

Academic librarians as educational developers: Overview, case study, and discussion

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Abstract

In the library and information science (LIS) literature, there are examples of librarians leading educational development initiatives, often centered on information literacy (IL). However, there does not appear to have been significant exploration in the educational development literature of librarians acting as educational developers. This article is intended fill this gap by providing an overview of academic librarians' engagement with educational development and offering a brief case study of a librarian who is involved in educational development, followed by discussion of key questions and potential implications that are raised when considering librarians acting in this role. The goal is to open up a dialogue between and among educational developers and librarians about the role of librarians in educational development. This may also encourage discussion among educational developers about how the field should be defined and who qualifies as an educational developer.

Keywords: academic librarians, libraries, educational development, information literacy

In a 2022 article in *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, Melissa Bowles-Terry and Karen Sobel describe how their experiences as academic librarians supported their ability to move into educational

development leadership positions at their institutions. As has been noted in the educational development literature, there is not a single path into educational development. Instead, developers come from a range of disciplinary and professional backgrounds (Beach et al., 2016; Green & Little, 2013; McDonald & Stockley, 2008; Quinn & Vorster, 2014; Stockley et al., 2015). The article by Bowles-Terry and Sobel demonstrates that academic librarianship can be a potential path into educational development.

While not all librarians who engage in educational development will move into educational development leadership, within the library and information science (LIS) literature there are a number of articles that encourage librarians to become involved in educational development (Johnson & Goodson, 2015; Mader & Gibson, 2019) or that show librarians engaging in activities that align with the work of educational developers, including offering faculty workshops, designing courses for faculty, and leading faculty learning communities (Bazeley et al., 2014; Burrell et al., 2020; Flierl et al., 2019; Flierl et al., 2020; Folk & Hammons, 2021; Hammons, 2020a, 2020b; Handler & Hays, 2019; Mi, 2015; Sharun & Smith, 2020).

Librarians' engagement with educational development does not appear to be frequently discussed within the educational development literature, and there are indications that developers may lack awareness of librarians' ability to collaborate on or lead educational development programming at a high level. Mader and Gibson (2019) surveyed directors of centers for teaching and learning (CTLs) and found that while the majority considered it beneficial for librarians to participate in CTL activities, some made comments indicating that librarians lacked certain qualities that would support their ability to more fully engage in educational development. Furthermore, in a study on librarian representation in educational development journals, I reviewed issues of *The Journal of Faculty Development*, *To Improve the Academy*, and *International Journal for Academic Development* and found only a limited number of articles that described meaningful collaborations between librarians and educational developers

(Hammons, 2024b). While I did find a few examples of librarians as co-authors in these journals (see Calkins et al., 2021; Sipes et al., 2020), I also found that librarians do not tend to publish as solo authors or with only other librarians in educational development journals. As a result, some educational developers may have limited understanding of the potential for librarians to act in this role or meaningfully contribute to educational development.

In this article I hope to increase the visibility of librarians acting as educational developers and encourage dialogue between and among developers and librarians about the part librarians may play within educational development. This is significant because, as has been noted in the educational development literature, few educational development units have staffing levels that allow them to offer all of the resources and services that they might like to offer (Brinthaupt et al., 2019). Increased high-level collaboration with librarians acting in educational development roles could allow educational development units to expand the range of programs they are able to provide.

After outlining the roles of educational developers and librarians, I give an overview of librarians' involvement in educational development and a brief case study of my own work. I then explore several key questions related to librarians' involvement in educational development and end with recommendations for increasing collaboration between librarians and developers.

