

Perspectives on Peer Support for Tenure-track Librarians: The Annual "Juniors'" Retreat at Stony Brook University

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Abstract

The non-tenured faculty at Stony Brook University Libraries has implemented an annual one-day retreat which includes presentations, posters of research in progress, group activities, and a discussion of current library issues. The retreats have inspired junior faculty members and assisted them in forming a supportive network of peer mentoring for guidance through the tenure process.

Keywords: Mentoring, peer mentoring, library retreats.

Introduction

For the past three years the Dean of the Libraries at Stony Brook University (SBU) has granted the non-tenured faculty a professional development day to hold a retreat at an offsite location. The retreat is organized and run entirely by the non-tenured faculty, with a small committee choosing the venue, organizing the content of the program, and providing food for the day. The day's program begins with the participants presenting ongoing research and practicing upcoming conference presentations, followed by the poster session and lunch. The afternoon is devoted to a group discussion dealing with the library and how each person views the way the library is administered. Non-tenured librarians feel that this retreat and the format of the day enable the group to identify issues in their workplace and to speak freely about concerns. This professional development program is unique in that it is organized and implemented entirely by the non-tenured librarians themselves. This is not a traditional mentoring program, where tenured faculty members critique the work and writings of non-tenured librarians, but rather an opportunity for non-tenured librarians to gauge their progress relative to other librarians and to stretch themselves by presenting their research to a group of their peers. It is also a forum for non-tenured librarians to discuss issues that

they may have in the workplace, such as how they see themselves fitting into the organization, or issues they have with the organizational structure of the library. It is a collaborative exercise where librarians present, critique each other's work, and participate in the group discussion. As such it strengthens the professional and social bonds among colleagues who will work together for many years to come.

This paper outlines the planning, implementation and assessment of the retreats, places this program within the context of other mentoring programs described in the literature, and hopefully provides a model for other librarians interested in developing a similar program.

Background

Located sixty miles east of New York City on Long Island, Stony Brook University is one of the four flagship research universities of the State University of New York. With 1,900 faculty members and over 23,000 students in three colleges and eight schools, SBU offers sixty-one majors and sixty-eight minors. The SBU Library is a member of the Association of Research Libraries and employs seventy-nine people. Twenty-five of them are faculty libra-

rians, seventeen of whom are tenured. At the present time five of the non-tenured faculty librarians are eligible for tenure. The tenure process at SBU is similar to the process at many other academic institutions. Each tenure-track librarian has a mentoring committee and there is a finite amount of time allotted to obtain tenure. Tenure files are reviewed by an internal committee, a senate library promotions committee, the Provost, and the President, using guidelines set out by the Library Faculty Appointment & Promotion Committee.

At the first retreat in 2006 there were nine non-tenured librarians, but since that time several librarians have received continuing appointments and the group has shrunk. As the group is small relative to the size of the tenured faculty, there is a desire among the juniors to increase our visibility. Our goals for the retreats were to increase our visibility as a group with the hope that our combined voice would be heard and appreciated more than each individual librarian's voice; the afternoon group discussion time would be a collaborative endeavor and would enable us to present a unified plan to the library administration for improvements to the library; and preparing presentations or posters would keep us on track in the tenure process.

Literature Review

There is a large body of work describing mentoring in academic libraries (1). Such mentoring programs include formal programs where a mentee is assigned a mentor to help him/her successfully navigate the tenure process in order to advance in the profession. A recent mentoring program was initiated at the University of Kansas and was so successful that it has been expanded to include all staff within the library. The library changed the structure of its mentoring program in two ways: 1) the director of Human Resources was added as

a member of the Mentoring Committee and Program, and 2) the assistant deans of the library planned and selected each mentee's mentoring committee in a more methodical way. This included interviewing the mentee and possible mentors and then meeting to select the appropriate mentor. The final decision was made by the mentee's associate dean who was designated to get the mentor and mentee together to start the mentoring process (2).

There are also formal mentoring programs designed to assist non-tenured library faculty with specific aspects of their files, such as the writing/mentoring program at the University at Buffalo. The non-tenured librarians at the University at Buffalo noticed that the descriptive writing assignments they had been assigned during graduate school had been easier than writing research papers in their professional positions. Many found "the structural and analytical elements of scholarly professional writing difficult," but needed to start research projects of their own and publish articles about their professional research to meet the expectations of the academic library where they now worked (3). In response, the Academic Writing Group was initiated by non-tenured librarians and ran for two years culminating in a two-day writing retreat. These elements are similar to the SBU Junior retreats, yet the Buffalo program had a goal oriented process designed to ensure that members of the group were successful in getting their work published. During the first two years of this support group, five out of six librarians had an article accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal.

