

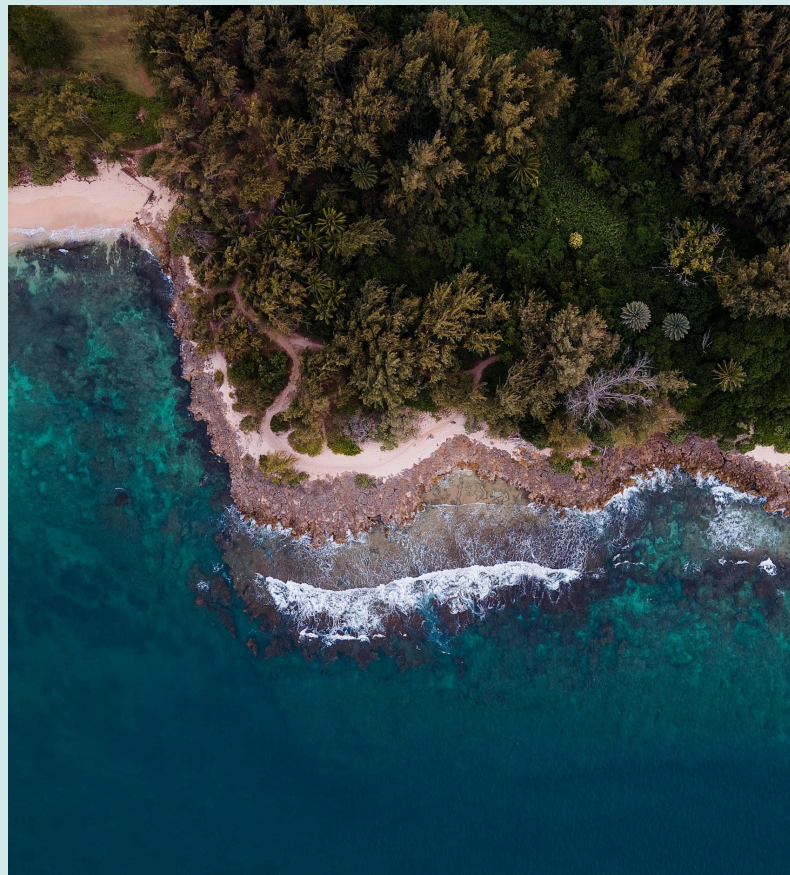


Swimming Toward an Ever-Shifting Shoreline:

*Re-envisioning a Student
Advisory Committee as a
Learning Community*

LOEX | May 9, 2026

Anna Sandelli





Learning Outcomes

Through today's session, participants will be able to:

- Describe strategies to incorporate instructional practices into informal student learning settings
- Identify aspects of instructional design that can foster engagement
- Explore opportunities to build community through shared facilitation and multiple modes of participation





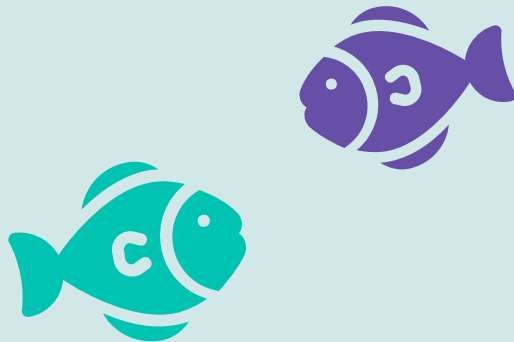
Today's Plan

01 Introduction and background

02 Approaches and strategies

03 Learnings and opportunities

04 Questions and conversation

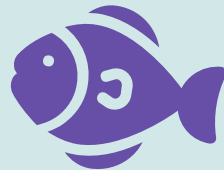




Share Your Experiences

Raise your hand:

- If your library has a student advisory committee or similar group
- If you've been a part of a library's student advisory committee





Part I: Sunny Skies

- Newly created Student Success role
- Enthusiasm fueled by exploration
- Connections emerge and grow
- Input leads to action and impact



Part II: Clouds Gather

- Newly created department head role
- Enthusiasm outpaces capacity
- Administrative tasks add up
- Input leads to...good intentions?