Defining Educational Developers and Academic Librarians

Educational Developers

Educational development refers to a range of different activities centered on "the enhancement of the work of colleges and universities, often with a focus on teaching and learning" (POD Network, 2016). Determining the boundaries of educational development as a field

has proved challenging. Little (2014) noted that “educational development seems to suffer from a perpetual identity crisis” (para. 6). Even the name of the field has been debated, with the terms “faculty development” and “academic development” also being used in different contexts (Beach et al., 2016; Green & Little, 2016; Ouellett, 2010). The POD Network has adopted the term “educational development,” agreeing with Little (2014) that it is the best fit:

This phrase encompasses the breadth of work we do as part time/full time, short term/long term/career faculty, staff, and administrators who come from a wide range of disciplines and professions and who work on individual, program, and institutional levels in face to face and online environments on issues of student development, faculty development, and organizational leadership, among others. (para. 2)

Little’s description highlights the range of roles and focus areas that developers might have. The POD Network outlines several sub-fields within educational development, including instructor/faculty development, instructional development, and organizational development. Educational developers may center their work primarily on individual instructors, providing consultation and support for instructors’ development as teachers, scholars/researchers, and individuals, but may also work at the course, curriculum, or institutional level (POD Network, 2016). There is no specific degree associated with educational development, so educational developers come from many different disciplinary backgrounds (Beach et al., 2016; Green & Little, 2013, 2016). While many developers may work in a specific educational development unit, this is not always the case (Lee, 2010).

Thus, providing a simple description of the work of educational developers, and, in turn, determining who exactly qualifies as an educational developer, is difficult. For the purpose of this article, however, educational developers can be considered individuals who work in higher education and whose efforts are significantly focused on improving teaching effectiveness, student learning, and/or institutional

quality through a range of activities at the individual, curricular, or organizational level.¹

Academic Librarians

On the surface, defining “academic librarian” appears more straightforward than defining “educational developer,” as there is a degree associated with academic librarianship: the master’s degree in library science (MLS) or library and information science (MSLIS) (American Library Association, n.d.-a). However, determining who qualifies as an academic librarian is not always as simple as it may appear, as there are individuals who work in academic libraries that have an MLS or MSLIS but do not have the specific title of “librarian.” There are also cases in which someone may be given the title of “librarian” without actually having an MLS. In general, however, an academic librarian can be defined as someone who holds this credential and works in a library in an institution of higher education.

Academic librarians can have a range of responsibilities, which can include advising individual faculty, staff, or students related to their specific information needs, building and maintaining library collections, coordinating information literacy (IL) and/or library instruction programs, and acquiring and managing electronic resources (American Library Association, n.d.-a). In practice, the day-to-day work of academic librarians can vary significantly depending on the specific role and status of the librarian, such as whether the librarian is considered faculty or staff, and the type of institution, ranging from small colleges to large research universities. While more traditional titles, such as “reference librarian,” still exist, librarians’ work has also expanded into new areas and often become more specialized. A recent search for available academic librarian positions on the American Library

1. This definition is based on the description of educational development provided on the POD Network website (POD Network, 2016), which, in turn, draws on the descriptions of educational development provided by Amundsen and Wilson (2012), Felten et al. (2006), Little (2014), and Sorcinelli et al. (2005).

Association's JobLIST included positions for Instructional Design Librarian, Scholarly Communications Librarian, Outreach and Strategic Initiatives Librarian, and Research Impact Librarian (American Library Association, n.d.-b).

While the requirement for librarians to have an MLS or MSLIS does provide a more direct path into academic librarianship than exists in educational development, and in general allows for a clearer distinction about who qualifies as a librarian, there has still been significant debate about appropriate roles for academic librarians, which will be discussed in more detail below.

Overview: Librarians and Educational Development

Before diving into an overview of librarians' engagement in educational development, it is important to note that, while librarians do sometimes use the term "educational development," the term "faculty development" still appears to be more common in the LIS literature. In this overview, I included articles using both terms and considered them both to be referring to the same type of work. When discussing specific articles, I use the term used by the original author(s).

Librarians and Educational Development

In a study of librarians and faculty development, Fribley et al. (2021) noted that "librarians have advocated for their role in faculty development for decades, certainly predating use of the phrase *faculty development*" (p. 254). They provide evidence of librarians' interest in faculty development going back to the 1930s and continuing in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. For example, they mention a 1998 article in which Patricia Iannuzzi argued that "academic librarians can and should play a leadership role in faculty development efforts on their campuses" (p. 97). Iannuzzi specifically indicated faculty development

as a strategy for librarians to support the integration of IL into the curriculum.