In addition to formal mentoring programs with a focus on a particular aspect of the tenure process, there is also the informal mentoring that takes place in a group setting. Several articles in the literature describe informal mentoring programs within the library. The non-tenured librarians at the Sterling Library of Texas A&M University have formed a monthly support group to address tenure and other topics of concern to their members. The support group can

"... provide an outlet for discussing common concerns, and channeling the participants' energies toward finding effective solutions" (4). Though described as informal, the support group is highly structured, with monthly meetings, a chair in charge of organizing the meetings, and occasional outside speakers.

Colorado State University's library has a self-organizing group called "juniors." They meet weekly and the group's organization and structure have evolved over time. The group members appreciate the fact that they can speak freely about library-related issues at their workplace. "When you hear the types of research that your peers are working on, it often helps spawn ideas of your own, and leads to collaboration..." (5). This peer mentoring group, like those at Texas A&M and Buffalo, demonstrates that meeting frequently to discuss tenure issues provides moral support and assists librarians in conceiving new ideas, developing new collaborations, and improving their writing. The structure keeps the groups meeting regularly and helps non-tenured faculty stay on track. It also provides opportunities for cooperation and collaboration, cooperation by helping members provide each other with individual critiques of work, and collaboration in developing projects that evolve as participants discover common research interests. Informal mentoring groups have all noticed that their mission, goals and outcomes evolve over time.

The Welcoming, Orientation and Mentoring (WOM) Committee at the University of California at Santa Barbara implemented a sequence of information sessions dealing with mentoring and other leadership issues which was included in the library's regular orientation activities for new librarians. These information sessions provided additional professional development opportunities and the goal of "promoting a culture of mentoring throughout the library" (6). This series on mentoring and professional development was open to all librarians as well as interested staff members, was designed for those in need of mentoring and those inter-

ested in being mentors, and included such topics as career assessment and the dynamics of the mentoring relationship.

Innovations in mentoring were suggested by Kathy Kram and Lynn Isabella as early as 1985, when they noted that "a brief review of recent research highlights the advantages and the limitations of the conventional mentoring relationship, and indicates why it is essential to begin investigation of other developmental relationships in organizations" (7). Kram and Isabella focus on peer mentoring as one such unconventional form of mentoring, stressing peer relationships as an important element of professional development, since they "appear to have the potential to serve some of the same critical functions as mentoring, and also appear more likely to be available to individuals" (8). Relationships formed during the years that non-tenured librarians work together and mentor each other will probably endure through the course of their careers, whether they stay at the same institution or move on to work at different libraries. Kram describes various types of peer relationships: information peer, collegial peer, and special peer. She describes these relationships as a continuum with the lowest level of trust in the information-peer relationship. The collegial-peer relationship involves a moderate level of trust with those in the relationship evaluating each other's work and being somewhat familiar with their personal lives. The final level in Kram's continuum, the special peer, involves the most intimate and least formal relationships of the three (9). One of the goals of our non-tenured librarians' retreat was to move the group from information-peer relationships to collegial-peer relationships by encouraging members to become better acquainted with each other and to critically evaluate each other's work.

Another explanation for a change in the way mentoring takes place argues that collegial relationships themselves are evolving because so many librarians are retiring at the same time that many new types of librarian positions are being created, e.g. web librarian, a position that did not exist ten to fif-

teen years ago. There will be a shortage of mentors for new librarians because the pool of tenured librarians will shrink, in addition to an increase in new positions where no one is yet qualified to mentor these librarians. Because of this, Sarah Ann Murphy argues that "...traditional hierarchical mentoring relationships are no longer sufficient for developing tomorrow's library leaders" (10). What is needed in today's tenure-awarding academic library is a holistic approach to mentoring: traditional mentoring, peer mentoring, and other programs that might evolve over time.

