BOPPP-ING AROUND: OUR FORMULA:

In 2016, we investigated library peer mentorship programs after conversations with post-doctoral students who were peer mentors in the University of Saskatchewan’s peer mentorship program (Murphy, 2016).

The PAL Centre at Western is completely staffed by volunteer student Learning Peers who provide mentorship to fellow students in time-management skills, studying strategies, memorization tips, reading and note-taking, subject-specific skills and as of 2017, library research skills.

Our approach blended face-to-face elements (in-person information literacy instruction with an active-learning activity) with online components (a module in Western’s LMS, an online quiz and online forums). Our approach was flipped to maximize the mentors’ learning.

The online module was easily created from existing orientation modules. Our PAL module contents were generic enough to be subsequently repurposed for use with the Academic Leadership Program (ALP) which is integrated into Western Residences.

“BOPPP-ING” AROUND:

BRIDGE-IN
Why are we here?
Motivations for the partnership included:
- students go to each other first before coming to the library (Smith, May & Burke 2007)
- the potential power of peers for referral to the library
- our limited capacity to create a stand-alone peer mentorship program

OUTCOMES
What do we want to achieve?
Partnership outcomes for Western Libraries included:
- new channel for students seeking research/library help
- reusable generic online material re: orientation to Western Libraries
- increased collaboration with campus partners
- confident library champions amongst undergraduate students

What do we want to achieve?
Partnership outcomes for mentors included:
- learning how the library system at Western works (locations, how to borrow, how to access resources online)
- learning how to help their peers get started with research
- learning about the various help channels at the library

PRE-ASSESSMENT
What do we need to know?
Partnership Pre-Assessment
- campus partnerships are one of the main factors in the success of a library peer mentorship program (Murphy 2016)
- aligning programming with intended outcomes – e.g., Where is the best fit on campus? Answer: PAL program

Mentors’ Pre-Assessment
- post-online-module quiz to determine mentor’s understanding of content, which informed in-person session

PARTICIPATORY LEARNING
How are we going to achieve our outcomes?
Prework: Online Module
Students were asked to review an online module and complete a quiz before training day.

Face-to-Face: Train-the-Trainer
We reviewed content based on quiz results; dug deeper in areas where there were more errors. Role-playing scenarios were used to check understanding and reinforce skills.

Ongoing Online Forums
We hosted forum discussions with mentors through the academic year. Topics included: citing, evaluating info, study spaces, emotions in research

POST-ASSESSMENT
Were we successful?
Partnership Post-Assessment
19 + 18 + 7 = 44 peer mentors to date
# of peer mentors on campus (19 from PAL year 1, 18 from year 2, 7 from ALP)
The PAL Centre has answered around 19+18+7=44 peer mentors to date.

Mentors’ Post-Assessment
- mandatory participation in forums
- provided the opportunity for ongoing reinforcement of skills and clarification of misconceptions

SUMMARY
What did we learn?
1. Partner.
2. Repurpose.
3. Engage.

WHAT’S NEXT:
Further repurposing of content for additional introductory modules with more campus partners:
- Academic Leadership Program (Residence)
- Western 101
- Campus Resource Training
- Western “Sight” program
- Off-campus mentorship program

REFERENCES: