Book Clubs in Academic Libraries: A Case Study and Toolkit

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*This is the vision statement we used to promote and
advocate for our programming.*

Executive Summary

This toolkit is designed to inform the academic librarian or staff member about book clubs hosted in an academic library. The toolkit guides academic librarians and staff through building meaningful and effective book clubs at their institutions through an overview of extant literature, the results of a cross-institutional survey, a case-study, and through a series of best practices. It provides the academic librarian and staff with language about the vision and value of such a program.

Acknowledgements

Introduction

In Autumn 2018, the University of Washington Tacoma Library and the University of Washington Tacoma Center of Equity and Inclusion launched the pilot program of Real Lit[erature]: Reading for Social Justice, a book club in an academic setting with a focus on young adult fiction.

Real Lit[erature] is envisioned as a thematic reading and discussion program that engages the campus community through literature-based outreach.

The goals of Real Lit were to create a greater awareness and discussion of the experiences that are being had by our students, staff, and community members. By interacting with narratives that reflect different experiences, it has provided opportunities to dialogue with peers about shared and disparate experiences. Additional benefits include creating community by reducing isolation, and enhancing campus education through peer-based discussion groups.

After a successful pilot, Real Lit[erature] will now be offered quarterly.

The lessons learned from the pilot are myriad, and we wanted to share with our academic librarian colleagues some of the key takeaways. From collaboration to marketing, from book selection to frameworks for anti-oppressive facilitation, we believe our experience and strategies offer a strong foundation for a toolkit.

Why a toolkit?

There are two primary reasons for creating such a toolkit:

1. To promote this sort of programming within academic libraries by highlighting benefits and outcomes; and

2. To support open access resources within the library community as a way to underscore the importance of resource availability.

Promotion of this sort of programming

We believe that this sort of programming offers multiple benefits to academic campuses:

1. Building campus community by increasing empathy

2. Creating closer connections to students, faculty, and staff over literature, which in turn may facilitate future library interactions

3. Increase campus visibility through programming

4. Highlight library services and programming, instead of library resources

Open Access

We firmly believe in the importance of open access publishing, which we define as a research output that is distributed free of cost and available readily online. In addition, we have added a creative commons license to promote reuse.

Why? Restricting access to academic research through paywalls and subscriptions to journals poses an unnecessary fiscal burden

on smaller institutions; this, in turn favors wealthier institutions. By promoting open access, we are advocating for greater equality in access to information.

PART I

CASE STUDY: UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON TACOMA

In what follows, we present a case study of creating a social justice oriented book club at the University of Washington Tacoma.

Inspiration

Real Lit[erature] at UW Tacoma was inspired by the American Library Associations Great Stories Club. An amazing funding opportunity for libraries working with underserved teenagers, we agree that "explor[ing] questions of race, equity, identity, and history" as a way to share experiences is important and that libraries are a locus for this type of programming.[1]

Yet we realized that we would have to adapt the concept to make it more relevant to college students and staff and faculty, on an urban serving campus, and decided to make a few changes to the model. (Note: we did not apply for ALA funding).

First, we shifted the focus away from underserved teenagers to allow for a broader audience to be reached. Secondly, we chose a title title suited to our campus, instead of relying on the list provided by the ALA. This is something we will discuss further in this toolkit, but it is important to note early on.

We did adopt the structure of providing books for participants to keep as their own. This aspect of the book club was important, as it addresses issues of socioeconomic disparities and allows for inclusion of all students regardless of material means.

1. "Great Stories Club," American Library Association, 2017, accessed January 15, 2019, https://apply.ala.org/greatstories/about-gsc.

At your library and campus:

What authors, public figures, intellectuals, or community members inspire or motivate you? What sort of framework would be helpful for a book club at your institution? We encourage you to find your own inspiration, motivation, and/or foundation that works for your campus.

Campus Context

This sort of programming would work on many campuses, but we want to stress the context of our university and why we felt like this sort of program would resonate at UW Tacoma.

First, data from a panel on student experience indicated that students did not see themselves reflected in the relatively homogenous, primarily white demographics of staff and faculty, and that this presented a barrier to learning and a lack of spaces to discuss experiences. UW Tacoma's self-reported ethnicity of faculty and staff shows over 60% white, with another 13% that did not report.[1]

Second, departments and campus units are relatively siloed at UW Tacoma, which acts as another barrier towards dialogue.

How could we optimize for program success in this environment? What sort of programming was needed at UW Tacoma in particular? What sort of framework would help optimize for success?

1. "University of Washington -- Tacoma Campus / Student Life / Diversity," accessed Feb 5, 2019, https://www.collegefactual.com/colleges/ university-of-washington-tacoma-campus/student-life/ diversity/#chart-faculty-ethnic-diversity.

Collaboration

We chose to collaborate with the University of Washington Center for Equity and Inclusion for three main reasons. One, their expressed mission and vision supported the vision of Real Lit[erature]. Two, bolstering this relationship has been a long-term goal for our library, and we are finally staffed enough to pursue it. Finally, their established connections with students, and a history of discussion-based programming made for a natural fit, and was also strategic, to increase visibility.

At your library and campus

Are there any natural partners for the theme you've picked? Consider who is currently having the conversations you want to be participating in.

Naming of the Club

Initially, we spoke of the book club as our "diverse literature" reading group, but realized quickly that this language was unwieldy and would not catch people's attention.

After brainstorming a few names with The Center for Equity and Inclusion ("Real Talk Reads", to tie it to an extant program on our campus named "Real Talk") and roughly surveying extant names of academic book clubs, we changed tactics. We decided to ask the student workers at our library for name suggestions, as a way to find a name that might resonate with the student population on campus.

One of our student workers had the following to say:

> I like Real Talk Reads, and after a moment of thinking about more potential names I came up with Real Lit[erature] (it's a double entendre because lit is also slang word for something that is a very cool experience). Just a thought.

We used their suggestion after running it by other students. We

also really like the fact that giving a student the power to name a club meant for students sets a good precedent.

Stakeholders

We initially identified three major stakeholders (Students, Library, collaborative Campus Units) as audiences for this kind of programming, but quickly realized that there was expressed need from staff and faculty on campus to participate as well.

Below we describe these stakeholders on our campus.

Students

UW Tacoma's diverse student body includes a broad range of ethnic and family backgrounds, ages, interests and experience. More than 80 percent of students transfer to UW Tacoma from one of the many community colleges in the area or from other universities. Freshmen from high schools all over the Puget Sound and beyond make up a growing portion of students. Add to the mix students who are returning to school after years away, military personnel and their families, and professionals working on new career goals. Our students create a kaleidoscope of perspectives crucial to learning. [1]

1. " About the University of Washington Tacoma," University of Washington

UW Tacoma students are primarily non-traditional — that is, not the traditional age of college bound students. Many hold jobs while attending school, and have other obligations (such as family) that puts significant stressors on their time.