All librarians are grappling with the transformation of our profession due to the technologies that have revolutionized the field. During the past twenty years there have also been many innovations in leadership theory. Because of the disruptive nature of technology and the way it has changed our profession and the operations management of many organizations, peer mentoring may now be more valuable and necessary. Mary Ann Mavrinac describes how peer mentoring is an important tool for providing learning opportunities in today's academic library: "Peer mentoring in an academic library setting [is] an example of a learning process that is in congruence with values-based transformational leadership" (11). Mavrinac suggests that peer mentoring programs in today's learning organization should be "self directed... in which individuals actively plan and initiate their learning opportunities" (12).

One of the most important advantages of peer relationships is that they provide a high level of information sharing and additional psychosocial functions such as emotional support, which are essential though hard to quantify. There are several websites geared towards peer mentoring in the library setting. A good example is the ArLisNAP (Art Library Student & New Arlis* Professional) website, which includes online mentoring through blogs and chat rooms for art librarians or library students interested in becoming art librarians (13).

There are few articles in the library literature dealing with retreats. The University at Buffalo's writing mentoring program ran a two day retreat at the end of its second year that was attended by non-tenured faculty and facilitated by some of the tenured librarians. Bowling Green State University in Ohio has an annual themed retreat for its top managers. This has taken place for the past four years and has been spearheaded by Linda S. Dobb, Dean of Libraries and Learning Resources. Each retreat has a business as well as a social component. Dobb sees retreats as an opportunity for a group to get to know each other's units and to reconnect socially. She notes, "We reaffirm some of our shared values. [The retreat] is a communication tool, a constant work in process" (14).

Some of the literature on this topic was available at the time of the SBU retreats and may have been read by one or more of the organizers. The retreats, however, were not based on the literature. This has allowed the non-tenured faculty to create a unique professional development opportunity that is successful enough to be in its fourth year of planning and that may be a useful model for other libraries to follow.

A Spontaneous Idea

The non-tenured librarians' retreat at Stony Brook University was a spontaneous idea instigated by a couple of newly hired, non-tenured librarians. It was originally thought of as a place where "juniors" could get together and talk about the state of librarianship in general and our library in particular. The juniors requested the time and financial support from the Dean to have the retreat off campus. Support was enthusiastically provided and a small committee of juniors set about organizing the retreat. What transpired was the organization of a high-level mini-conference designed to showcase everyone's ongoing research and projects. All participants were required to make a presentation, display a poster, or serve as a moderator for the afternoon discussion. At the end of the retreat, a summary of the day was presented to the Dean and all partici-

pants were encouraged to fill out an online survey.

The non-tenured librarians' retreat has taken place for three consecutive years. For the first two years Stony Brook University librarians were the only participants. By the third year tenure-track librarians from the other colleges and universities on Long Island were invited to participate, and several did.

The Retreat Programs

A large component of the retreat involved a formal program in the morning designed to showcase the research projects of the librarians, as well as to provide a forum for them to hone their presentation skills. [See Table

1] The first year's program was so ambitious that some librarians felt they did not have enough time to absorb everything or examine the posters adequately. Another problem was that almost all the presenters ran over the allotted time for their presentations. The group was smaller the second year, everyone presented, and there were no posters. The third year's format included both presentations and posters, and because there were librarians from several institutions the discussion took on a more theoretic tone. The third retreat included a talk by an outside speaker from within the SUNY system who spoke about the future of resource sharing, collection management and purchase on demand.

Table 1
Retreat Programs

Retreat #1 - 2006	Retreat #2 - 2007	Retreat #3 - 2008
Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D-Space • Plagiarism Workshop Components • Cataloging of Korean Materials • The Future-of-Cataloging Brouhaha, or, The Sky Might not be Falling After All • Resources for Asian American Studies: Negotiating the Taxonomy of a Young Discipline • Providing Access to Geospatial Information 	Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major Implementations of Aleph and What Aleph Can do for You • The DeFrag Team • UUP [United University Professions Union] and You: An Informal Discussion • New York Times Maps • Using Screen Capture Technology to Create a Video Catalog of "Frequently Asked Questions" • Information Commons at Stony Brook Southampton • Video World Old and New: YouTube & Podcasts 	Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing a Tenure File • Enhancing Access to XXXXXX University Archives and Special Collections: Bringing It to the Web • Loaning an SBU GPS Device • Publishing "Return on Investment: Libraries and Student Retention" • Aleph and Google
Poster Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Literacy and Outreach • New Point of Service for Reference • Dateline: Library • The Weeding Equation. When Space ≠ Infinity 	Poster Session [No posters in second year]	Poster Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment for Instruction • SUNY Shared Collection Successes • Website Usability • Resource Sharing within an Academic Library[invited speaker]
Moderated discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Planning: What Role can Junior Faculty Play? 	Moderated discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is Trendspotting Working at Stony Brook? 	Moderated discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library SWOT Analysis