Indeed, much of the discussion within the LIS literature around librarians and faculty development has been related to librarians' efforts to teach IL—the skills and ways of thinking necessary for learners to effectively navigate the complex information environment (see Association of College & Research Libraries, 2015). Teaching IL is a key focus area for many librarians, and the most common method of instruction is the “one-shot” session, in which a librarian provides a single instruction session for a specific class on research skills. While many libraries have built active IL programs centered on the one-shot, this approach has also received significant criticism as being ineffective (Bowles-Terry & Donovan, 2016; Pagowsky, 2021).² Libraries do not have the staffing to provide instruction to all students in this format, and even for those classes that librarians can reach, the amount of time in a one-shot significantly limits the content librarians are able to teach.

As an alternative to the one-shot model, a number of librarians, including myself, have argued for an approach centered on educational development. In the “faculty-focused” approach, “librarians would spend a significant amount of time developing, implementing or supporting faculty development activities or initiatives that are intended to teach faculty how to teach IL” (Hammons, 2022, p. 23). Those who support this approach have argued that it could allow librarians to develop IL programs that are more effective, scalable, and sustainable (Cowan & Eva, 2016; Fister, 2009; Hammons, 2020b, 2022; Lechtenberg & Donovan, 2022; Miller & Bell, 2005; Smith, 1997).

While the faculty-focused approach has not become the dominant method of IL instruction in academic libraries, there are many instances within the LIS literature of librarians leading IL-focused educational development initiatives, intended to increase faculty knowledge of IL

2. A recent issue of *College & Research Libraries* (2022, Vol. 83, No. 5) was devoted to critical discourse on the role of the one-shot.

and/or enhance faculty teaching practices related to IL. In a previous article, for example, I highlighted more than 20 examples of librarians designing or leading workshops, online courses, faculty learning communities, and course redesign programs focused on teaching faculty to teach IL (Hammons, 2020b). Other examples, not included in the article, include Sharun and Smith (2020), who described an educational development workshop intended to support faculty in teaching critical evaluation strategies, as well as Handler and Hays (2019), who led information literacy-focused communities of practice.

In many of these cases, the authors did not use the term “educational development” or “faculty development” to describe their initiative. However, I argue that they should still be considered educational development initiatives, because they were focused on developing faculty knowledge or supporting faculty ability to teach IL, often in the hopes of changing how IL was taught at the course, program, or even institutional level.

Although much of the literature on librarians and educational development has related to IL, librarians’ involvement in educational development does not need to be limited to this topic. For example, Bazeley et al. (2014) described a librarian-led faculty learning community focused on scholarly communication.

Librarians as Educational Developers: Benefits and Competencies

In addition to arguments that librarians taking an educational development approach can support more sustainable IL programs, other potential benefits could include increased visibility of librarians as educators and an enhanced sense of professional satisfaction stemming from being seen as a peer rather than as a service provider (Bowles-Terry & Sobel, 2022; Folk & Hammons, 2021; Handler & Hays, 2019; Mader & Gibson, 2019; Mi, 2015).

While there are only a few research studies focused on librarians’ experiences acting as educational developers, these provide evidence that librarians are capable of effectively acting in an educational

developer role (Flierl et al., 2019; Flierl et al., 2020; Fribley et al., 2021). In addition, several librarians have pointed out that many of the competencies that librarians already have, such as the ability to collaborate with faculty members across multiple disciplines, are closely aligned with the competencies required by educational developers (Bowles-Terry & Sobel, 2022; Fundator & Maybee, 2019).

Librarian as Educational Developer: A Case Study

To provide additional support for librarians' ability to act in an educational developer role, I give a brief description of my own educational development work. I have been the Teaching and Learning Engagement Librarian at The Ohio State University since 2019. My primary responsibility is to support the integration of IL into the curriculum through educational development. I have worked to build a strategic IL-focused educational development program, including a self-paced online course and a virtual workshop series.