The implications of this for a book club is simply that there is little time for student extra-curricular activity. We thus actively had to consider in which ways to motivate students to attend.

Faculty and Staff

UW Tacoma has a faculty of 347 as of Autumn 2018, with a 16:1 faculty-student ratio on campus.[2]

According to the UW Tacoma Staff Association Bylaws, the staff on campus consists of classified staff (full or part-time, permanent or temporary); of professional staff (full or part-time, permanent or temporary); and of librarians (full or part-time, permanent or temporary). For the purpose of this toolkit, it is important to note that the hourly staff have barriers on their time that allow for less flex-time than faculty.

Tacoma, accessed January 15, 2019, https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/about-uw-tacoma/about-university-washington-tacoma.

2. "UW Tacoma 2018-2019 Facts," University of Washington Tacoma, accessed January 15, 2019, https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/about-uw-tacoma/uw-tacoma-2018-19-facts.

Library

The mission of the UW Tacoma Library is to help our students, faculty and staff achieve their goals. We accomplish this through exceptional services, resources, spaces, and technologies. We work at a systemic level integrating with the university's curriculum and pedagogy, engaging in contemporary processes of scholarly communication, amplifying the reach of our faculty's research, and by building partnerships within and beyond the university.[3]

Currently, the UW Tacoma Library employs 17 staff (8 librarians, 2 professional staff, and 8 classified staff), with the potential for growth as the campus expands. It also employs 19 student workers (4 graduate student positions, 15 undergraduate positions).

It has only been recently that library staffing has been filled, if not to a sustainable level, then to one which allows for the integration of programming into the library (beyond meeting basic service needs).

Other Campus Units

We collaborated primarily with the UW Tacoma Center for Equity and Inclusion:

3. "About the Library," University of Washington Tacoma, accessed January 15, 2019, https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/library/about-library.

> In conjunction with UW Tacoma's diversity statement, the Center for Equity & Inclusion aims to enhance campus education, develop community partnerships, and cultivate our diverse campus community. We strive to foster our diverse learners education and transform communities through a welcoming and inclusive space, programming, and resources for students, staff and faculty, in efforts to engage and learn through the exploration of human differences.[4]

The Center for Equity and Inclusion hosts a conversation about community issues called "Real Talk". We wanted to indicate the affinity between that dialogue and the one for the book club, and thus drew on extant branding.

It is noteworthy that there have been several staffing shifts at the Center for Equity and Inclusion, including during the pilot of Real Lit[erature]. These did not, however, substantively affect the way in which the book club operated.

At your library and campus:

Who are the stakeholders on your campus? Think about what campus units and/or community partnerships you can harness to work collaboratively. Are there extant community conversations happening that have recognizable branding that you can use to create visibility?

4. "Center for Equity and Inclusion," University of Washington Tacoma, accessed January 15, 2019, https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/equity/center-equity-inclusion.

Budget

As the initial run of Real Lit[erature] was conceived as a pilot program, both the UW Tacoma Library and the Center for Equity and Inclusion contributed funds to optimize for success. The UW Tacoma Library felt it important to have the funding for the books come from the Library, and provided the funding for food, movie tickets, and promotional materials. The budget for speaker fees came directly from the Center for Equity and Inclusion.

Framework

Based on the described context out which we are operating, several frameworks/philosophies served as conceptual backdrops for Real Lit[erature].

1. We decided to draw on Nina Simon's Of/By/For All movement, which stipulates that people will be involved and invested in their community organization if they are OF their interest, created BY folks within their community, and FOR their use and enjoyment.[1]

2. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's The Danger of a Single Story TED Talk, which posits that that multiple narratives are essential to understand and promote equity, was a key factor in the choice of novels. Additionally the notion that stories can save lives and connect us to ourselves is a part of our conceptual foundation as well.[2]

3. Elif Shafak's TED Talk, entitled The Politics of Fiction, serves as a framework to demonstrate how the power of fiction can help overcome identity politics and how it helps us leap over cultural walls. We emailed this talk to participants ahead of the first meeting.[3]

1. Nina Simon, "Of, By & For All", accessed February 12, 2019.
2. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie,"The Danger of a Single Story," TED: Ideas Worth Spreading, July 2009, accessed January 15, 2019, https://www.ted.com/talks/ chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en.

At your library and campus:

There are many frameworks that you might use to inform your programming. What sort of frameworks are being discussed by your academic community or your peers?

3. Elif Shafak, "The Politics of Fiction," TED: Ideas Worth Spreading, July 2010, accessed January 15, 2019, https://www.ted.com/talks/ elif_shafak_the_politics_of_fiction?language=en.

Operations

Picking a Title

We explicitly picked a young adult (YA) title for this book club. There were many reasons that contributed to this choice, but the main reason is that their reading level makes them more accessible. Though we considered a few adult novels, we ultimately decided to stay with the choice of YA.

> Autumn 2018 Pilot: The Hate U Give. Summary: Angie Thomas' NYTimes bestseller, The Hate U Give, looks at how the life of Starr Williams is upended after the death of her friend, Khalil, at the hands of a white police officer. We picked this title because of its currency — police violence against people of color in the United States — and because the nuanced way in which the author addresses people's identity.
> Winter 2019: The 57 Bus. Summary: Dashka Slater's award-winning book looks at the ways in which two teenagers' lives intersected — how agendered Sasha was attacked by Richard, who then faced adult sentencing in a prison-industrial complex that is not infrequently racist and biased against people of color.

For the Winter Quarter, we wanted campus (and students in particular), to drive the selection process. We gathered a list of six titles that discussed contemporary and current themes (e.g., Sexual Assault, LGBTQ issues, Muslim-American identity), and created a

poll for current book club members to vote on. We also promoted the poll via the Library's blog.

At your library and campus:

Think about what titles might make sense on your campus. Are there courses being offered that could help scaffold the conversations happening? What are some of the current events or social injustices that are in the media? Also think strategically vis a vis a novel and its popularity.

Structuring the Meeting: Community Agreements

As part of our programming, we wanted to ensure an equitable space where every voice was respected. To that end, we drafted community agreements that we shared with participants before the first meeting, and also read outloud when we met. Students had the choice to add agreements or change them, but no one choose to alter them. Please find our community agreements included in the appendix.