The Moderated Discussions

The discussion at the first retreat was geared very much towards solving problems within Stony Brook, and was most closely related to the reason we initially decided that the non-tenured librarians needed a retreat. We wanted a forum where we could freely discuss general concerns about our workplace without administrators or senior librarians who have been at the institution for a long time, and whose opinions might carry more weight than those of the junior librarians. The summary report from this retreat states that the most common theme was the desire to see more professional and effective communication within the library, as well as between the library and the university at large. The five newest members of the non-tenured faculty suggested that a more thorough introduction to the library would be useful to incoming faculty. The group discussed ways in which non-tenured faculty could play an effective and positive role in the library outside of the strategic planning process. Two recommendations emerged which were passed along to the Dean of Libraries: 1) implement an effective web of communication, and 2) foster creativity and encourage active participation.

The discussion for the second retreat began by watching a variety of YouTube videos. Each participant had been asked prior to the retreat to submit his/her favorite YouTube selections to the organizers. Two librarians then selected a variety of videos from this list for the group to watch. Some of the videos related to the profession and others were funny or just plain fun. Watching the creative talents of the producers of these videos was intended to be an inspiration to everyone. It was a way to highlight how new technologies can enhance our work as librarians. Choosing among people's favorite YouTube clips was the most equitable way of selecting items, and some of the choices, by reflecting people's personalities, lifestyles or work habits, helped us get to know each other better.

The discussion that ensued focused on evaluating possible improvements that this second retreat may have had over the previous year's retreat. The discussion produced a marked interest in developing future team-based projects during the year. Some issues had become more important since the previous year, such as the lack of space in the library and the need for improved collection management. The strategic plan was again mentioned, and the non-tenured faculty reiterated interest in being involved in implementing parts of the strategic plan and in evaluating the success of the plan so far. A list of nine action items was sent to the Dean:

- Address the impact of the shrinking space;
- Improve the lines of communication;
- Continue to support professional development (e.g. retreats, conferences, etc.);
- Encourage a discussion of technology with a wider focus. Discussions by heads of departments at Director's Council are not sufficient;
- Invite stakeholders to trendspotting programs, since they need to be involved in these discussions;
- Find a different approach to the Strategic Plan;
- Devise new approaches to the management model;
- Encourage a spirit of trying new ideas;
- Increase the library's involvement with selection of a Content Management System.

By the third retreat, with a smaller group of Stony Brook juniors and participants from other institutions, the discussion became less about Stony Brook and more about librarianship in general. We decided to try a new approach to the discussion and to put our professional lives, desires and plans into a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) of the profession. This new approach would apply to any of our institutions and to the profession in general. [See Table 2].

Table 2

Library SWOT Analysis

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
Cooperative networking groups Quick to adapt to new technology Like information Fit in with the culture Passionate generalists Service oriented Locating things Respect privacy Altruism Helpful	Cheap labor Poor self-promotion Lack of funds Stuck in a rut Tunnel vision Don't see needs of others Not adventurous Risk adverse Don't know how to partner to our strengths Too nice Live within our budget Inbred Slow to adapt to new technology Too controlling Can't afford to hire technology stars Not respected
<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
Globalization of information literacy Global network potential Wikipedia entries Review lists in WorldCat User-driven content Libraries work as a unit Relationships Publishing	Direct-user business Information business is a profitable market Priced out of the market Businesses are building their own libraries Link resolvers need improvement Libraries do not have a strategy New generation of students Budget trouble Google Elsevier

Although this exercise produced an interesting discussion and a clear view of ourselves in our profession, it didn't end with the type of goals we set for ourselves from the other two retreats. The inclusion of non-Stony Brook librarians enhanced our retreat, and the inclusion of a guest speaker from one of the other SUNY colleges sparked an interesting discussion. In keeping with the evolutionary spirit of our retreats, what we gave up in intimacy of the cohesive SBU group we made up by meeting new colleagues on Long Island.