Part III: Just Keep Swimming?



- Virtual community reinvigorates enthusiasm
- Library transitions provide both opportunities and challenges
- 2024-2025: a chance to pause

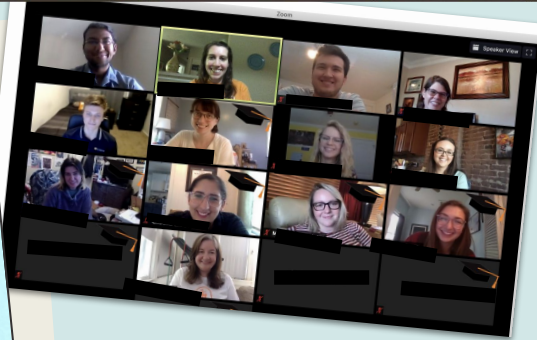
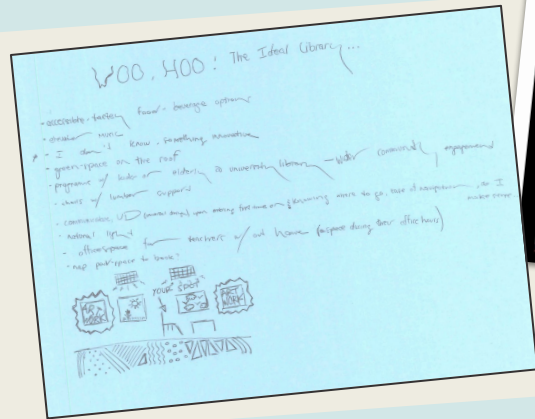


Committee as Learning Community



"I really enjoyed my time on the committee last year, and I felt like my voice was actually heard. Being a part of a committee that gets things done while also making sure everyone's voice is heard is rare. I would like to do that again!"

-Student interest form response, 2018-2019



Images, left to right: A "draw your ideal library" activity, a student advisory group photo, and a group Zoom screenshot.