Note: During our discussion, we raised the issue of "safe" versus "brave" spaces.[1] Due to the sensitive nature of the conversation, we felt strongly about not promising a safe space. Participants responded well to this notion.

At your library and campus:

1. Brian Arao and Kristi Clemens, "From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces A New Way to Frame Dialogue Around Diversity and Social Justice," in The Art of Effective Facilitation : Reflections from Social Justice Educators, ed. Lisa M. Landreman,(Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2013), 135-150.

What agreements make sense for your community? How might these be adjusted depending on the title you pick? (Note: for the second iteration of Real Lit, we picked a title about gender identity. We modified our community agreements and placed "Respect others' pronouns" first on the list.

Scheduling

On our campus, we recently switched to a time schedule that allows for "community hour" from 12:30-1:30 with no classes scheduled at this time. The result of this schedule change has been that every department and club tries to schedule their meetings at this time. Additionally we have a large population of non-traditional students who work, have families, are in the military, etc. We have programs that meet entirely at night, or over the weekend, and we are a commuter campus with only a very small percentage of our students in on-campus housing. Scheduling any time means we are going to miss a large section of students.

For the pilot of this program, we chose to go with the community hour scheduling.

Structuring the Meeting: Land Acknowledgment

During our first meeting, we employed the practice recommended by LSPIRG and the Know the Land Territories Campaign.[2] We noted that "we are on the traditional territories of the Puyallup and the Puget Sound Salish" and expressed thanks for being able to carry out our work on their lands.

This practice is becoming more and more current in the library

2. "Know the Land: Territories Campaign," LSPIRG: Creating Agents of Social Change, accessed Feb 1, 2019, http://www.lspirg.org/knowtheland/.

world, a a way to recognize the history of colonialism and to create more equitable spaces.

At your library and campus:

What indigenous land is your campus on? Is acknowledging land a practice on your campus?

Structuring the Meetings: Pronouns

Library and Center for Equity and Inclusion staff modeled the importance of sharing pronoun preferences with participants. Thus, an introduction looked something like this: "Hi, my name is Johanna, my pronouns are she/her, and I'm a librarian here at UW Tacoma. I'm interested in this book club because I want to create a space where difficult conversations about issues in our community can be shared."

Modeling pronouns was an intentional practice repeated during each session to be inclusive and respectful of gender diverse and expansive identities.

Facilitating the Discussion

Facilitating a discussion is always a balancing act. It requires prompting participants in a way that encourages and engages them, but also does not push. It is largely a soft skill, one that requires intentionality, but also reliance of intuition and ability to react in the moment.

Despite this nature, we took some intentional steps towards a philosophy of facilitation. We were inspired by philosophies and

toolkits such as Anti-Oppression Resource and Training Alliance's (AORTA) Anti-Oppression Facilitation for Democratic Processes guide, and Nina Simon's OfByForAll philosophies. The AORTA facilitation process gave us guideposts for what type of space we wanted to create, but this guide is really intended for committee meetings. This meant that there were some sections that were less applicable to our setting, such as the bullet point noting that facilitators do not let any individual take the group off-topic or off-task.[3] As a coordinating team, we discussed this, and noted that this space was meant for discussion of tough, complex topics, and therefore we do not want to police if something is off-topic.

Having the shared foundation helped as discussions evolved. Knowing that our role is to promote space to engage shifted our focus from getting the participants to answer questions, to finding topics that rang true for participants. Rather than using the text as the point of discussion, we used it as our point of engagement with bigger topics. An example of this is taking a character and defining a concept from their point of view, and then asking the participants how they define this concept for themselves.

Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History's Of/By/For All framework also gave us some guidance and structure in our approach to facilitating. Simply put, this framework states that if you want your programming to be for your community, it needs to be of and by said community.

"Putting up a "welcome" sign is not enough. To involve people in

3. "Anti-Oppression Facilitation Guide," AORTA: Anti-Oppression Training and Resource Alliance, June 2017, accessed January 8, 2019. http://aorta.coop/portfolio_page/anti-oppressive-facilitation/.

> meaningful, sustainable ways, you can't just make programs FOR them. You have to involve them in their creation.[4]

We used this framework to shape our facilitation by putting it in dialogue with the AORTA guide. We wanted the participants of the reading group to feel that this group was of them, and by them. By giving them space to define what they wanted to discuss, and to lead the conversations based on what they responded to, this gave them ownership.

Staff and Faculty? Student Choice

As discussed above, we saw more expressed interest by staff and faculty than we initially anticipated. Given the potential for conflict of interest (students in a voluntary club conversing with faculty from whom they were taking classes and getting evaluated by), we decided to invite only students to an initial orientation session, and ask them if they felt comfortable having faculty and staff join the discussion.

When asked, students expressed that having a breadth of voices present in the room was part of the reason they chose to participate in the book club to begin with. We honored that choice, and invited interested faculty and staff to attend the next meeting.

4. "Anti-Oppression Facilitation Guide," AORTA: Anti-Oppression Training and Resource Alliance, June 2017, accessed January 8, 2019. http://aorta.coop/portfolio_page/anti-oppressive-facilitation/.

Twitter Hashtag for Campus-wide discussion

We wanted to make sure that all of campus felt welcome in discussing the book choices with members of Real Lit[erature], even if they could not attend the discussion sessions. We created a twitter hashtag (#RealLitUWT), and regularly tweeted using the Library's and the Center for Equity and Inclusion's social media platforms to promote it. Though we did not see any engagement using that hashtag, we think there is value in having a documented record of the Real Lit[erature] conversations.

Assessment and Participant Feedback

We view any qualitative feedback we gathered, as well as quantitative data about attendance, as information we can use to improve future iterations of the programming. In other words: we can learn from the data, and adjust future programming accordingly.

Our goals for the pilot were set based on historical knowledge of event attendance/student engagement on our campus. We also took into consideration the realities of an urban-serving commuter campus: there is limited time for students to pursue extra-curricular activities.

Based on these expectations, we set these following goals to measure pilot success:

- 5-10 students enrolling
- 3-5 students completing the pilot program
- Publishing a library story and/or blog about the program.

We measured these enrollment goals by taking attendance during each book club meeting. On average, we saw the following results:

- 8 individuals/session participated on average
- 13 attending for the orientation session

- 17 participants sitting in on the skype call
- We published 1 library story and 3 blog posts about the pilot. Links to these are in the Appendix.

Given our stated goals, we concluded the pilot program successfully.

Participant Feedback

Additionally, we also gathered participant feedback before and during the pilot of the book club. To gather this feedback, we used Google Forms for the pre- and interim surveys. For the post-survey, we relied on passing out a paper survey.

The text of these surveys can be found in the Appendices.