We produced a SWOT analysis during the third retreat without thought to hierarchical decision making. The discussions gave us

the opportunity to imagine the scenario of producing forward-thinking ideas. We practiced working in groups and generating creative ideas and other essential tools for running a complex organization like a library. And the evaluation process allowed each presenter to compare her/himself easily and directly with her/his peers. Comparing our work to some of our colleagues will either reassure us or inspire us to bring our own work up to a higher level. As we plan for our next retreat the Stony Brook non-tenured librarians have decided that we would like to invite other librarians from Long Island to join us again.

Assessment of the Retreats

We conducted a survey after each retreat to assess whether participants had enjoyed the retreat and benefited from it. After each retreat, an online survey was sent to all participants via email. For the first two retreats all participants filled out the survey (twelve in 2006, nine in 2007). In the third year, seven out of eleven participants filled out the survey. The retreat was generally rated excellent or very good for all three years. [See Table 3]

Table 3

**Survey Results: Please rate the overall quality of the retreat			
	2006	2007	2008
Excellent	6	7	3
Very good	5	1	3
Good	1	1	1
Fair	0	0	0
Poor	0	0	0

** (For full analysis, positive, and negative comments please see surveys Appendix 1, 2, 3.)

Positive Comments

In all three years participants enjoyed their discussions and socialization with each other and the juniors found it interesting to hear what their colleagues were working on and to see the presentations of others. Certain themes emerged, one of them being the need for more open discussion during the retreat, or perhaps a less formal format to the day. In earlier retreats there was the suggestion that we should bring in an outside speaker and in the third year the outside speaker from one of the SUNY colleges joined us and spoke about the future of resource sharing. The comments about the content of the retreats have been generally positive. One participant noted that the first

retreat was “completely relevant to our position as juniors.” In the second year, a participant stated that he/she “Enjoyed socializing outside the library setting and learning about the different projects faculty are involved in.” In the third year, another participant commented on the “very high quality of presentations,” and noted particularly that the “outside speaker was a huge asset.” Participants commented positively all three years about the general organization of the retreat, the venue, the schedule, and the food.

Each year one or two presenters received special mention by the attendees. The most popular presentation appears to be the one provided by a Stony Brook faculty member in 2008 on how to ensure a smooth tenure process. She had received tenure at another institution and was about to receive a continuing appointment at SBU. She was able to give good, specific advice about how to manage the tenure process.

Criticisms

The venue, a beautiful old house on the North Shore of Long Island overlooking the marshes, seemed to be popular until we introduced other participants from outside Stony Brook. The difficulty of getting attendees to the retreat and especially back to the train afterwards to use the limited public transportation was problematic for many people.

Each year participants exceeded their half-hour allotment of time, which required adjusting the schedule during the day. By the third year, we held everyone to his or her half hour time slot, so this was not as much of a problem. For the two years that we held poster sessions, the criticism was voiced that there was not enough time to look at all of them and to talk to the poster presenters. Over the years we have improved our time management skills for presentations. This skill is invaluable for those of us who present at other conferences where the presenters must strictly adhere to the time allotment of their presentations. To

address the other problems of not having enough time to spend on the poster session and missing the last afternoon train from Stony Brook, we are planning a shorter agenda for the next retreat, which will allow participants to spend more time viewing posters and accommodate commuters.

Another problem that emerged was that the moderated discussion does not seem to have been to everyone's satisfaction. One participant in the first year felt that the retreat would be improved by "having more time for relaxed conversation." The next year, another participant "liked the discussion, although I would not call it moderated..." Still another pointed out in the third year that "it might have been helpful to have an article to review before the retreat on SWOT analysis...to jumpstart the moderated discussion." In each case, there did not seem to be a satisfactory level of engagement even though the discussion itself was interesting. The planning committee for future retreats will need to define more carefully what "freewheeling" and "moderated" discussions are and decide which format to use for upcoming retreats.

Conclusion

The non-tenured librarians' retreat is a day of learning as well as fun. As our organization changes, and the size of the group grows or contracts, the retreat may change its format. The learning and values we develop as a group may influence the larger library organization and assist the faculty to develop strategic goals. As long as the Dean of the Library supports this retreat day, the non-tenured faculty will value it. The non-tenured faculty, through activities such as the juniors' retreat, can participate in transforming the culture of the organization and broadening the learning opportunities for all the librarians at our institution. One theme that seems to be present in the surveys is a feeling that the afternoon discussion during the retreats is not open and informal enough. Perhaps the afternoon can be open to small group discussions with a very loose agenda that would allow for a more free-

flowing discussion on a variety of issues. The planning committee will change the format of the afternoon discussion with input from participants before the retreat. That way we will have a clear expectation of the outcome of the discussion.

