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Filling the Cabinets with Nutritious Information

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NUTRITION INFORMATION

When it comes to sustainability, the individual really can make a difference, and many people are interested in how their actions contribute to the overall improvement of their community's sustainability. At the same time, sustainability is complicated, and individuals are exposed to a wide range of confusing information, including a fair amount of greenwashing. One way to overcome this issue is to provide colleagues with nutritious pieces of sustainability information.

This recipe is a two-part educational approach using newsletters and a series of lunch-and-learn presentations, which also promote and advance the sustainability of the library. Library staff come together to learn how they can make an individual difference while also growing a sense of community. The process outlined not only engages the library community but also encourages outreach and collaboration with other groups, both on campus and off. This recipe can be done individually or with a committee.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The learning objectives of each newsletter and lunch-and-learn will depend on its topic. The overall outcome of the series of newsletters and events is to continually expose li-

brary staff to new ideas, topics, and thoughts in regard to sustainability and to keep the conversation going.

NUMBER SERVED

10–100 depending on space and budget

COOKING TIME

Initial prep time may take multiple hours depending on whether a committee or an individual is doing the work. Subsequent prep for individual newsletters and events is about an hour or two. Length of lunch-and-learns should be at least an hour if possible.

DIETARY GUIDELINES

The purpose of this recipe is twofold. It provides sustainability-related continuing education opportunities to those who work in the library. It also adds to the sense of community within the library by providing a way for individuals to discuss and learn from each other.

It falls under the ACRL Information Literacy Frame Scholarship as Conversation in that it allows the library staff a way to contribute to the conversation both in discussions and as guest writers for the newsletter. Since the topic of sustainability is so complex, the library staff will also ideally, as stated in the Dispositions for the Frame Scholarship as

Conversation, "recognize they are . . . entering into an ongoing scholarly conversation and not a finished conversation."

INGREDIENTS AND EQUIPMENT

- Microsoft Publisher (or other software to create newsletters)
- Google Forms to create invitations and keep track of RSVPs
- A room with a projector for lunch-and-learn events
- Budget to purchase food (optional)

PREPARATION

There are two main parts to the preparation. The first is thinking about the content and timing that will be most inviting to the library staff. How frequently will they be able to attend presentations? How frequently will you reasonably be able to create newsletters and organize presentations?

In regard to content, a good place to start can be covering the basics of sustainability including the three pillars (economic, environmental, and social), which is new information for many people. Other possible interesting topics include

- Anything sustainability-related happening in the library, on campus, and in the community. Invite those from the campus or community to do guest sections

in the newsletter or to be speakers for a lunch-and-learn.

- Different things that individuals can do to improve their personal sustainability. Provide some "low-hanging fruit" (e.g., use a travel mug), as well as some larger tips (e.g., don't fly as much) to provide a balanced mix.
- Recycling tips. Recycling is complicated, and people are often surprised by what is and isn't recyclable (especially since this varies depending on location).
- Newsletters can discuss the previous and upcoming lunch-and-learn presentations.
- Local energy companies that provide home energy audits.

The second part to the preparation is the actual creation process, which includes organizing the desired content into newsletters, thinking of potential speakers to cover the content of interest, and planning the lunch-and-learns. Once you have an idea of the content and how frequently you want to get that content out, you can start preparing your newsletters and events. Create a template for your newsletter before getting too far into creating the first issue. Consider things such as color schemes, logos, and headers and footers to make the newsletter recognizable. Ideally, you want a template that is easy to move content around in so that creating the individual issues is not overly time-consuming.

COOKING METHOD

1. Keep an ongoing list of topics to cover. If working with a committee, this can be in a cloud storage service such as Google Drive so that all members can contribute.
2. Keep an ongoing list of images to use by saving Creative Commons or public domain images. Put anything that seems interesting in a folder you can pull from when creating each newsletter issue.
3. Set up a schedule for releasing the newsletters and hosting the lunch-and-learns.
4. Create and share your newsletters per your schedule.
5. For the lunch-and-learns:
   - Identify and confirm speakers.
   - Schedule the presentation according to the needs of the speakers and the library staff.
   - Reserve the room and ensure you will have whatever technology the speakers will need (such as a projector and mic).
   - If your budget allows you to provide lunch, identify where you will be getting lunch from and communicate with the food provider about their procedures.
   - Use Google Forms to create an invitation form to send out to the library staff.
   - Have staff RSVP using the Google Form so that you can get a head count. If you are providing lunch, have attendees select the lunch

they want or indicate any allergy or nutritional needs. Don't forget to order lunch for the speakers!
   - Order lunch a few days before the event, or per the food provider's specification.
   - A day or two before the event, send a reminder email to staff who RSVPed.
   - Write up a brief introduction to the speakers. After presenting the speakers, enjoy your lunch while you learn!
   - Keep an eye on the time to make sure there is time for questions and the event does not go over.

Some optional steps in order to be able to share the feast with a wider audience and for those who want to come back for seconds:

- Create a webpage to share what you are doing and other sustainability information. This can be done using LibGuides if your library uses that software.
- If your library has a repository, upload the newsletters!

ALLERGY WARNINGS

If you are able to provide food for the lunch-and-learns, you likely won't have an attendance problem and may actually get too many people signed up unless you keep an eye on RSVPs and put a limit on the number of attendees. This limit will likely be based on how many lunches your budget can cover.

If you are not providing food and the event is more of a brown-bag, you could have people

RSVP and not show up. However, you likely won't have to restrict the number of people who RSVP and can still get a decent turnout. If you are not providing lunch, it is recommended to send the reminder email to everyone, not just those who RSVPed. Remind the attendees that the event is a brown-bag and that they are to bring their own lunch if they want to eat.

CHEF'S NOTE

The author created this recipe while at a different library than her current place of employment. It was a great success, with many people not only attending and engaging at the lunch-and-learns, but also remarking on how they read and looked forward to the newsletters. At this library the recipe proved to not only engage the staff, but actually changed their habits. Some of the products from this culinary test-kitchen can be found at these webpages:

Colorado State University Libraries. "Sustainability at Morgan." LibGuide. Accessed April 8, 2019. https://libguides.colostate.edu/sustainability.

The author cannot guarantee the longevity of this guide.