Participant feedback, especially during and after the programming, was limited. We understand that the responses may thus not be representative of the opinions of all the participants. Here is some of the feedback we received:

- Pre Survey (13 responses)
    - Strong desire to have open dialogue about current issues ("I hope to engage in discussions about discrimination, a prominent topic in today's society, and hear the opinions of my peers")
    - Interest in having a place to discuss literature ("...also I get to read a book ... on school time so that's nice")
- Interim Survey (1 response)
    - Request for Community Agreements to be shared each session

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- ◦ Thoughts about how to get quiet group members to participate (writing out answers to questions, going around in a circle responding to prompts)

At your library and campus:

What are reasonable goals for a pilot program on your campus? What types of participant feedback would be valuable for your library and your programing?

Reflections

The content of this section has been previously published, but reframed here for this context. (cf. Bull & Jacobsen Kiciman, 2018).

These are the high-level takeaways that we learned through piloting our book club. Each is discussed below.

1. Empower Students
2. Relevance for Academic Libraries
3. Simplify the Process
4. Gauging Demand
5. Marketing, marketing, marketing

Give as much power to your students as you can

We believe that the sharing and cultivating of knowledge and experience is activism, and moves towards social justice. As such, decentering decisions from the organizers and into the hands of the participants is an important part of our pedagogy.

Despite marketing primarily to undergraduate students, we saw a high rate of interest from staff and faculty. Given our stated goals, however, we wanted to keep the focus on students and student voices. We thus gave the students the choice if they wanted

to include staff and faculty in the discussion. They discussed and decided that they wanted to include everyone in the conversation. Students informally mentioned that they appreciated being given the choice.

Students were also given a short list of options for the following quarter's iteration of the book club, letting them vote on what title and theme they would like the book club to address next. We made it clear that they were not being asked to commit to participating again by voting. Rather, their needs are shaping the direction the book club takes as it moves forward.

Relevance to Academic Libraries

The benefits for students and librarians are twofold. First, these conversations that are not tied to assignments and extant power structures allows for the fostering of genuine relationships. This, we hope, may result in reduced library anxiety and encourage students to feel more comfortable using other library services. Second, engaging in dialogue and understanding the concerns and experiences being had by members of the community allows for greater mutual empathy.

However, in creating a book club grounded in principles of social justice, it is our hope that we create and foster a space for hard conversations to be happening through the lens of literature, and giving people to synthesize and respond. The energy, enthusiasm and honesty brought to the book club discussions was remarkable.

Keep it simple

In order to attract busy students to an extracurricular, we created multiple incentives — movie tickets, food, author skype call, and free books. And yet it proved difficult to get students to claim movie tickets. However, one of the students to fill out the satisfaction survey felt that these perks were important, noting that

"[a]ll the resources and perks were greatly appreciated and kept me motivated to stay involved to be part of the good discussions…."

The questions we used for facilitating each discussion were based on the promotional material distributed by the publisher. Very much grounded in the literature, the questions assumed that participants had read the relevant portions of the ntext. We quickly realized that keeping the questions general enough was key for promoting inclusive dialogue. This allowed participants who had not completed all the reading to participate as well. Thus, questions framed as follows created a more lively dialogue: "how does this character define community — and how do you define community?" Questions that were too specific, or too literary in nature, resulted in more silence.

There is a demand

Participants framed their interest in terms of having the space and time to have discussions about current events impacting their lives. One student said that participation in Real Lit would allow for "discussions about discrimination, a prominent topic in today's society, and hear the opinions of my peers." Another underscored that at the forefront of their mind was "understanding of issues among poc [persons of color] and intersectionality within different communities" and that reading a novel on school time was an additional perk.

Marketing

In our own pilot, we found that participants each mentioned a different marketing tool when asked how they had learned about the book club. Our takeaway is to stress the importance of a multi-pronged marketing and communication strategy to reach the broadest audience possible. In what follows, we highlight strengths and weaknesses of each tool.

Campus Television: There is a centralized advertising service on our campus that streams advertisements for events, programs, and other campus news across several flat-screen televisions that are in key buildings on campus (including the library). We used the campus television screens to inform campus about the book club in the weeks leading up to the first meeting. We also advertised the skype conversation.

- Strength: Visually appealing; reaches interdisciplinary audience
- Weakness: No way of knowing if people are seeing it; low engagement factor

Campus Listserv: There are several relevant campus email listservs that target different audiences: the whole campus, faculty, staff. On our campus, faculty especially appreciate the listserv as a way to understand what is happening on campus.

- Strength: Reaches faculty
- Weakness: Clunky interface; readers of the digest have to click on an attachment to view message.

Bulletin Boards: There are 22 bulletin boards across campus buildings that allow cross- or interdepartmental postings.

- Strength: Good way to reach students, especially in the student dormitory on campus
- Weakness: High time commitment to walk across campus; ecologically unfriendly; bears some printing costs

Social Media: The UW Tacoma library runs a blog, and has a Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram account. We utilized all four online social media platforms with messaging dependent on platform and audience.

- Strength: Easy, low-cost way to reach a broad audience
- Weakness: Efficacy depends on how engaged the community is with social media to begin with

Other: Word of mouth is an important tool to promote events, at least at UW Tacoma. We were able to increase attendance the day of the skype conversation by talking with students at library service points.

- Strength: Direct engagement with stakeholders
- Weakness: Does not reach the entire campus; must be used in combination with other marketing channels

At your library and campus:

   How does your campus communicate with its stakeholders? Consider the importance of word of mouth communication as well, and use time at a public service point to promote the programming.

Value: Book Clubs as Advocacy

We believe that: The sharing and cultivation of knowledge and experience is advocacy, a form of activism, and moves towards social justice.

The processes of setting goals, including the ramifications of fiction reading on empathy; selecting a title very specifically for its content and the discussions this content would raise; the intentional collaboration with the Center for Equity and Inclusion; giving students priority and allowing them to include or not include faculty and staff out of respect for potential power dynamics: All of these aspects are an attempt to create an experience that is mindful and intentional, and makes reading not a passive experience, but one of activism and advocacy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a ballooning of articles on book clubs in academic libraries over the past few years, indicative, perhaps, of the growing engagement and role that academic libraries are playing in the extracurricular programming arena. Though many similarities emerge (incentivizing through providing books and refreshments), the goals of the clubs differed substantially.

Several broader themes emerged:

1. book clubs to increase reading engagement;

2. book clubs to promote interpersonal communication

3. book clubs to promote dialogic learning; and

4. book clubs for community building.