We did not set out to be change agents, just to have a day to bond, yet the retreats have evolved into valuable forums for us to explore theoretical issues critical to our profession while we discuss practical concerns related to our day-to-day work and our eventual promotion. Though developed initially for a small subset of the library staff, this program could form the basis for broader programs and professional development for the entire library staff in the future. This professional retreat is a model for any library faculty in that it allows for discussion of professional issues and presentation of work in progress in a social setting. Although the recommendations presented at the conclusion of each retreat have not been adopted by the administration in the exact form we presented them, the Dean has approached the non-tenured faculty to work together as a group on some issues. Our collective voice is stronger in faculty meetings and non-tenured librarians have been involved in providing "trendspotting" programs through the Library Services Committee. This process has helped us gain confidence, befriend each other, and be seen as a cohesive group among the faculty. The retreats have given us additional visibility and respect in the library. The non-tenured librarians have succeeded in working together to organize a retreat that has enabled us to become closer to each other professionally and personally. This model of a one-day annual retreat can be adopted by the entire library faculty. The cumulative effect of having the retreat each year is beneficial as we get to know each other and our research interests in a more intimate way. We feel more empowered during discussions about strategic planning in the library, and overall, more comfortable and confident in our profession. The non-tenured faculty at SBU present this retreat as a model of peer mentoring and collaboration which can be

adopted by library staff who wish to provide professional development opportunities within their own organization.

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APPENDIX 1

This is an anonymous survey.

The number of people who took this survey is: 12

Junior Retreat May 30, 2006 Evaluation Survey

Thank you for taking this anonymous survey. Your comments are much appreciated.

1. The amount of time allotted for the presentations was:

- ☒ [0] Too much
- ☒ [11] Just right
- ☒ [1] Not enough

2. The posters were:

- ☒ [6] Excellent
- ☒ [5] Very good
- ☒ [1] Good
- ☒ [0] Fair
- ☒ [0] Poor

3. Please rate the overall quality of the retreat:

- ☒ [8] Excellent
- ☒ [4] Very good
- ☒ [0] Good
- ☒ [0] Fair
- ☒ [0] Poor

4. What did you like most about the retreat?

- ☐ [6] Venue
- ☐ [1] Day off
- ☐ [8] Presentations
- ☐ [5] Posters

- ☐ [10] Moderated discussion
- ☐ [3] Recreational time (Hike)
- ☐ [1] Food
- ☐ [7] Socializing

5. Please provide any additional positive comments about the retreat

[This was a very good event. Well done, well organized and run, and completely relevant to our position as juniors.]

[I thought the organizaers did an excellent job of creating a fine day for us all.]

[Everyone was really enthusiastic about the day and open minded about the discussion]

[It was a great opportunity to get to know colleagues that you do not see or speak to often. I got a chance to hear about what everyone is working on.]

[Tough to say what was best, because the presentations, posters and discussions were all great: stimulating and informative.]

[It was wonderful to discuss issues and concerns together without fearing anything. The open discussion in the afternoon was very productive and to me any library meeting should be that way. I feel that I am a lot more energized from this retreat. I would like to see the great ideas that came out yesterday happening in the future.]

[it wasn't really a day off - it was definitely a working full day]

6. What did you like least about the retreat?

- ☐ [0] Venue
- ☐ [0] Day off
- ☐ [0] Presentations
- ☐ [0] Posters
- ☐ [1] Moderated discussion
- ☐ [3] Recreational time (Hike)
- ☐ [1] Food
- ☐ [0] Socializing

7. How can the retreat be changed or improved?

[I think it was fine the way it was organized, to be honest.]

[More time for open discussion]

[Having more time for relaxed conversation. I would prefer more time for comments and questions about presentations/posters. Perhaps a 2-day event to allow for reflection.]

[I thought it was great. No change needed. But, we need a remote clicker for the power

points that doubles as a laser pointer.]

[It was very nice to hear what everybody is doing in their little corners. Although hiking was such a treat, for those who are not fond of outdoor activities, we may want to plan something that everyone can enjoy. Inviting a guest speaker can also be an idea (although the day went fast only with our presentations, posters and discussion.).]

8. Please provide constructive comments for Presentations e.g. David had too many slides or Monica's presentation was very well organized.

[We could check all presentations requiring the laptop ahead of time to be sure they worked properly.]

