NAIT Library Embedded Librarian in an Online or Blended Course: Guidelines

Online or blended courses with information literacy activities and/or assignments are good candidates for an Embedded Librarian (EL). The librarian in the course will provide personalized library and information literacy assistance at the time of need and offer meaningful instruction within the course in the form of postings to the entire class. Suggestions for search strategies and appropriate sources will be timely and relevant as they coincide with students’ specific assignments. The benefit of having an EL reply to postings in a single discussion forum throughout the course means that all students have access to the information and can learn from it.

Course developers should contact Jodi Lommer at NAIT Library, jodil@nait.ca, to discuss the potential for having an EL in an online or blended course.

Role of the Course Instructor

- Contact Jodi Lommer at least a week in advance of each new section of a course to request the services of an EL.
- Give permission for the EL to have access to the Moodle course with instructor and editing privileges at least a week in advance of each new section of a course.
  - Access to online degree courses (i.e., BTECH or BBA courses) contact degreesupport@nait.ca
  - Access to all other courses contact helpline@nait.ca
- Provide the course overview and description of the assignments to the EL.
- Introduce the EL to the students in the course.
- Refer students to the Library Questions & Tips discussion board or EL when questions are asked in other discussion boards that the librarian is not monitoring or by emails directly to the instructor

Role of the Embedded Librarian

Familiarity with Course Content

- Review the entire Moodle course site.
- Read the course overview to be familiar with course content and research activities.

Introductions & Contact Information

- Post a personal introduction to the Introductions discussion forum.
- Provide students with contact information and hours of availability.

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Information Literacy Content

- Embed & update any information literacy content or activities (e.g., IL Moodle books, iNAIT Assignment tutorial, IllumiNAITing Academic Integrity, links to Online Library Classes or other IL content) as discussed with the instructor.
- Consult with the Instructor before editing Moodle class content.
- Assist in the creation of information literacy assignments (e.g., citation assignments, library database searching assignments).
- Enable the NAIT Library block.
- Enable @NAITLibrary Twitter feed widget, if requested.

Library Questions & Tips Forum

- Include a brief forum description indicating:
  - How it will be beneficial for students to post their questions in this forum.
  - The EL’s hours of availability (most often set for regular work hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00am-4:00pm).
  - EL contact information (i.e., direct e-mail and phone number) for students who do not wish to post their questions publicly.
  - That posting questions to the Library Questions & Tips discussion board is entirely optional.
- Reply to students’ questions on discussion board during established hours.
- Suggest alternate ways for students to access library help on weekends and evenings, such as Ask Us services on the library website (phone, text, IM and email).
- Post a message in advance to inform students if the EL will be unable to reply during regular posted hours.
  - Find suitable coverage should the EL be absent for more than two work-days during the course.
- Set up and monitor additional information literacy discussion forums as requested by the instructor.

Research Tips & Posts

- Provide weekly to biweekly research & library tips on the Library Questions & Tips forum focusing on challenging areas that have been identified in the course (e.g., search tips, finding scholarly/academic information, APA citations).
- Focus on facilitating students in their search for appropriate resources, rather than providing them with specific resources or content.
- Direct students whenever possible to resources and services available on the library website.
- Refer any non-research and course-related questions to the instructor.

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End of Course Feedback

- Provide instructors with feedback regarding student comments and concerns as expressed through the forum or via e-mail.

What an Embedded Librarian cannot do:

- Facilitate the course content.
- Interpret or critique the instructor’s assignments with students.
- Discuss the marking rubric for course assignments with students.
- Grade any student assignments.

Levels of Service

An Instruction Librarian can be embedded for an entire course or a specific set of time (e.g., 3 weeks before a research-focused assignment is due). EL can be embedded with two levels of service:

1. **Level 1**
   
The EL will enable the Moodle library block, create a Library Questions & Tips forum and provide students’ with their contact information. The EL will provide course-end feedback.

   The EL will not proactively provide research tips & library news but will be available to assist students with their research and citation questions, if needed.

2. **Level 2**
   
The EL will perform all of the duties of the Level 1 EL and also post weekly research tips & library news in the Library Questions & Tips forum. The EL will collaborate with the course instructor to create and upload IL content, if needed.