Teaching Information Literacy

A key component of the program is Teaching Information Literacy, a teaching endorsement offered in collaboration with the university's Drake Institute for Teaching and Learning. Endorsements are credentials provided to Ohio State faculty and staff who complete 10 to 15 hours of professional development programming on a topic. While the endorsement program is coordinated by the teaching and learning center, and they provide the certification of completion, any campus unit can develop and manage an endorsement.

Self-Paced Course

I developed Teaching Information Literacy, a six-module, self-paced Canvas course that is intended to help instructors learn more about

IL as a concept and revise a course to incorporate IL. The course was approved as an endorsement in October 2019. Course learning outcomes include:

- Develop an expanded understanding of IL as a concept.
- Identify IL learning outcomes that support students' ability to learn disciplinary ways of thinking.
- Employ instructional design strategies to develop or revise an assignment or course to teach IL.

In the course, participants are introduced to the *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* (Association of College & Research Libraries, 2015). After learning about the concept of IL, and how it is practiced in higher education, participants are guided through a backward design process as they work to identify IL learning outcomes, activities, and assessments. The final product for the course is an Information Literacy Action Plan, in which participants outline their goals for integrating IL into a course. For a more detailed description of the course design process, see Hammons (2020a).

Cohort and Workshop Options

Originally, participants' only option for earning the Teaching Information Literacy endorsement was to complete the self-paced course. To expand participation options, I have also offered a number of IL cohorts. In the cohort option, which is offered once or twice per year, participants enroll in the course at the same time as several other participants, are expected to complete the course over the period of the cohort (usually about 4 weeks), and have the opportunity to attend synchronous virtual cohort meetings.

In 2022, I again expanded the options for participants to complete the endorsement. I developed a "workshop option" that allows participants to earn the endorsement by completing 11 hours of IL-focused workshops and developing an Information Literacy Action Plan.

Participant Information and Assessment

More than 50 individuals have completed the course. They have had a range of different roles, including graduate teaching associates, lecturers, and tenure-stream faculty, and have come from many different departments, including English, Spanish & Portuguese, sociology, music, entomology, engineering education, psychology, pharmacy, nursing, and veterinary clinical sciences.

Participants who complete the self-paced course are asked to submit a post-course survey. When developing the survey, I did not seek Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to use the survey results for research purposes, so I am unable to share specific responses. However, in general, the survey responses have indicated the positive impact of taking the course on participants' understanding of IL. Anecdotal evidence also indicates that participants often do make significant changes to their courses after completing the course.

Information Literacy Workshops

Along with the Teaching Information Literacy course, another key component of my instructor development program is my virtual IL workshops. Workshops are intended to provide participants with an overview of an IL concept or issue and practical strategies they can incorporate into their teaching. The first workshop series, offered in May 2020, consisted of six 1-hour Zoom workshops, one per week, each focusing on a core IL concept from the *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*. Since 2020, I have offered multiple workshops each year, expanding the range of topics and experimenting with the length of the workshops. Participants have had many different roles and disciplinary backgrounds. While I do not conduct formal assessment of the workshops, the continued high attendance levels, including of those who attend multiple workshops across a series, has indicated to me the ongoing value of the workshops.

Collaboration with the Drake Institute

My work involves ongoing collaboration with the university's Drake Institute for Teaching and Learning, which has developed a program in which faculty and staff across the university can apply for affiliate status. Affiliates must demonstrate a strong commitment in support of teaching and learning across the university. I was selected as an affiliate in 2021 and as a senior affiliate in 2022.

While much of my educational development work has centered on IL, my affiliation with the Drake Institute has allowed me to support educational development programming on non-library related topics. For example, I recently collaborated with colleagues from the Drake Institute to lead a 4-week book discussion group focused on James Lang's (2016) *Small Teaching: Everyday Lessons from the Science of Learning*.

Discussion

By providing the overview and sharing my own educational development work, I hope to expand the perspective of developers on the potential for librarians to not only collaborate on but lead educational development programming and to encourage increased dialogue between and among developers and librarians about the role of librarians in educational development.

