Outreach with a Personal Touch: Takeaways and Tips from a Personal Librarian Program

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Abstract
Are you looking for a new way to reach out to students and draw them into your library? Why not consider implementing a Personal Librarian (PL) Program? In fall 2015 Kent State University Performing Arts Library started a PL Program to undergraduate and graduate level music, theatre, and dance majors. This poster provides tips, best practices and ideas to consider when planning a new outreach program both to students on campus and online. Marketing strategies, web presence, programming ideas, classroom visits, lessons learned, and the benefit of faculty buy-in will also be addressed.

Vision & Goals
- To build a personal connection with students and faculty.
- Rebrand existing services to appear more relevant and approachable to our audience and provide a new way to promote the Performing Arts Library and librarians.
- To support student success and improve retention.

Marketing & Programming
- Start with what can be developed in house.
  - Letter size posters and handouts.
  - Stickers with contact information for both Personal Librarians to give to students to affix to their class syllabus, planner, technology case, etc.
- Build a web presence that is engaging and inviting.
  - Approachable, engaging photograph.
  - Contains “interview” with Personal Librarians.
  - Provides opportunity to electronically schedule an appointment.
- Build on existing personal connections with students and engaging word of mouth marketing.
- Build on existing programming to foster personal relationships with students and faculty.
  - College of the Arts Sundaes on Friday Student Mixer.
  - Performing Arts Library Welcome Week Series: Meet & Greets and Connect @ Kent.

Tips & Takeaways
- Engage faculty and library administration.
  - Promoted service as a rebranding of existing services, rather than starting a new service.
  - Request to be added to the agenda at annual performing arts faculty retreats/meetings.
  - Speak with faculty individually.
- Start small and build on successes.
  - Focused primarily on freshman in the Fall 2015 semester by collaborating with First Year Experience instructors to tailor a library introduction sessions.
  - In the Spring 2016 semester we expanded to include all undergraduate and graduate performing arts majors and minors.
- Promote the program through classroom instruction and pop-in visits.
  - Visit classes with performing arts majors each semester to stay on students’ radar.

Top References & Resources
- Personal Librarian & First Year Experience Library Conference - http://library.case.edu/kei/services/personallibrary/conference/ (presentations and posters archived electronically)