Book Clubs for Reading Engagement

Jansen (2018) situates book clubs hosted at academic libraries in the vacuum of summer, where there are fewer classes and generally more bandwidth for librarians to pursue extra programming. Framed as "collaborative and immersive learning", Penn State University Libraries collaborated with their es]academic tutoring center to "engage peer tutors [student employes] in reading and hope their enjoyment spread to other students who were on campus during the quiet summer term" (p. 258). Though their model differed from RealLit (summer reading vs. academic year; specific community of readers vs. open to the campus), some similarities emerge: reading YA novels, , providing snacks, and the use of marketing channels (campus television, posters, and word of mouth). The primary difference between the University of Washington, Tacoma's RealLit and Penn State's summer engagement book club resides in the use of topics in books to have difficult conversations on social justice (RealLit) versus the use of book for increasing reading engagement (Penn State).

Book Clubs for Modeling Interpersonal Skills

Kilham and Griffiths' (2017) model of book clubs at Quinnipiac University was envisioned to promote interprofessional communication skills (collaboration and respect) between healthcare students and faculty, creating a space to model conversation. Titles were selected strategically to correspond to curricular events, and were non-fiction; snacks were provided. Further, there were no repeated discussion times over the course of the academic term; instead, one session was set up to discuss the book. Instead of an author talk, Quinnipiac University Library chose to have expert academics within their community present a commentary on the work. Collaborators included the Center for Interprofessional Communication and the Office of Graduate Affairs. Though their data suggests a positive response to the book club, the authors noted a difficulty in attracting students who already have a busy schedule; this mirrors some of the thoughts and concerns experienced at the University of Washington, Tacoma. Benefits included expanding library services and forging connections with units across campus, which we have noted as well.

Book Clubs for Student Engagement

Goldberg and Trott (2012) give a succinct overview of the history of libraries' involvement in book clubs, with a focus on the role book clubs can play in readers advisory and in building community. Notable, perhaps, in the historical overview is the fact that many early book clubs in libraries supported marginalized groups — women in particular — and offered sites and spaces for these groups to discuss public issues. They note, in other words, a democratizing effect of the book clubs, as well as a supportive function for marginalized voices. This resonates with the stated goals of Real Lit[erature] at the University of Washington, Tacoma. Further of interest is their description of a non-fiction non-fiction book club on the Penn State Beaver campus: the ripple effect of hosting an author on student engagement (fundraising for the cause described in the book, writing papers for classes) was remarkable. They conclude with practical advice for campuses starting up, including marketing, collaboration, and other tips.

Book Clubs as Didactic Tools

Alvarez-Alvarez (2016) explores the role of reading clubs in Spain with a focus on dialogism: that is, the role of conversation in civic and literary education. Seen as much more didactic, the author seeks to understand the efficacy of reading clubs in promoting adult literary skills and reading comprehension through an interpersonal engagement. We chose to include this article here because of its focus on learning, though the clubs examined were hosted an public libraries and community centers, and because of its extraordinarily rich literature review. A key takeaway focused on book clubs as "social and cultural space[s] for discussion of controversial issues among people with different experiences, ideologies and tendencies on equal terms" (p. 240).

MacKay (2015) discusses the processes that Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia went through in order to adapt a campus reading group to a campus wide One Book program. This article reflects on the tasks associated with this type of large-scale reading program, and hints at the culture change that comes from integrating a text across curricula. This text proves particularly helpful when the Real Lit[erature] team began looking at scalability and creating a workflow.

Marland (2011) is a second source that reflects on academic book clubs as didactic tools. In this particular setting, the book club is meant to encourage language learners to read for fun, and in doing so, build language skills.

Book Clubs for Community Building

Fajardo (2010) seeks to encourage academic librarians to host book clubs, and highlights the benefits. Similar to Real Lit[erature], Fajardo focuses on the role of book clubs in promoting the library and its services on campus and creating community. The focus at St. Catherine's, an all-female institution, is on books written by women and women of color; it is clear from these choices that finding titles that make sense to the campus demographics is important. Fajardo also notes that popular titles with films associated with them see more interest than literary fiction. Similarly to Real Lit[erature], Fajardo found that finding the right time to meet was important to optimize attendance (lunch time, with snacks), and that by far the biggest benefit to the participants was the sense of discussion ideas with a diverse audience.

Limitations

There is rich scholarly literature about book clubs in school and public libraries, in no small part because book clubs have been an important part of programming for these types of libraries for a while. We chose not to include that literature here. Though there may be pedagogical overlap for why these library types choose to run book clubs (encourage reading, build community), we felt strongly that the focus should be on academic libraries.

At your library and campus:

   Think about what purpose you want your club to serve: building community? Highlighting marginalized voices? Promoting reading? Having scholarly conversation? Showing the breadth of services that an academic library can provide? Whichever purpose(s) you choose, make the goals clear in your vision statement and in the promotion of your club, to set the right expectations.

LIBRARY SURVEY: STATE OF THE FIELD

In order to situate the UW Tacoma Library book club within the parameters of what is happening professionally on a national level, we conducted a web scan of extant academic book clubs in the United States. The "state of the field" is important in so much as it helps us determine whether our work is unique or not, or whether we are acting as part of a larger, emergent trend.

What we found: **fiction-based book clubs that are sponsored or run by academic libraries in the United States seem to be limited in number.**

Below we present the details on limitations, methodology, and results.

Limitations

While comprehensive, the web scan to assess the state of the field was not exhaustive. Its function here is to demonstrate (in conjunction with the literature review), the prevalence of book clubs of academic campuses. We realize that book clubs without a web presence will automatically have been excluded from this search.

Survey: Methodology

Using Google.com, we conducted a search for library book clubs mentioned on publicly-viewable sites with ".edu" domain suffixes, limiting our results to the past year in order to examine groups with current programs.[1] We then used personal judgment to evaluate web information to determine if the programs were open to students and coordinated (in partnership or in whole) by the institution's library. We identified 25 groups this way.

We then used a list of R1 universities in the United States as compiled by Wikipedia and used the same search terms and date filter to identify book groups mentioned specifically on each individual university's domain. We identified an additional 15 groups this way. Overall, our searching included 142 universities. The spreadsheet we used to collect data can be viewed here.

---

1. Search phrase: .edu "library" AND ("book club" OR "book group")

Survey Results

We identified 40 book groups within a set of 142 universities. Of these, we were only able to positively identify 4 as exclusively fiction-based: University of Massachusetts Dartmouth's Science Fiction Book Club, Wake Forest University's Graphic Novel Book Club, Washington State University Spokane's Interprofessional Book Club, and Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis' Special Collections Book Club. Additional information was limited for this small dataset of 4, but at least 2 of them were in partnership between the university libraries and another organization (student engagement in one case and a bookstore in the other).

