between countries.
   8. Stephanie: My previous experience w/international students was specific to working with a refugees at a small liberal arts college. In hindsight, some would coaching on how to work with/relate to these students would have been very helpful.
   9. Jennifer: Another challenge is that faculty have hidden curriculum, and may not provide examples of documents that students are expected to produce. Then faculty may be disappointed by what they receive, but students are trying to guess what that is
5. Stephanie: Even after TOEFL, how do your libraries/colleges support ELL students? I find some have passed the TOEFL, but reading and analyzing English language texts can be very challenging and take them much longer than native speakers.
   1. Olga: Glad we’ve progress to talk about whose role this is. Writing centers have limited expertise and this can depend on the discipline. Plagiarism for example can depend heavily on the subject. Sciences for example and copyright differences are pronounced here. Raising these concerns at workshops for faculty to raise the questions to faculty to consider as they’re creating class content. Faculty beginning to come around to this. Some of these issues aren’t limited to international students. Things like reading academic texts is not necessarily easy for
   2. Stephanie: Expressing their opinions and thought processes in English is very different from returning a verbatim answer from a text book.
6. What are the most common or best ways for the library to reach international students?
   1. Crystal: Tutorial videos and LibGuides
   2. Olga: orientation sessions that highlight how to find librarians. Teach a lot of workshops. Teach plagiarism prevention in workshops. Events about cultural awareness. Include students in organizing these events. Including international student workers to create and market these events.
   3. Aditit: We created introductory help videos in different languages
   4. Katy: orientation and intro to library for ESL students that focus on language learning resources. Includes leisure reading like magazines, etc., as well as functions in databases that read articles aloud. Campus resources that partner students with domestic faculty staff, students. Doesn’t have to be framed around academic library resources.
   5. Jennifer: Working with the international education department and writing centre
   6. Aimee: We offer a couple of different programs jointly with our Office of International Programs & Research along with the Libraries such as a Welcome at the start of the academic year, Cultural Conversations each quarter with an international speaker, celebrations of different holidays and traditions throughout the year, regular discussions of what is going on in the world, international student orientation, instruction sessions throughout the year.
      1. Olga: Can you share some sample topics or speakers for the conversations.
         1. Aimee: Cultural conversations bring people in from the community who’ve lived in multiples places or are international scholars. They will share what they’re researching. Can also be personal stories about their experiences in life and academia. One specifically talked about her experience in education as queer woman in Mexico and pursuing education in the US. A second was born in Italy, raised in France, educated in Colombia, and now works in the US. He shared all the traditions he experienced before working in Washing ton State while living in Nevada. Aimee shared that there is a website that gives guidelines for how to host these.
         2. We started our Cultural Conversations based on ones from the City of Bellevue, WA. See https://bellevuewa.gov/city-government/departments/community-development/neighborhoods/building-community/cultural-conversations
7. Deborah: Anyone get push back from profs who want full immersion?
   1. Meaning full immersion in English
   2. Olga: our international office has reinforced this, i.e., wants students to be English only
   3. Katy: started Spanish language orientation
8. What are the biggest challenges for librarians seeking to reach international students?
   1. Katy: we have a decentralized campus and international students don’t live on campus. Don’t know if we’re meeting their needs and how do we reach them.
   2. Olga: Teach cultural competencies to people who work with international students. Do this through workshops.
   3. Katy: Problems with printing instructions. Be proactive in helping students and reassuring that others also experience these problems
   4. Robin Browne: How do you find international students?
      1. Olga: May depend on who leading populations are. Look at student demographics. Very close relationship with international students office
      2. Jacqueline: Our Office of Global Initiatives held a couple of workshops for university faculty and staff which included a panel with international students. This was extremely helpful for us to learn some of those cultural competencies, ways to help them, etc.
      3. Crystal: We have an International students orientation, similar to Freshman orientation. The International students come into the library for a tour and demonstrations/presentations. We get to see the faces during that time.
