PAL-ING AROUND WITH PEER - SOURCED LEARNING
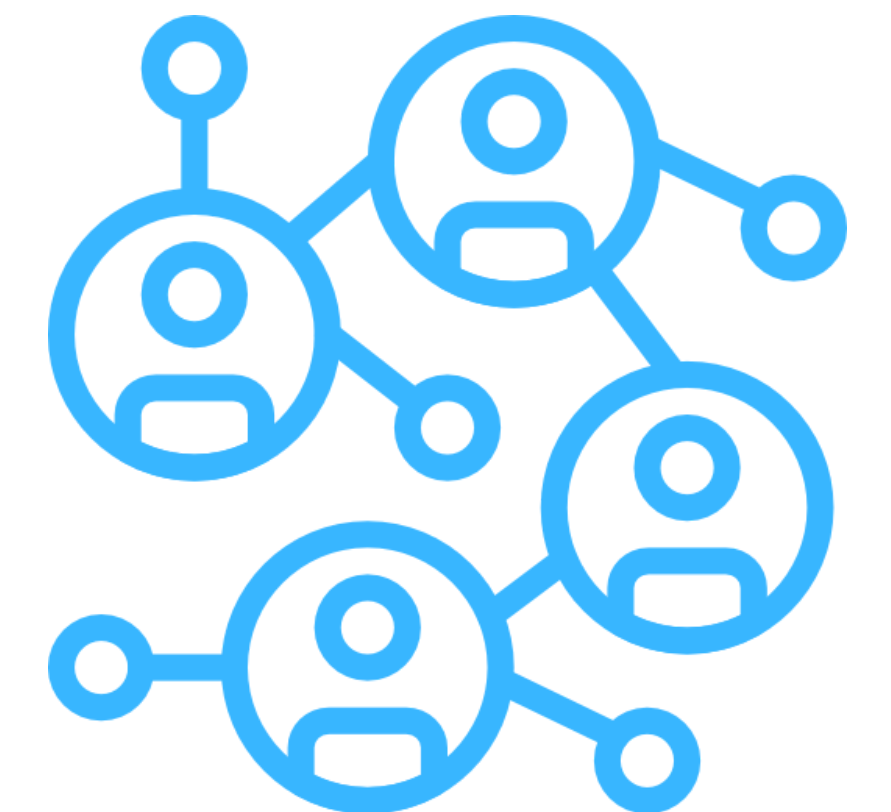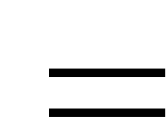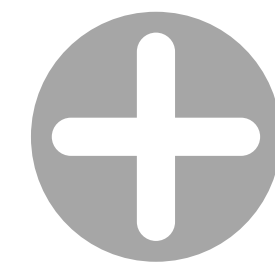
An interactive, flipped, and blended approach

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Western Libraries

OUR FORMULA:

Western Libraries **+** PAL PEER ASSISTED LEARNING CENTRE **+** (blender) **+** (recycle) **=** Peer network of library champions!

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 (an 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:

BOPPPS is a model often used by Western Libraries' Teaching and Learning Librarians for lesson planning. BOPPPS promotes active, outcomes-based learning by allowing the instructor to map out motivations, learning outcomes, assessment strategies, and teaching and learning activities (Hundey 2015) . Here we have used it as a framework to describe our partnership as well as a framework in the design of the program itself.

BRIDGE-IN

Why are we here?

Motivations for the partnership included:
- students go to each other 1st 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

Motivations for the mentors included:
- build confidence in identifying and answering library questions from their peers
- personal development of library and research skills
- get a good reference from PAL staff (#realtalk)

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

Learning 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 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?

WELCOME TO WESTERN LIBRARIES!

Learning Outcomes:
By the end of this 30-minute lesson learning peers will:
- remember how to find the 6 Western Libraries service **locations** and their hours; remember what services and resources are available from these locations
- understand how to **get started with research**
- understand how to **borrow library materials**, including using Western Libraries catalogue, using My Library Account, and finding Course Readings
- understand the importance of **citing and writing** (and avoiding plagiarism) and how to do it properly
- remember how to find several options for **getting help** from Western Libraries' staff

▷ Locations

▷ Getting Started with Research

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 25 questions to date regarding library research. Discussions with PAL adminstrators about their perspective on the partnership have been very positive. There is a high satisfaction rate from both adminstrators and peer mentors.

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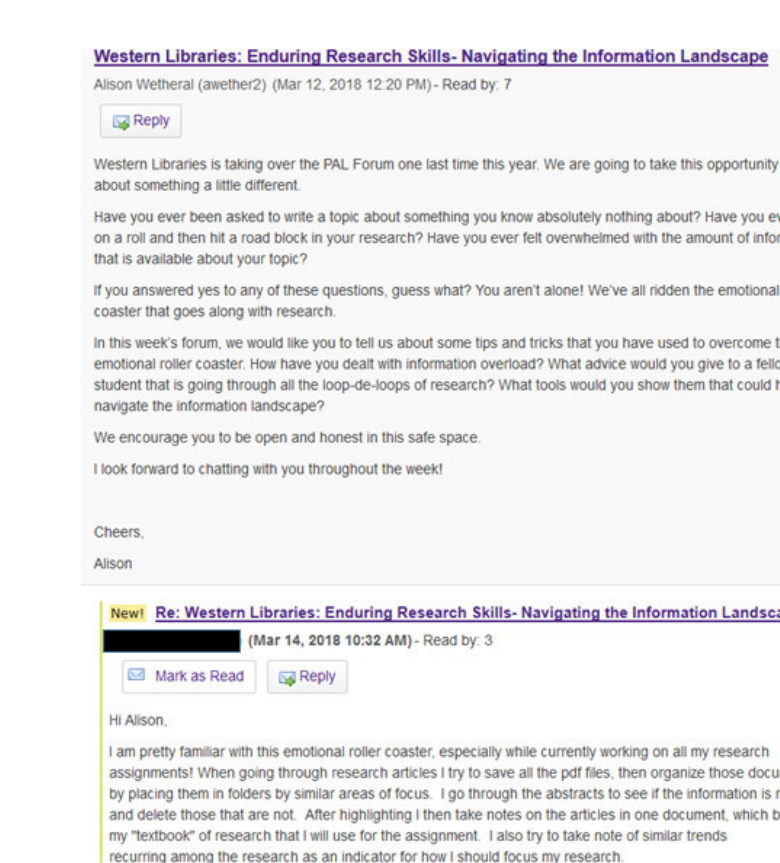
- mandatory participation in forums
- provided the opportunity for ongoing reinforcement of skills and clarifcation of misconceptions

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 "Soph" program
- Off-campus mentorship program

REFERENCES:

Hundey, Beth. (2015). "BOPPPS Model for Lesson Planning." Retrieved January 16, 2019, from http://www.queensu.ca/teachingandlearning/modules/active/18_boppps_model_for_lesson_planning.html

Murphy, J. A. (2016). Enhancing the student experience: A case study of a library peer mentor program. College & Undergraduate Libraries, 23(2), 151–167. https://doi.org/10.1080/10691316.2014.963777

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