While we realize that our data set is not exhaustive, and limited to book clubs with web presence that met our search parameters, we can say with some confidence that fiction-based book clubs in academic libraries that are co-sponsored with other campus units are not currently prevalent in the United States.

It would be interesting to see how this trend played out internationally.

At your library and campus:

If you run a book club and you are interested in having it represented in our survey

results, please contact the authors. This document is published open access, and we are happy to make and document relevant revisions as they arise. These revisions will be clearly noted and dated.

TOOLKIT

What follows is a roadmap for academic library staff to follow in trying to create a fiction-based book club at their academic library.

How to use this Toolkit

You will be asked to consider a series of questions, follow a few activities, and think about your environment, in order to customize the experience to your campus. We believe that there is no one-size-fits-all model, and we encourage thinking that allows for a book club that is relevant to your stakeholders needs.

Please also refer to the Appendices for an example of our workflow and a checklist, which can adapt to meet your needs and make fit with your academic calendar.

Reasons to Host

There are any number of reasons to host a book club in your academic library. Below are just a few of them.

- Building community
- Highlighting marginalized voices
- Promoting reading
- Having scholarly conversations
- Showing the breadth of services that an academic library can provide
- Creating, sustaining, or strengthening collaborations with other campus units

You can use the text entry widget below to jot down notes about your priorities for this club. **Please note that these will not save.** Alternatively, you can download a print copy of the toolkit here.

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

`https://uw.pressbooks.pub/bookclubs/?p=123`

Stakeholders

Take some time to consider your stakeholders — those people who might have an interest in participating in a book club. These might include students, staff, faculty, even community members. You may want to think even more granularly: undergraduate students? First year students?

The following questions are meant to help you think through who might be interested in participating in your book club.

- Who are the main stakeholders on my campus?
- What activities exist for these groups on my campus?
- Who on my campus would benefit the most at this moment in time from having book-related conversations?

Partnerships & Creating Buy-In

There are multiple reasons to collaborate with other established units on campus. Using established in-roads allows for a wider reach, and draws students, faculty, and staff that might be disinterested in communications directly from the library, but are interested in communications from other units.

For our specific setting, we recognized that our unit had been uninvolved in campus programming for quite some time, and partnering with another unit would gain buy-in to us as a programming unit. We chose the Center for Equity and Inclusion intentionally for overlap in cause, but also because they were well established as a host of campus events.

Use the widget below to jot down some of the campus units who might be relevant to your book club. **Please note that these notes will not save.** Alternatively, you can download a print copy of the toolkit here.

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

`https://uw.pressbooks.pub/bookclubs/?p=136`

Next, you will want to reach out to these campus units to gauge interest. Feel free to adapt the following text for your purposes:

> "Dear _____, the [you Library Name] is considering starting a fiction-based book club. Studies show that reading fiction increases empathy, and reading together can build community. We are reaching out to see if you might be interested in collaborating

> on this endeavor, since your mission of [fill in their mission] aligns well with our strategic vision for this club. We look forward to hearing from you!"

From here, you will have to see who expresses interest, and go down your list if campus units do not have the bandwidth to collaborate. This can take time, but it is well worth your while to find a group on campus that you can work with as a way to strengthen your endeavor.

Budgeting

It is possible to run a book club on a shoestring budget. You will have to work with your collaborators and see what you agree on is important to provide to your book club participants.

A few budget items to think about:

1. A copy of the book for each your participants

    ◦ circa $10-$15/copy of book/participant

2. Refreshments (Cookies? Chips? Candy? Something catered? Tea and coffee?)

    ◦ Costs will vary, but it is possible to spend under $100 for a semester of non-perishable nibblies

3. Movie tickets, if you are timing a book club around the release of a feature film

    ◦ Costs will vary, but calculate $15/ticket/ participant

4. Speaker fees

    ◦ In our experience, these can range from $250 per thirty minute skype call to $1000 for an hour of conversation. The range is large.

5.   Costs for promotional materials (printing, etc.)

6.   Costs for miscellany (book plates, etc.)

When you have examined possible budget items, **create a budget request form for your department and/or to share with collaborators**. You are welcome to borrow the following format:

Budget Request Form:

1.   Library staff involved in planning

2.   Frequency

3.   Date funding decision needed by

4.   Starting date or quarter/term

5.   Anticipated goal or outcome from proposed event/program

6.   Alignment with strategic plan

7.   Co-sponsorship with other campus unit or external partners (not required)

Sample Budget Worksheet

Description	Library funds	Co-sponsor funds	Total funds
Book costs			
Snacks			
Other costs (list)			
Total:			

Branding

Once you've got a budget and campus partnerships, it is time to think of brandin — this is the step where you begin to create an image around your concept. We focus here on naming and creating a logo.

Club Name

A name should reflect what you plan on doing in the book club and should try to encapsulate your goals.
  Ask yourself:

- Are there event names already being used in the Library that could lend themselves to a new variation (TacTalk → TacReads)

- Are there event names already being used on campus that could lend themselves to a new variation (e.g., Real Talk → Real Literature)

- What sort of names might my stakeholders respond well to?

- Does the name I pick reflect the club's goals and values?

Logos

Remember, a logo encapsulates brand value and additional meaning. Start doodling, or play around with some design tools.

Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- What idea or ideas do you want your logo to represent?
- Is my logo recognizable?
- Is my logo scalable (for a flyer? campus television?)
- Is my logo relevant?
- Is my logo impactful?
- Is my logo respectful?

For actually creating the logo, here are some resources that have free account options for design and image tools:

- Canva: https://www.canva.com/
- Piktochart: https://piktochart.com

Co-branding

Next, think about whose departmental logo goes on the promotional materials.

Always be sure to check in with your campus partners about co-branding the event. We see it as a huge benefit to co-brand, because it indicates co-sponsorship, for one, and links your library to other campus units, thus raising visibility.

Choosing a Title

Once you have considered your stakeholders, framework, and brand, it is time to pick your title.

Picking a title is a delicate balancing act between an awareness of current events, an understanding of the campus and its interests, and finding something that will appeal to a larger group. It is also, quite frankly, a fun activity.

You may be making choices between:

- Fiction and Non-Fiction
- Adult, Young Adult, Middle Reader, or Children's
- Themes such as social justice, inclusivity, etc.
- Are there other choices that you need to make?

Tools for Title Choice

Here are some tools to help you locate titles that are current, relevant, diverse, and engaging.