      4. Katy worked with an ESL group and knew the students from those courses. Building a personal relationship with the ESL instructors. Those students then matriculate into the university. There are also “generation 1.5” where they have lived most of their lives speaking English and in the US but don’t speak English at home. Some citizens of the US may have been raised outside of US and have different needs than “traditional” international students
   5. Ekettling: I’m curious. Do any of you try to engage with your teaching faculty who have grown up and/or pursued higher education outside the US l to help bridge the expectations, understanding of challenges, and individual person differences in student approaches to their academic pursuits?
      1. Olga: not always deliberately. Will have a lot of international students and TAs attend workshops that have shared their experiences which was helpful. Also have workshops for faculty on teaching Chinese students specifically. Many of the faculty attending these workshops were not US citizens and able to give feedback from working in China
   6. Aditi: getting rid of their fear and that we are a neutral entity on campus
   7. We give tours to our international students which helps them get to know us and our facilities/services. We have several students we employ that are international as well. It's great to get their feedback on library services/collections.
9. What are the most important things international students need to know about the library?
   1. Katy: a lot of libraries have closed stacks abroad and international students may not be aware that we have open stacks. May not know about reservable rooms. May not know we are open overnight. Printing.
   2. Helene: We are starting a project to see whether we should consider writing social media posts in foreign languages (for this project, we are looking at Spanish).
   3. Aimee: I would like to translate our web site into other languages as well as key research guides. Or perhaps we need to create research guides targeted towards International students
   4. Olga: That there are subject librarians with specialty degrees and that students can get help from them about subject specific questions
   5. Katy: We also host workshops for students studying abroad.
   6. Robin: It’s striking that many of the needs perceived to be the needs of international students are also the needs of remedial students. Wondering if there are research opportunities for working with international students in community colleges
   7. Deborah: I think information about personnel is useful. Many cultures prefer a more personal connection over a practical approach to research.
   8. Jennifer: For those who translate, what about students who may not have their language represented? How do you navigate in those waters which makes groups of haves and have-nots
   9. Stephanie: When you have students who have some advanced degree but now need to step down for career placement, the differences in the higher education experience vs. how it’s handled here. How have you handled these differences?
      1. Olga: Many graduate students have to teach and that is a big learning curve for them acclimating to the US system of higher ed. The university has a certificate for preparing students to teach.
      2. Katy: a recent Saudi student who wanted to study as an unmarried woman had to have her father come with her. Her father enrolled in ESL courses. He had taught English in Saudi Arabia and therefore he was able to experience American culture in the context of teaching ESL and how he can take those back to his home country. But that may be more frustrating for a doctor or engineer.
10. What do you most want LIS students to know about international students and library efforts to support them?   Towards the training of new librarians
    1. Katy: That these students exist and that they’ll need to create services for. If possible, it’s good to get international experience to become more empathetic
    2. Jennifer: Probably the themes we discussed here today. Ways to reach out, services, activities, etc that will address their needs
    3. Olga: Whatever we do in teaching and library services to benefit international students also benefits all student groups. It’s following the idea of UDL. When we’re more cognizant of how we phrase things and how we ask questions makes it better for all users.
    4. Aimee: I tell my LIS students to get to know their international peers as they will learn what is going on in libraries around the world is something that will effect them in their careers.
    5. Jennifer: Have empathy. Get to know the person (the individual) - some cultural competency training focuses on stereotypes which can be very detrimental
    6. Stephanie: I think that would go back to teaching culture competencies, the extra hurdles international students must overcome, and that it is the librarian's responsibility to reach out.
    7. Ekettling: They need to know how we designate floors where services/collections/resources are (ground floor, 1st floor. 2nd floor). They also need to know how we arrange items by subject more so than by author. I agree with Deborah they need to know something about library employees and their interests before we inquire about students’ own backgrounds, interests, concerns. Also we are currently doing a library website usability study to determine if different user populations (including international students/global nomads) have preferences for web navigation conventions and subject/content groupings.
11. Call for interest in incoming co-convener roles
12. Call for new themes or topics for discussion