

Professional Development and Professional Identity:

A Qualitative Assessment of the Art of Teaching Program

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Instruction at Harvard Library

About the Harvard Library:

- 28 libraries, several centralized shared services units, 700+ staff
- No formal faculty status, no centralized, formal library instruction program
- Cross-org governance structure started in 2015, including Research, Teaching & Learning Standing Committee (RTLSC)

Harvard University

- Highly decentralized, 12 degree granting schools + Radcliffe Institute
- Curriculum development and instructional support centered in schools

Background & Rationale

Significance of instruction work in academic libraries

Significance of professional development

Trainees can develop:

- Professional identity (e.g., Teacher identity)
- Efficacy
- Confidence

Significance of training in pedagogy

- Particularly important for academic librarians who do not hold faculty status but have formal or informal teaching responsibilities.



Research Goals

To understand

- How well both programs worked
- How the changes in the program structure from 2016 to 2019 have affected their outcomes
- How the training program influenced participants' professional identity and teacher identity

Background

- RTLSC determined need for skill development
- Pilot Workshop in January 2016

Overall Goals

- To develop librarians' practical teaching skills
- To help them develop a sense of teacher identity

Structured Programs

- July 2016
- Spring 2019

The Art of Teaching for Librarians (AoT) Program



2016 Art of Teaching

20 Applicants: 15 Accepted, **12** completed

3-week intensive training program

- 4-hour FtF meeting/week with online assignments
- Group work
- Teaching presentation

2016 Art of Teaching

	Strongly Agree	Agree
I gained new skills as a result of this seminar.	45%	36%
This seminar helped me understand how to apply my learning to real problems and contexts.	36%	45%
This seminar should be offered again in the future.	73%	18%

For improvement

- Shorter class sessions spread out over more weeks
- Interested in more hands-on in class



2019 Art of Teaching

Semester-long (14 weeks)

- 3- hour FtF meeting/week with supplemental online assignments
- Practicum experience to apply concepts

12 Nominees from supervisors

- 12 Accepted, 10 Completed

Feedback was collected through:

- Pre-post survey questionnaires
- Personal interviews for this case study

Methods

Semi-structured personal interviews by an external interviewer

Survey Questionnaire

- Self-assessment skills, Teaching & Professional Identity

13 Participants

- 6 from 2016 program
- 7 from 2019 program

Qualitative content analysis process outlined by Margrit Schreier (2014).

- Coded by two trained GAs.

Initial coding themes were developed based on:

- Teacher Identity (Positive, Negative, Neutral)
- Self-perception towards teaching as part of their professional identities.

Survey Results

Survey Item 1 = Strongly Disagree; 7 = Strongly Agree	2016 Cohort	2019 Pre-Test*	2019 Post-Test
Teaching is an important component of librarianship.	6.2	6	6.5
Conducting research is an important component of librarianship.	5.7	6.2	6
Librarianship is an important part of my professional identity.	6.2	6.8	7
Teaching is an important part of my professional identity.	5.5	5.7	5
Librarians are educators.	6.3	6.2	6.5
Being a member of the higher education teaching profession is important to me.	4.8	5.3	6
I read research on teaching and learning.	4.7	5	5.2
I talk to my colleagues (librarians and other members of the higher education profession) about teaching and learning questions.	5.8	5.5	4.8
Other people think of me as a partner in higher education.	5.2	4.7	4.7
Library instruction is an important part of the teaching mission of higher education.	5.7	6.7	6.3

Interview Findings

Overall more positive than negative/neutral comments

Positive themes:

- Love teaching/helping students
- Large/important part of role
- Some already identified as teacher

Neutral/negative themes:

- Teaching is not my primary task
- Just what librarians do
- Teaching identity is reserved for 'real' faculty
 - Need qualification

Impact of AoT program:

- Helped develop confidence & empowerment
- Gave a name to what they already did
- 2019 participants were less sure how to apply concepts

Discussion

Why did some 2019 participants have lower teacher ID after training?

- Why did they resist?

What is the impact of time on the assessment results?

What is the role of organizational structures on professional identity?



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