1. Consider #OwnVoices Titles. Here is Bibliocommons' curated list of some of the most popular #ownvoices young adults novels (defined as: titles about diverse characters written by authors from that same diverse

group). This list was put together by the Portland Public Library.

2. Consider diverse YA Titles. School Library Journal's "Must-Have YA Titles" is a list of 42 titles recommended for all libraries. SLJ is the premiere publication for librarians and information specialists who work with children and teens.

3. YALSA (Young Adult Library Services Association) lists their Book Awards and Selected Booklists titles, and links out to The Coretta Scott King Awards, the Rainbow List, and other notable winners.

Marketing and Communication with Stakeholders

In order to get the word out about your new book club, you need to tap into the existing channels of communication on your campus. As our case study indicated, all channels of communication matter.

Brainstorm the major channels that exist on your campus. Who uses them? What are their pros and cons? Refer to your stakeholder list to make sure that they are represented in this activity.

Channel Type	Used By	Pros and Cons
Example: Campus TV Screen	Students	Highly visible

If you create a list, you will have a list of channels to use, and have verified that each of your stakeholder groups can be reached.

Here are some resources for Digital Rights Free images that you might use for marketing:

- Unsplash: https://unsplash.com/search/photos/digital

Next, you will need to jot out the message relevant to each stakeholder, and will further make some notes about when you want to be communicating these messages. An example is included for reference.

Note: There is no one size fits all model for communicating with stakeholders. Some of this will depend on best practices on your campus.

Examples

Message for Students to be sent out two week prior to the end of the previous term (e.g.):

"Are you interested in joining a social justice oriented book club? We'll be reading The Hate U Give and discussing issues of police violence." ...

Daily Operations

Scheduling

Scheduling is always tricky. Please know: there is no such thing as the one time that will work for everyone you want to reach. Choose a time that reaches the broadest audience, but be ready to adapt the following term depending on feedback.

   A few questions to think on:

1. Are there times on campus dedicated to extracurricular activities, such as a lunch hour?
2. Are there days of the week (e.g., Fridays?) when fewer students and/or faculty members are on campus?
3. Are you able to schedule more than one session for the book club to account for people's varying schedules?

Land Acknowledgment

As our case study modeled, there is work being done in the area of land acknowledgment, and libraries are playing a role in advancing this paradigm. This practice is becoming more and more current in the library world, a way to recognize the history of colonialism and to create more equitable spaces. Please refer to the work by Laurier

Students Public Interest Group (LSPIRG, "Know the land"), for more information.

In short:

1. Educate yourself on what indigenous lands you are on. A good tool for this is https://native-land.ca/

2. If you can, work with your local tribe or tribes to generate the language for your land acknowledgement. As an example: We noted that "we are on the traditional territories of the Puyallup and the Puget Sound Salish" and expressed thanks for being able to carry out our work on their lands.

Facilitating the Discussion

In order to effectively facilitate a conversation that touches on tough topics, such as social justice and equity issues, you will want to have a guiding philosophy or theoretical foundation.

Questions to consider:

1. Is there a guiding philosophy about facilitation that you've previously used and that would work well in this setting

2. What is the purpose of your book group? Is there a philosophy that best supports this purpose?

3. Who is going to lead your sessions? Does the leader set the questions, or will the questions be generated from elsewhere?

4. Do you want there to be student/participant leadership? How do you scaffold towards this model?

5. How will you determine what is "on task" and how will you manage this?

6. What about disruptions, violations of community standards, or other issues, who will deal with these, and how will you approach them?

Assessment

When designing assessments, it is important to be clear about what your intention is. First, are you assessing for budget purposes (this program was successful because we reached x students/faculty/staff), or philosophical purposes (this program was successful because our participants were engaged, had meaningful conversations, and reported satisfaction with their experience).

Questions to consider:

1. What are you assessing? What numbers or qualitative data will be of interest to you?

2. Do you need numbers to justify budget requests? If so, what numbers would be most persuasive to a funding body?

3. What do you as the founder/facilitator of this group need to know in order to improve the next iteration? What feedback would help shape the next round?

4. What format will your assessment take: paper, digital, verbal, etc? Is your form scalable or is it specific to this iteration? How would you adapt this for future iterations?

5. How do you plan to store your data, and will participant identity be protected and/or anonymous?

Coda

Lastly, we would love to hear from you if you used this toolkit, and we will try to incorporate your feedback.

Please fill out this google form or email us at alainac@uw.edu. We welcome your feedback.

PART V

APPENDICES

The appendices that follow share with the reader some of our documents, documentation, and operational materials.

Appendix A: Vision Statement

This is the vision statement we used to promote and advocate for our programming.

Vision:

The UW Tacoma Library in conjunction with The UW Tacoma Center for Equity and Inclusion seeks to form a pilot diversity book group for the Fall quarter of 2018. This book group is modeled off of the American Library Associations Great Stories Club, but with adaptations that make it more relevant to college students, on an urban serving campus. The Diversity Book Group Pilot is envisioned as a thematic reading and discussion program that will engage UW Tacoma students through literature-based outreach.

We feel that The UW Tacoma Library and The UW Tacoma Center for Equity and Inclusion offer an ideal partnership for this type of conversational group which brings together a group of students to read a diverse and inclusive text about contemporary issues.

Justification:

In a 2013 Dutch study by Bal and Veltkamp, readers of fiction who were emotionally transported into the narrative showed an increase in displayed empathy. Similarly, in a 2012 study out of Washington and Lee University showed readers of fiction showed an increased empathy as well as prosocial behavior over a control group that read nonfiction. Based on these findings, the goal of

this group is to allow space for students to interact with a narrative regarding issues faced by themselves, fellow students, and community members on our urban-serving campus. These issues might include, but are not limited to, poverty, hunger, incarceration, violence, and other complex current issues.

Structure of pilot:

The goal of the pilot is to recruit 5-10 students to participate in a quarter long reading group. It is our plan to coordinate with a UW Tacoma faculty member and have students participating in this book group receive extra credit for their course.

The students will be provided with copies of a selected text that is theirs to keep, and be given a reading schedule. The group will meet bi-weekly to discuss the story, themes, and reactions. As needed, we will invite specialists from the campus community and beyond to attend the meetings, such as social workers, mental health specialists, and other experts.

At the end of the quarter, the CEI will host a speaker related to the text (possible author, community organizer, etc) and the students who completed the reading group will have a hosted lunch with the speaker ahead of the public speech.

Goals:

Inspired by the UW Tacoma Strategic Plan, the goals of the Diversity Book Group are to create a greater awareness and discussion of the experiences that are being had by our students, staff, and community members. By interacting with narratives that reflect different experiences, it will provide opportunities to dialogue with peers about shared and disparate experiences. Additional benefits include creating community by reducing isolation, and enhancing campus education through peer-based discussion groups.