Exploring the idea of librarians acting as educational developers raises several intriguing questions that are worthy of discussion, including:

1. Does educational development represent a new or distinct role for academic librarians, or is it an expansion of their existing role?
2. When are librarians acting as educational developers, or engaging in educational development work, and when are they acting as librarians?

3. What are the implications, for both librarians and educational developers, of librarians engaging in educational development?
4. What are the implications of this discussion for the understanding of educational development as a field?

A New or Distinct Role?

I will begin by discussing whether educational development should be considered a distinct or new role for librarians. On the one hand, considering the description of educational development provided earlier, one could argue that educational development is something that librarians have always been doing. Although I certainly cannot speak for all academic librarians, I think many would agree that most, if not all, of their work is dedicated in one way or another to “the enhancement of the work of colleges and universities” (POD Network, 2016).

On the other hand, the tone of the recent articles within the LIS literature focused on librarians as educational developers does tend to position this work as something distinct from the types of support that librarians have always provided for faculty. For example, Handler and Hays (2019) stated that “faculty development might not immediately spring to mind as a role for librarians” and indicated that “it is our hope that other librarians will start to see connections between the work of librarians and the work of faculty developers, and be more willing to pursue this as a part of their larger presence at their institutions” (p. 220). Such statements indicate that faculty development is not considered a common role for librarians.

The educational development approach to teaching IL also still seems to be outside of the mainstream. In arguing for the “teach the teachers” approach, Cowan and Eva (2016) recognized that some librarians would see it as a “radical idea” (p. 164). As noted, many instruction librarians continue to devote the majority of their time to providing instruction to students in the one-shot format. Making the transition to an approach focused on educational development would

require many librarians to make a significant mental shift in how they think about their role (Bowles-Terry & Donovan, 2016; Hammons, 2024a).

There is also evidence that librarians tend to act in a service provider role when interacting with faculty or demonstrate “deference” behavior toward faculty (Julien & Pecoskie, 2009; Nalani Meulemans & Carr, 2013). Fribley et al. (2021) found that one of the barriers to librarians participating in faculty development is their concern over status and not being seen as equal to faculty, even when the librarians have faculty status themselves. Therefore, librarians acting in an educational developer role, which may be seen as a position of authority in relation to faculty, could represent a major shift for some librarians in how they interact with faculty.

Librarian or Educational Developer?

For at least some librarians, then, acting in an educational developer role does seem like something different from their traditional efforts to support faculty. This leads to the second question: When should a librarian be considered as acting as an educational developer, or engaging in educational development, versus acting in an expanded librarian role? If a librarian leads a faculty learning community, should this be considered librarianship or educational development?

One potential answer is that the librarian’s intent or awareness of their actions could determine whether their efforts should be considered educational development. I think of my work with instructors to be educational development. When I designed Teaching Information Literacy, I considered it to have an educational development purpose. It was intended to be a structured, long-term program that would increase faculty knowledge, in the hopes of enhancing faculty teaching practices and improving student learning. Within the literature, other librarians have also described their work as being educational development or faculty development. In such cases, especially given the uncertain boundaries of educational

development as a field, why should librarians not be considered to be acting as educational developers?

However, in many of the examples I provided above of librarians leading educational development initiatives, the librarian authors did not specifically describe their programs as being educational development. It seems likely that some librarians who develop a workshop or other programming aimed at faculty would not consider themselves to be acting in an educational development role. In fact, there is evidence from at least one study that some librarians would have difficulty even clearly describing the role of faculty developers (Johnson & Goodson, 2015).

Thus, an argument could be made that librarians' efforts should be seen as distinctly educational development only if that is how they characterize the work. And yet, in an essay on the changing nature of educational development, Gibbs (2013) noted that "many of those undertaking educational development would not describe themselves as educational developers" (p. 5). This seems to indicate that one does not need to identify as an educational developer to be seen as doing the work of educational development.

