The Clock is Ticking

Moving from in person to virtual reference in a hurry

Agenda

- How we prepared

- What we did not expect

- How to better prepare next time

- Opportunities and unexpected upsides

How we prepared – Challenges

- Set Up Virtual Reference
- Provide Access to Coursebooks
- Ensure Access to Subscription Databases
- Continue to Provide Faculty Support

Virtual Reference

We already had evening virtual reference once a week

- **Call forwarding**
- **Online chat feature**
- **Email**

Virtual Reference In a Hurry

Expanded our virtual reference to 9-5, M-F

- **Calls to the reference desk are forwarded**

- **Schedule adjusted – one librarian covers reference for the entire day (instead of daily two-hour shifts)**

- ***Written instructions provided to all reference librarians***

- **Electronic chat function eliminates face-to-face interaction**

- **Loss of library workshops**

Providing Access to Coursebooks

Coursebooks

- BLS Library keeps one copy of every casebook on reserve

- During NY's PAUSE period, students lost access to this service and many were also unable to access coursebooks left in lockers on-campus

Access to Coursebooks -Solutions

- **Possible solutions**
  - **Scan pages for the rest of the semester?**

- **Contacted coursebook publishers and arranged for complementary access**
  - **Foundation Press/West Academic**
  - **Carolina Academic Press, Wolters Kluwer/Aspen**

- **Contacted Bluebook and obtained free accounts for electronic access**
  - **Created a shared Google Doc with list of access codes and students who received each code**

Instructions to Students & Faculty
LibGuides

Remote Access to Library Resources & Services

- Access to online coursebooks
- Access to Bluebook online
- Instructions for proxy server to access subscription databases
- Virtual reference instructions
- Library databases, resources, e-books, and study aids

Faculty Remote Teaching Guide

- Online pedagogy, teaching blogs, third-party content
- Library resources
- Zoom tips

Coronavirus Resource Guide

- Info on COVID-19 (news, legal & non-legal resources & information)

What We Did Not Expect...

Technological Issues

* Proxy server did not always work

  * Unable to access databases needed to answer reference questions

Coursebooks not available electronically...

- Some students were unable to access either physical or electronic versions of coursebooks

  - Tried to find alternative ways of accessing the information needed

    - e.g., showed student who was unable to access her coursebook, *Selected Sections on United States International Taxation* the federal tax resources on Cheetah

Patrons facing difficult situations

- E.g. A student contacted us that their laptop broke and they had to take out an additional loan to purchase a new laptop, which set them back in their coursework

- Some students contacted us that they had family members who were sick and the stress of caring for them set them back

- We made patrons aware of possible sources of aid, such as Brooklyn Law School's new Student Support Fund & sources listed in BLS Library's *Coronavirus Research Guide*, such as: NYC Emergency Management, COVID-19 Services & Resources

How we can better prepare

for the next emergency

Ensure Students Have Access to Course Materials

- Determine which case books are available electronically
  - Create a list of titles
  - For print only case books, ask faculty members to share their syllabus
  - Alternatively, ask IT to provide the library access to faculty course pages

Replicating In Person Reference

- Reference Office Hours
  - Use Zoom, Skype or Google Meet Up to provide "In Person" reference
  - Allow students to make appointments via online shared calendar
- Proxy Instructions
  - Ensure they are up to date
  - Know which browsers work best
- Virtual access to physical collection
- Outreach to Other Departments

Opportunities
& Unexpected
Upsides

Strengthening Organizational Memory

- Create Internal How To Documents

- Analyze Day to Day Duties

- Revise Library Policies and Procedure Manuals

- Create a Best Practices Manual for Remote Work

Getting to the bottom of the To Do List

- Updating Research Guides
- Revising Policy & Procedure Manuals

Time's Up!

- Getting ready in a hurry
- Unanticipated problems
- Learning from our mistakes

Questions/Comments

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