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Bringing Underserved Staff Online @ LMU

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Bringing Underserved Staff Online @ LMU

Raymundo Andrade & Jamie Hazlitt | William H. Hannon Library | Loyola Marymount University

Background

- Both LMU and the Hannon Library have a strong track record of offering enrichment workshops to staff to encourage professional development. In 2010, the library launched a hugely successful series of workshops designed to promote our services and collections to staff as a rich (and often unrealized) benefit of working at LMU.
- In Fall 2010, we realized that we were inadvertently excluding nearly 150 LMU employees from our outreach efforts, and offered a series of library orientation workshops in Spanish and English designed to work with Facilities staff schedules.
- Although feedback from the workshops was positive, we learned that many of the attendees lacked the basic technology skills needed to utilize the library. We partnered with a number of groups on campus (see below) to strategize about how to evaluate and elevate the computer literacy levels of LMU Facilities staff.

Outreach to Facilities staff

- Fall 2010: Pilot project: a five-session, Spanish language workshop to which 15 attendees were invited. Project included volunteers from all across campus, including LMU students.
- Spring 2011: Spanish and English language survey designed to capture comfort levels with technology and library skills distributed to Facilities staff. With a 43% response rate, we are confident in using the results to inform our outreach and workshop planning efforts.



Partners are essential for success!

- William H. Hannon Library
- Latino Staff Association
- LMU Facilities Administration
- Viernes Por La Tarde (grassroots advocacy group)
- Department of Ethnic & Intercultural Services
- Department of Chicana/o Latina/o Student Services
- LMU Center for Service and Action
- Latino Faculty Association
- LMU Spanish Club
- Movimiento Estudiantil Chicana/o de Aztlán (M.E.Ch.A)
- LMU Information Technology Services

Workshops include...

Curriculum materials developed by Milly Lugo, Senior Librarian for Adult Services at Santa Ana Public Library:

- Keyboard skills
- Mouse skills
- Email (commands and etiquette)
- Introduction to the Internet
- Basic search skills
- Introduction to Microsoft Word



Challenges

- **Workplace culture:** Facilities staff organizational culture is much different than professional staff culture. Workshop planners need to be sensitive to these differences.
- **Communication:** Facilities workers are not at a computer all day, yet most campus news and announcements are communicated via email. **Word-of-mouth publicity is vital!**
- **Variant work hours:** Facilities staff have shifts that are nearly round the clock, and are only permitted to take breaks at specific times. This needs to be considered when scheduling workshops.
- **Language:** Many Facilities workers speak English as a second language. Although we have volunteers to support Spanish language workshops, we do not have the human resources to offer instruction in other languages. Are we inadvertently excluding other groups, despite our best efforts?
- **Scalability:** The pilot program had 100% attendance by the 15 participants, all of whom provided positive feedback about their experience with the workshops! But it also took a small army of volunteers to provide the hands-on support necessary for success. How do we extend our outreach while facing the reality of limited time and resources?

What's next @ LMU?

- Summer 2012 (in progress): Drop-in Summer Computer Literacy Workshop offered every Thursday
- Extended outreach to campus dining staff
- Advocate for more robust institutional support (including HR and IT) for Facilities staff professional development. Although our efforts thus far have been “underground,” LMU’s mission statement includes “the encouragement of learning” and “the promotion of justice,” both of which are wholly reflected in this project, and *we are optimistic that we can make change happen.*