Another way to think about when to characterize librarians' work as being educational development could be to consider the scale or intended outcomes. In many of the ways that librarians' support faculty, they are working on an individual level, such as providing a consultation to a faculty member on selecting resources. One could argue that librarians' actions should be considered educational development only when they are trying to support faculty learning or improve teaching effectiveness beyond the level of the individual faculty member. Again, however, the description of educational development provided above indicates that working at an individual level can be part of the work of an educational developer, so this does not seem like a clear way to make a distinction between a librarian acting as an educational developer and a librarian acting as a librarian.

A third option for making a distinction between librarians acting as librarians and librarians acting as educational developers could be to

consider the content. Many of the examples I have used to show librarians acting in the educational developer role have been focused on IL, which is a traditional “library” topic. In fact, librarians have played the key role in defining and promoting IL as a concept (Badke, 2014; Cowan, 2014). It could be argued that librarians should be considered to be acting as educational developers only if they focus on topics *outside* of traditional librarian expertise. However, even when the topics are more traditional library topics, if the goal of the work is to support the development of faculty as teachers or as scholars/researchers, why should this not also be considered educational development?

Another way to think about this issue is to define an educational developer by their organizational home. A librarian would be considered to be acting as an educational developer only if they are employed, either full time or part time, by an educational development unit. However, as Lee (2010) described, the format of educational development units can vary significantly across institutions. Many institutions have centralized units devoted to educational development, but this is not always the case. At some institutions, educational development may be the responsibility of a committee or a single individual. Trying to argue that an individual has to be part of an educational development unit to be considered an educational developer seems limiting.

A final way to think about this question, which is closely related to the issue of intent, is to focus on identity. This is also relevant to another question: Is it even necessary to make a clear distinction between when librarians are acting as librarians and when they are acting as educational developers? I consider myself to be *both* a librarian and an educational developer. That is, educational development is part of my identity as a librarian. I do not feel the need to give up my identity as a librarian, even though some of the work I do may align more with educational development than with traditional librarianship. If I identify as an educational developer, why should I not be considered an educational developer, especially given that there is no specific degree associated with educational development?

We know educational developers come from many different disciplinary backgrounds. In a survey of more than 800 educational developers, Little et al. (2018) found that 44% continued to research in their original discipline, and 40% continued to teach in the field. If they are continuing to research and teach in their original field, it is likely at least some would continue to identify as members of those fields, even when working in educational development. If this is the case, is there a need for librarians who engage in educational development work to make a clear distinction between their work or identities as librarians and as educational developers?

Within the LIS literature, there has been significant debate about whether librarians should be considered teachers. A quick consideration of this issue may be helpful to the discussion of librarians as educational developers. While there has long been an educational component to librarians' work, it is only in the past few decades that teaching has become a primary responsibility for many librarians (Ariew, 2014; Sproles & Detmering, 2016). As the expectations for librarians to teach have increased, a number of studies have explored how teaching fits into the role and identity of librarians. While there is definitely evidence that many librarians have embraced this work and consider teaching to be part of their identities as librarians, the idea that librarians should be considered teachers has not achieved universal acceptance, even among librarians who have teaching responsibilities (Austin & Bhandol, 2013; Baer, 2021; Becksford, 2022; Kemp, 2006; Kirker, 2022; Wheeler & McKinney, 2015).

In a recent study on librarians as teachers, Kirker (2022) outlined three categories for describing librarians' identities in relation to teaching: Teacher-Librarians, Librarians Who Teach, and Not a Teacher. Teacher-Librarians specifically described themselves as teachers or thought of the work they did as teaching, whereas Librarians Who Teach recognized that part of their job involved teaching, but they did not necessarily identify as teachers. The one respondent in the Not a Teacher category specifically distanced themselves from the identity of teacher when doing librarian work,

even if the librarian work involved teaching, but was willing to accept the teacher identity when describing their work teaching a credit course outside of the library.