[Presentations were all well done, providing just the right amount of overview. Next year, ask people to send a copy first to prevent any problems with CD might be helpful.]

[I thought all the presentations were interesting and informative but perhaps a little long, I don't think anyone stayed within the 15 minutes given in the schedule. This did not allow much time for questions/comments.]

[A handout from John would have added a tiny bit, but he did very well. Special collections' might have been shorter but it was excellent.]

[It would have been nicer if presentations were run on schedule. For those without power-point slides, a hand-out or talk-related literature would have been helpful for the audience.]

[The presentation by Jason and Kristin was particularly good.]

[all were good]

9. Please provide constructive comment for posters e.g. David had too much information on his poster or Monica's poster was very well organized.

[I thought they all looked very well done, fusing the right blend of graphics and text.]

[Everyone did very well of what I saw.]

[It was nice to see a variety in the retreat program, but the information delivered didn't seem to catch as much attention as presentations did. The reason why I think is that the audience was too large for one poster. I couldn't see pictures, charts, and data in detail from a distance. I think 2-3 people are good enough for presenters to talk comfortably and for the audience to look at the information and ask questions. So if we are going to do this next time, I'd like to suggest that we divide up the group and rotate. Poster presenters have to repeat the talk a few times, but this way, each poster gets more attention. Time spent will be pretty much the same since all presenters will talk at the same time.]

[all were good]

End of Survey

APPENDIX 2

This is an anonymous survey.

The number of people who took this survey is: 9

Junior Library Faculty Retreat May 29, 2007 Evaluation Survey

Thank you for taking this anonymous survey. Your comments are much appreciated.

1. The amount of time allotted for the presentations was:

- ☒ [1] Too much
- ☒ [5] Just right
- ☒ [3] Not enough

2. Please rate the overall quality of the retreat:

- ☒ [7] Excellent
- ☒ [1] Very good
- ☒ [1] Good
- ☒ [0] Fair
- ☒ [0] Poor

3. What did you like most about the retreat?

- ☐ [3] Venue
- ☐ [1] Day off
- ☐ [8] Presentations
- ☐ [5] Moderated discussion
- ☐ [1] Recreational time (YouTube, etc.)
- ☐ [1] Food
- ☐ [4] Socializing

4. Please provide any additional positive comments about the retreat

[This was an exceptional retreat this year. It was especially good to have Fang there with us, and to hear her report. All the speakers did a great job and I think we should propose that the entire library (or at least the faculty) do something like this once a year.]

[Susan L did a great job organizing the retreat. It was good to spend time with everyone.]

[I liked the discussion, although I would not call it moderated. Actually, the evaluation of Trendspotting did not occur, other than a comment by Susan K.]

[Everything went smoothly and the group was very engaged.]

[Enjoyed socializing outside the library setting and learning about the different projects faculty are involved in]

5. What did you like least about the retreat?

- ☐ [0] Venue
- ☐ [0] Day off
- ☐ [1] Presentations
- ☐ [0] Moderated discussion
- ☐ [1] Recreational time (YouTube, etc.)
- ☐ [1] Food
- ☐ [0] Socializing

6. How can the retreat be changed or improved?

[Rather than a one-to-many model of communication (a presentation), we might want to explore other discussion models that better fit a retreat setting. Perhaps we could decide beforehand which themes we would like to cover. People could break into smaller groups for discussion and then come back to share with the others what they've talked about. We have a day together in a pleasant environment to brainstorm, create, share and work on strategies. Let's come up with communication methods that foster these things. Some presentations are fine, but people can give those in other places - we don't need to go off campus for that. And we're already getting a fair number of presentations through other library programs. What we don't often get is an entire day together to talk more openly and freely.]
[Include a short walk.]
[More time for open discussion about pending issues.]
[Need to really make people stick to their time. We could have a guest speaker.]
[I think we need to move beyond discussions toward creating more practical solutions and or proposals in response to problems]

7. Please provide constructive comments for Presenters e.g. David had too many slides or Monica's presentation was very well organized.

[Too many presenters completely ignored their 30-minute time slots. Some presentations were over an hour!]
[Everyone well prepared, interesting topics but everyone went too long. Perhaps next year we must give everyone 45 minutes and go back to having a poster session for some presentations.]
[None. Everyone was well organized, knowledgeable and provided good visual aids]

8. Ideas for future retreats or additional comments?

[Reduce the number of presentations. Increase the time spent in small groups or as a large group in moderated discussion.]
[Keep the format the same. There needs to be one time and place a year for Juniors to share ideas and thoughts out of earshot of Seniors.]

