Library interactions - Developing research-based teaching and learning

Eystein Gullbekk, Therese Skagen, Hilde Westbye, Andrea Gasparini, Astrid Anderson, Jessica Lönn-Stensrud, University of Oslo Library, Norway.

Across Europe there is a push for strengthening research-based higher education (Fung et.al, 2017). As a pedagogical driven approach, research-based education aims at making students across all levels learn through enquiry and discovery (eg. Cleaver et al., 2017). Core competencies addressed are scientific and critical thinking skills, and skills in scholarly and interdisciplinary communication. At the University of Oslo, the reinforcement of research-based education is manifest in a recent large-scale initiative. The initiative implies that we must build quality in teaching and learning through partnership across and beyond the communities of our university. How can a library in higher education contribute to research-based education?

This presentation illuminates three interrelated cases from The University of Oslo Library. They exemplify how libraries can involve students, librarians and their patrons when the aim is to develop innovative education. Together the cases prompt discussions about the methods used to include different actors' perspectives in current development of learning and teaching design.

The three cases highlight the current state of a long-term movement of our libraries away from library-centered approaches and towards user and co-creation centered approaches. The methods described respond to the current call for partnership in building enquiry-based learning experiences.

The first case is our staff-development program. Established a decade ago the program focuses on developing a shared understanding of information literacy and pedagogical theories. The program is one element in our effort to change focus from education as a private concern to corporate responsibility. The aim is to make pedagogical competencies a matter of shared knowledge and culture.

The second case presents course design and the methods used to include the perspectives of students, fellow librarians and faculty. Project methodology from informatics has contributed to teambuilding and collaboration among library staff. It has also facilitated feedback from students, faculty and fellow librarians. The result is a revision of courses to students from BA to PHD levels, now with an emphasis on research-based education and active learning.

The last case describes the development of physical and digital learning spaces at the university libraries. Technology has opened for a change in the way students collaborate, learn and study. A project based approach that apply user centered design and user experience have contributed to the collection of information from students and employees aimed at enhancing and developing library space to enhance learning experiences.

Together our three cases tell a story about cultural change within our libraries, about implementation by involvement of different people and perspectives, and about the balancing of specialized expertise with shared vocabularies.

References

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