Perhaps a similar, but slightly expanded, framing could be helpful in thinking about librarians who are doing work that could also be considered educational development. One category could be Educational Developer and Librarian, for those who adopt both identities and consider the work they are doing to be both librarianship and educational development. Another category could be Librarian Who Engages in Educational Development, for those who still consider themselves to be primarily librarians but recognize that some of the work they do aligns with educational development. A third category could be Educational Developer or Librarian, for those who may consider themselves as doing both types of work in different contexts but see the two roles or identities as being distinct. And a final category could be Not an Educational Developer, for those librarians who do work that could be considered educational development, such as offering workshops for faculty, but who explicitly see this work as being librarianship. These categories are not perfect, and additional research would be needed to determine the value of such framing, but I offer it as one possibility for thinking about how to characterize librarians' involvement in educational development.

In the end, I may not be able to provide an answer that will satisfy everyone as to when librarians should be considered to be doing educational development or how this should be considered distinct from their work as librarians. My own perspective is that librarians should be thought of as acting in an educational developer role if that is how they characterize their own work. I do not think that they must give up their identity as librarians, or specifically work in an educational development unit, to adopt the educational developer role. I also think that many librarians could still be seen as being involved in educational development work, even if they do not think of themselves as being educational developers. However, other librarians, and educational developers, may have a different perspective.

Implications

There are important implications as to whether librarians should be considered to be acting as educational developers or are recognized by educational developers as capable of leading educational development initiatives.

Implications for Librarians and Educational Developers

One potential implication is that librarians who think of themselves as doing educational development may approach the design or implementation of their programming with greater intentionality. Rather than offering the occasional workshop for faculty, which can be valuable but unlikely to create significant long-term change, they may be more likely to develop structured programs with clearly identified goals and outcomes. They may also be more likely to consult a wider range of resources, such as literature from the field of educational development or the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL), as they develop their programming.

It also seems likely that librarians who consider themselves to be educational developers, or recognize their work as being educational development, may be more eager to seek out opportunities to collaborate with educational developers. In addition, they may be more willing to share their work in educational development journals or at educational development conferences, which could support increased opportunities for dialogue between developers and librarians.

Likewise, if librarians are recognized by developers as capable of acting as educational developers, or doing educational development work, developers may be more likely to reach out to librarians as potential collaborative partners, or even potential leaders within educational development units. However, if the support that librarians provide for faculty, such as offering workshops, is thought of by developers as being only librarian work, then it seems likely that opportunities for potentially beneficial partnerships may be missed.

Increased collaboration between librarians and educational developers could result in higher-quality educational development programming. In a previous article, I argued that educational development programs are more likely to be successful “if they are well-designed, well-resourced, and longer-term” (Hammons, 2022, p. 29). While librarians are capable of delivering well-designed, and occasionally even well-resourced, educational development programming on their own, on the whole, it can be challenging for librarians to offer sustained educational development programming. Librarians have significant responsibilities, and one of the barriers to librarians engaging in educational development is lack of time (Fribley et al., 2021). Having the support of educational developers in the design, implementation, and promotion of librarian-led educational development programs could significantly improve librarians’ ability to offer programming long term. It may also provide a credibility that may be missing if the librarian goes it alone. In my case, the opportunity to offer Teaching Information Literacy as an endorsement for which participants receive official recognition through the Drake Institute has likely contributed to the endurance of the program.

From the perspective of developers, the opportunity for increased partnership or collaboration with librarians could also prove beneficial. Brinthaup et al. (2019) noted that “very few centers for teaching and learning (CTLs) can do everything they would like to do, with respect to services offered, populations served, and resources provided” (para. 1). Increased involvement of librarians in educational development could allow such units to expand the number of programs that they are able to provide as well as the range of topics that they can cover, as librarians have expertise on many topics appropriate for educational development programming, such as copyright and intellectual property, scholarly communication practices, and research data management and visualization.

Librarians may also be able to provide a distinct perspective that would be valuable to educational development programs. Simmons (2005) described librarians as “disciplinary discourse mediators,”

noting that librarians being both “insiders and outsiders of the classroom” places them in a strong position to be able to mediate between novice learners and disciplinary experts (p. 298). While Simmons does not explicitly explore this role within the context of librarians acting as educational developers, the ability for librarians to see the perspectives of both students and faculty could be of great value when librarians engage as educational developers. Indeed, in their survey of CTL directors, Mader and Gibson (2019) found that the directors recognized the “unique perspective” brought by librarians, due to the ways in which they interact with students, as one of the benefits of increased librarian involvement in CTL programming (p. 788).