Evaluation

As this program is a pilot, we see it as exploratory, with a longer-term goal of once or twice annual repetition (Fall and Winter quarters, for example).

Collaboration between the two organizing campus units is a notable benefit as well.

The pilot will be considered successful by meeting one or more of the following criteria:

- Having 5-10 students enroll
- Having 3-5 students complete the pilot program
- Publishing a library story or having a campus news article about the program

We will integrate a post-pilot assessment by surveying the participants to learn more about the impact and value of this program.

Appendix B: To-Do Checklist & Workflow

To-Do Checklist (High Granularity):

- Write a Goal and Vision document
- Introduce programming at relevant librarian/staff meeting a quarter before you plan to start
- Meet with potential collaborators
- Draft a budget. Budget items may include:
  - Book costs
  - Snacks
  - Author fees
  - Recording fees, if applicable
  - Marketing expenses
  - Book plate costs
  - Possibly: name tags?
- Set a regular date and time for your book club
- Reserve a room for the meetings
- Pick a book

- Invite author to give a talk, if that is part of your scope
- Create a sign-up sheet (Google Forms)
- Design promotional materials that include link to sign-up sheet
- Flyers and/or Posters
- Campus TV AD
- Twitter/Facebook
- Push out promotional materials (2-3 weeks prior to onset)
- Order snacks
    - Make sure you are following campus rules regarding vendors and food services
- Communicate with individuals who have expressed interest in participating
- Create community agreements
- Create bookplates for the book with your club logo
- End of programming/pilot follow ups:
    - Thank you emails to:
        - Students
        - Partners
        - Author
        - Other funding bodies
- Schedule a debrief meeting at the conclusion of your last session
    - What did you learn?
    - What worked? What didn't?
    - What would you do differently next time?

Workflow

(Based on Winter Quarter 2019 at UW Tacoma)

Before end of previous term:

- Select book
- Begin publicizing
  - "this is what we will be reading next term"
  - Distribute via media channels
  - Consider a blog post about the book club
- Create google form for sign up
- Order books
- Contact author about skype availability
- Divide budget — schedule meetings with campus and/or community partners

1 Week before term starts

- Media push
  - Emails from collaborators (Library and Center for Equity and Inclusion) to
    - Listservs (UWT line, UWT Fac / PT)
  - Student activities email (UWT 411)
  - Campus TV
  - Print mini-flyers for Involvement fair
  - Print mini-flyers for Research Help and Circ Desks

- ▪ General communication to library staff via known channels (Slack) so people at desks are informed
  - ◦ Print flyers for campus bulletin boards/Post on bulletin boards
  - ◦ Social Media:
    - ▪ Facebook
    - ▪ Twitter
    - ▪ Instagram

First week of Term

- • Hand out flyers at Involvement Fair
- • Hand out flyers at Research Help Desk and Circ Desks
- • First meeting ("Orientation")
  - ◦ Community agreements
  - ◦ Reading schedule
  - ◦ Themed questions

Second week of Term

- • Second meeting
  - ◦ First reading discussion
- • Begin creating promotional materials for author skype call
  - ◦ Campus TV
  - ◦ Social Media
  - ◦ Flyer
  - ◦ Text for listservs

Fourth Week of Term

- Third meeting
    ◦ Second reading discussion
- Continue creating promotional materials for author skype call
- Begin considering new titles for the next term

Sixth week of Term

- Fourth meeting
    ◦ Third reading discussion
- Begin promoting author skype call
    ◦ Distribute via the channels enumerated above
- Decide on next term's title

Eighth Week of Term

- Fifth meeting
    ◦ Fourth reading discussion
- Continue promoting skype call
- Order books for next term

Tenth Week of Term

- Skype Call with Author if arranged

Appendix C: Promotional Materials

The following are examples of some of the promotional materials we used during Autumn, Winter and Spring Quarters 2018-2019. Please note the logo we created and use with all our promotional materials.

1.

Flyer for joining Real Lit[erature] Autumn 2018.

2.

Campus TV screen advertisement for skype call with author Dashka Slater, Winter 2019.

3.

Flyer for Spring 2019 Author Skype Call with Adib Khorram.

Appendix D: Community Agreement

Community Agreements serve the function to shape the way in which the community — that is, the book club participants — behaves during shared time. Cognizant of the fact that these agreements need to be values shared by the community, we drafted the following example, but left time and space for the participants to edit or change the language of the agreement. For the Pilot program of Real Lit[erature] at the University of Washington, Tacoma, these agreements were not modified.

_____

Real Lit [erature] Book Club
UW Tacoma, 2018
Community Agreements

1. Respect others' rights to hold opinions and beliefs that differ from your own. When you disagree, challenge the idea, not the person.

2. Be courteous. Don't interrupt or engage in private conversations while others are speaking.

3. Share responsibility for including all voices in the discussion If you have much to say, try to hold back a bit. If you are hesitant to speak, look for opportunities to

contribute.

4. Remember that we are working toward a common goal: discussing challenging issues facing our society and community, through literature.

_____

For the Winter 2019 version of Real Lit[erature], we added a community agreement about respecting pronouns, cognizant of the sensitive nature of the materials we were discussing.

Appendix E: Participant Feedback & Assessment Examples

The pre- and interim surveys both were conducted using Google Forms. The post-survey was handed out in print.

Pre-survey

Are you interested in joining a real conversation about contemporary societal issues? Come join The Center for Equity and Inclusion and the UW Tacoma Library in meeting 4x to discuss Angie Thomas' bestselling book about police violence and racism, The Hate U Give. We'll also go see the movie together, and have a one hour video conference with the author at the end of the winter quarter! Please note: spaces are limited. Contact –@uw.edu or –@uw.edu if you have questions.

1. What is your name? [short answer]

2. What is your email address [short answer]

3. Real Lit[erature] plans to meet the following dates. Please indicate your availability. Preference will be given to those who can attend all meetings. [Checkboxes]

4. Have you ever participated in a Book Club before? [Y/N]

5. What do you hope to get out of this Book Club? [Long answer text]

Interim survey ("October Check-In")

We wanted to give participants a chance to check in about how Real Lit is going. This survey is optional and results are anonymous. Thanks for your feedback!

1. What are your initial thoughts on Real Lit? [Long Answer Text]

2. Is there anything you would like to see done differently? If so, what? [Long Answer Text]

3. How engaged are the facilitators? [Not at all/Somewhat/ Very/Too much (dominate discussion)]

4. Any other feedback? [Long Answer Text]

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