End of Survey

APPENDIX 3

This is an anonymous survey.

The number of people who took this survey is: 7

Junior Library Faculty Retreat May 29, 2008 Evaluation Survey

Thank you for taking this anonymous survey. Your comments are much appreciated.

1. The amount of time allotted for the presentations was:

- ☒ [0] Too much
- ☒ [6] Just right
- ☒ [1] Not enough

2. Please rate the overall quality of the retreat:

- ☒ [3] Excellent
- ☒ [3] Very good
- ☒ [1] Good
- ☒ [0] Fair
- ☒ [0] Poor

3. What did you like most about the retreat?

- ☐ [0] Venue
- ☐ [0] Day off
- ☐ [6] Presentations
- ☐ [1] Moderated discussion
- ☐ [0] Recreational time (YouTube, etc.)
- ☐ [1] Food
- ☐ [1] Socializing

4. Please provide any additional positive comments about the retreat

[Very high quality of presentations. Outside speaker was a huge asset]
[I liked to hear from outside people about their research and service.]
[I also liked everything else you mentioned above in #3. I found the discussion among the participants before and after the presentations extremely valuable.]
[I also found the posture sessions particularly interesting. The use of "The Lucy Show" epi-

sode was innovative and fun! The venue was both intimate and beautiful.]
[Food was also very good. I also enjoyed being able to network with other local librarians face to face.]

5. What did you like least about the retreat?

- ☐ [0] Venue
- ☐ [0] Day off
- ☐ [0] Presentations
- ☐ [3] Moderated discussion
- ☐ [1] Recreational time (YouTube, etc.)
- ☐ [2] Food
- ☐ [0] Socializing

6. How can the retreat be changed or improved?

[We would have benefited from some fresh fruit: quartered or whatever. Still the food was good.]
[I liked that everyone was expected to participate, but I think that could have been made clear in the announcements about the event. The time allotted for the presentations was good. However, the first talk went significantly over (maybe more could have been allotted for that one?) and that put the vent behind schedule for much of the day.]
[Poster presentations might be held before lunch. This would allow more time for viewing the posters themselves during the lunch break.]
[I thought the retreat was very informative and I learned a lot from attending]

7. Please provide constructive comments for Presenters e.g. David had too many slides or Monica's presentation was very well organized.

[Aimee's presentation was very useful and most appropriate for our group. Lori Camino's poster session was well organized and the subject matter was presented very clearly. I liked that she had a bibliography, which was particularly useful for the particular subject she discussed (web evaluation).]
[Aimee's comments on the tenure process at both Ohio and Stony Brook were very informative. Fiona's discussion on Assessment for instruction is an extremely timely topic. Could she please share the worksheet she mentioned in her presentation with the group? Lori's handout on website usability sources will be useful in instituting such an assessment program elsewhere.]
[Thanks to Elizabeth for a great presentation and her suggestions. Aimee's tenure process sharing was very helpful and provided lots of practical tips. Lori's presentation (on the website project) also provided good suggestions. Cyril's talk was thought provoking and ended the day with thoughts of the future of libraries.]

8. Ideas for future retreats or additional comments?

[I think that the transport of some participants probably made them quite nervous. It would have been better if people had been polled before the event as to whether they could help out with transport. The group was small enough that when people had questions, the presenters were able to ask a small one. That improved camaraderie.]

[I liked the venue and the format for this time and think that it will work well again in the future. PS this was more than 4 questions! ;-)]

[It might have been helpful to have an article to review before the retreat on SWOT analysis within libraries to jump-start the moderated discussion. The idea of sharing areas of interest or current research is very helpful for stimulating thoughts about potential research projects. I would be interested in a retreat dealing with methods of assessment for various services within the library (e.g., reference or instruction).]

[Maybe we could form our own social networking group on Ning so that we can keep in touch and share knowledge and ideas between retreats. If you think it's a good idea, I'll set something up. - Fiona]

[In the future I don't think the LIRR should be an option for people. Either they drive themselves or they can't come. The train is not convenient. I was unfortunately volunteered by someone else to drive to a station that was out of my way and more unfortunate to have the person needing a ride not understand the words I'm not going that way therefore making me quite frustrated and late for my PT job.]

End of Survey