Thus, whether librarians think of themselves as educational developers, or are recognized by developers as being capable of doing this work, could have significant implications for both groups in terms of the range and quality of educational development programming that can be offered.

Implications for Defining Educational Development

There may also be broader implications of this discussion in regard to the understanding of educational development as a field and who should be counted as an educational developer. I have argued that librarians should be considered to be acting as educational developers when they characterize their work as being educational development and that they do not need to stop being librarians to adopt this role. I have also argued that librarians can be seen as engaging in educational development work, even if they do not specifically adopt the identity.

If librarians can be considered to be acting as educational developers, what other groups could also be considered as doing the work of educational development? Where should the line be drawn between what is educational development and what is not? When describing the endorsement program at Ohio State, I mentioned that any unit on campus can propose and manage an endorsement. If, for example,

representatives from the wellness center were to propose an endorsement to teach faculty stress management techniques, would the program facilitators from the wellness center also qualify as educational developers? Under the broad description of educational development as a field that is provided by the POD Network, an argument could be made that they should, but this may not be an argument that is accepted by all who consider themselves educational developers. For those who may be uncomfortable in describing librarians, or others, who engage in educational development work as educational developers, this could point to the need for additional consideration of the qualifications required to be an educational developer.

Recommendations

In order to take advantage of the expertise that librarians have, and their ability to act in an educational developer role or take on educational development work, some initial recommendations for educational developers include:

- Reach out to your librarians to identify any educational development programming they are currently offering. While librarians may not always use the term “educational development” or “faculty development,” many libraries offer programs directed at faculty, such as workshops, and may be open to partnering with their educational development center to increase the reach of their programs.
- Invite librarians to participate in your educational development programming. Librarians may hesitate to participate in educational development programming, especially at those institutions where they do not have faculty status, as they may not think the programming is directed at them. However, the more librarians participate in educational development, the more likely that they, and you, will start to see opportunities for collaboration (Bowles-Terry & Sobel, 2022; Mader & Gibson, 2019).

- If librarians are already involved in your programs, invite them to co-present or co-publish with you. Many librarians, especially those with faculty status, have scholarship requirements and will often welcome opportunities for presentation or publication.
- Consider implementing, if possible, some type of affiliate program where those who are not officially part of your unit can still get credit for their educational development work. Fribley et al. (2021) noted that librarians who work at libraries that specifically include educational development as part of their mission are more likely to feel empowered to engage in the work. Providing an option for librarians (and others) to be formally recognized for their role in educational development could increase librarians' interest in becoming involved. For example, I have included my status as an affiliate with the Drake Institute as part of my promotion and tenure materials as a way to demonstrate the campus-wide impact of my work.

Conclusion

As Mi (2015) noted, technological change and other forces have rapidly altered the role of libraries, and librarians can no longer focus their attention primarily on providing access to resources. Instead, "it has become imperative for librarians to redefine and realign the role and identity of academic libraries" (p. 26). For some librarians, this redefinition has included the integration of educational development into their conception of the appropriate work for librarians. Librarians have demonstrated the ability to design and lead educational development initiatives, and some librarians explicitly consider at least some of their work to be educational development. For educational developers, recognition of this interest, and of the ability of librarians to play leadership roles in educational development, opens up the potential for increased higher-level collaborations between librarians and developers. However, a consideration of librarians as educational developers

also raises questions about how educational development should be defined and who can be considered an educational developer.

Biography

Jane Hammons, MSLIS, MS, is an Assistant Professor and the Teaching and Learning Engagement Librarian at The Ohio State University Libraries, where she focuses on supporting the integration of information literacy into the curriculum through educational development. Her research interests center on the faculty-focused model of information literacy and librarians acting in an educational developer role.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The author has no conflict of interest.

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