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Partnering Library Research with Presentation and Writing Services at Western Michigan University’s HCOB Communication Center

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Partnering Library Research with Presentation and Writing Services at Western Michigan University’s HCOB Communication Center

LuMarie Guth, Western Michigan University
Martha Maytnier, Western Michigan University
MABL Meeting -- July 24, 2015
History of Business Librarians in the Communication Center

- Prior to the development of the Communication Center, the Business Librarian had 2 office hours a week in the business faculty office area.
- In 2010, Kay Palan became Dean of the Haworth College of Business, and sponsored the creation of the Communication Center.
- The Communication Center opened its doors in September 2013, and in November of 2013, Librarians began holding office hours within the Communication Center.
Help in strengthening and professionalizing oral, visual and written communication skills.
Growth of the HCoB Communication Center

By number of appointments:

2013  375 appointments
2014  643 appointments
2015  901 appointments

240% growth in use of the Center and Consultants.
Results and Assessment of Office Hours

Mobile On-Campus Business Librarian Transactions

Transactions

Date

Results and Assessment of Office Hours

Patron Type Before Communication Center
- Student-Undergrad: 54.5%
- Student-Grad: 21.2%
- Student-Non-WMU: 21.2%
- Faculty/Staff: 11.1%

Patron Type in Communication Center
- Student-Undergrad: 69.4%
- Student-Grad: 19.4%
- Faculty/Staff: 11.1%
Results and Assessment of Office Hours

**Time Spent per Transaction in Business Office Area Before Communication Center**
- 2: 1 to 5 min: 21.2%
- 3: 6-15 min: 12.1%
- 4: 16-45 min: 18.2%
- 5: 46-75 min: 9.1%
- 6: Over 75 min: 39.4%

**Time Spent per Transaction in Communication Center**
- 1: Up to 1 min: 11.1%
- 2: 1 to 5 min: 16.7%
- 3: 6-15 min: 41.7%
- 4: 16-45 min: 8.3%
- 5: 46-75 min: 19.4%
- 6: Over 75 min: 0%
Results and Assessment of Office Hours

- Statistics do not always show water cooler discussions and course planning meetings
- Need for log-keeping of other success measures outside of reference and instruction
- Relationship building with Communication Center director has lead to referrals to instructors
  - Introductory Management Class
  - Badge Program
- Bronco Business Bash
- Business Communications Course Instruction
From an in-depth study of over 400 employers across the U.S.

**Conclusion:** *Future employees are woefully ill-prepared for the demands of today’s and tomorrow’s workplace.*

Top skills employers look for:
- Professionalism
- Work Ethic/Teamwork
- Collaboration/Oral Communication

**Writing in English:**
26.2% report that new entrants with a college degree are “deficient”.
87.7% said these skills are “very important”.

**Written Communication:**
26.2% report that new entrants with a college degree are “deficient”.
93.1% consider written communication “very important”.

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**ARE THEY REALLY READY TO WORK?**

Employers' Perspectives on the Basic Knowledge and Applied Skills of New Entrants to the 21st Century U.S. Workforce

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**THE CONFERENCE BOARD**

**PARTNERSHIP FOR 21ST CENTURY SKILLS**

**CORPORATE VOICES for working families**

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**WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY**
BCM 3700 Integrated Communications in Business

Mandatory for all Business Majors at Junior or Senior level. Designed to help students expand understanding of the complexities or oral and written communications in business.

**Student learning goals:**
- To become effective communicators
- Have effective team skills
- Acquire global business understanding
- Understand information technology systems
- Understand ethical business practices
- Become critical thinkers
My BCM 3700 Class

Student majors in my class:

Management  Sales and Marketing
Marketing  Supply Chain Management
Human Resource Management
Small Business Management
Economics  Electronic Business Marketing
Finance  Computer Information Systems
Accounting  General Business
Part One: Career Materials
- Create a Blog and adapt your Personal Biography.
- Find 2 job postings or internships from a job website for your major.
- Create a Resume and use your Resume to address the job qualifications.
- Create a Linked-In Profile.

Part Two: Standard Business Communications
- Three-step writing process
- Promotional messages
- Negative/Positive messages
- Direct and Indirect modes of communication
- Message design

Part Three: Report and Presentation
- Digital Revolution
- Big Data
- Net Neutrality
Incorporating Threshold Concepts into BCM 3700

Research as Inquiry
- Questions in both academic and personal life are increasingly complex.
- Ability to engage in self-directed learning encourages a broader world view.

Authority as Construct
- Depends on origin, information need, and context.
- Determines the level of trust.
- Importance of assessing content critically.

Format as Process
- Understanding how tangible knowledge is disseminated.
- Why does format matter?
- Quality and usefulness of a given piece of information can be determined by the process that went into making it.
Searching as Exploration
- No “one size fits all.”
- Discovery requires the use of a broad range of information sources.
- Effective use of resources is predicated on understanding those resources.

Information has Value
- Creation of information and information “products” requires the commitment of time, original thought, and the understanding of authority.
- Intellectual property and the responsibility of consumers and creators of information based on the work of others.
Faculty who receive more services or communication from their liaison are more satisfied with their liaisons than those who receive less contact...It is not possible to overemphasize face-to-face contact, hallway conversations, roaming and office visits.

(Silver, 2014)