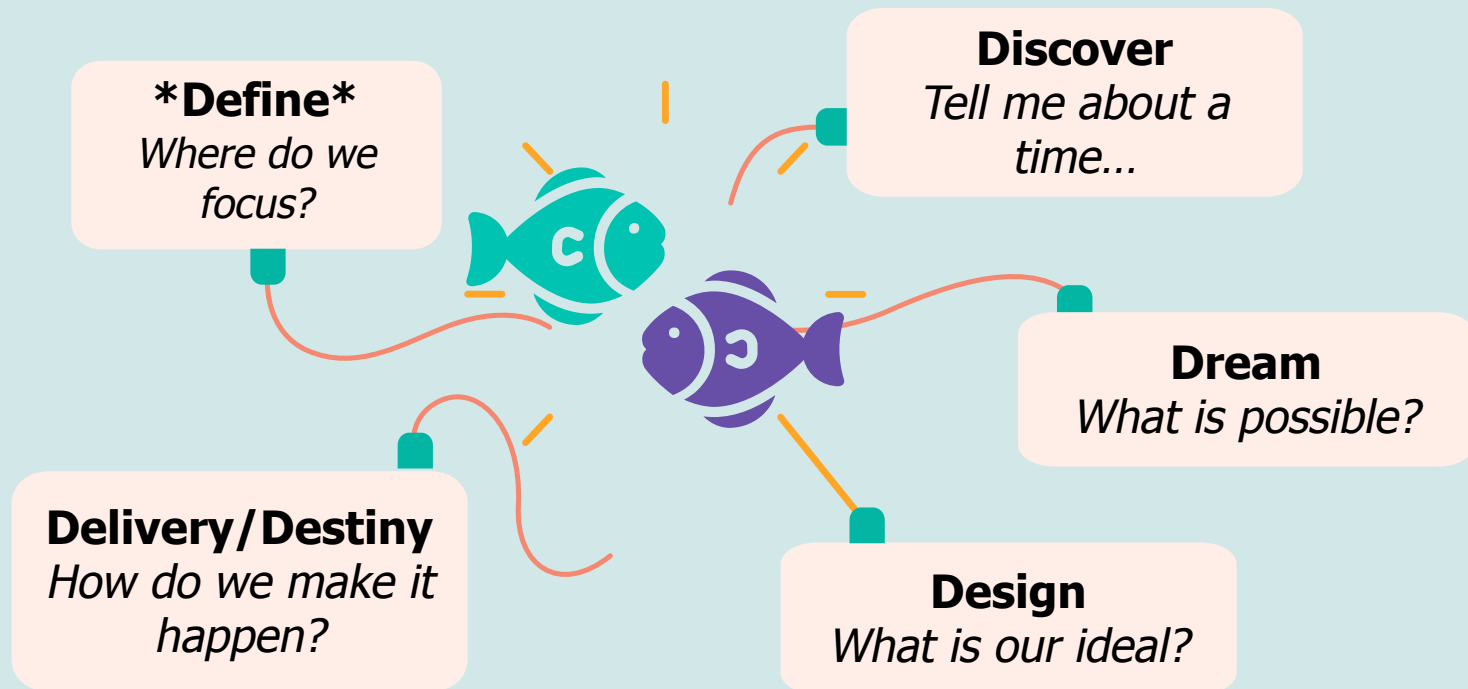
Appreciative Inquiry

- A strengths-based approach that builds on success
- About valuing and asking impactful, open-ended questions to create an expansive vision of the future (Bélanger & Rao, 2019)

*"...not a top-down approach, nor is it bottom-up; rather the approach is 'whole,' with all voices in the system working in concert."
(Stavros et al, 2015, p. 99)*



Appreciative Inquiry



(AI Commons, n.d., Cooperrider Center, 2023)





Appreciative Inquiry in Action

- **From 30+ project ideas to identifying core focus areas**
 - *Think about a positive committee or group experience you've had.*
 - *Imagine we've had a successful National Library Week - what made it a rewarding experience?*
- **From honoring challenges to co-creating success**
 - *Tell us about a time you felt most connected as a distance learner.*
 - *What does meaningful engagement look like as a graduate student?*



Curriculum Design

- Active learning activities
- Multimodal engagement
- Person-centered assessment





Active Learning

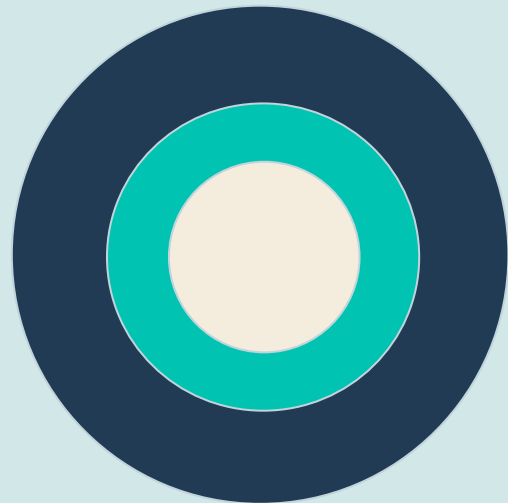
- Design thinking: human-centered and iterative approach
 - *Looking, understanding, making* (LUMA Institute, 2025)
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Guidelines
 - *Providing choice, promoting reflection* (CAST, n.d.)
- ACRL *Framework for Information Literacy*
 - Chance for students to see themselves as “contributors to scholarship rather than only consumers of it” (ACRL, 2016).



Active Learning in Action



- “Ongoing communication” as a theme:
What does this mean in practice?
 - Bull’s eye diagramming to identify how committee defines and ranks
 - Post-its and virtual whiteboard to share text-based and visual input
- More to explore:
 - [LUMA System methods](#)
 - [CAST UDL Guidelines](#)



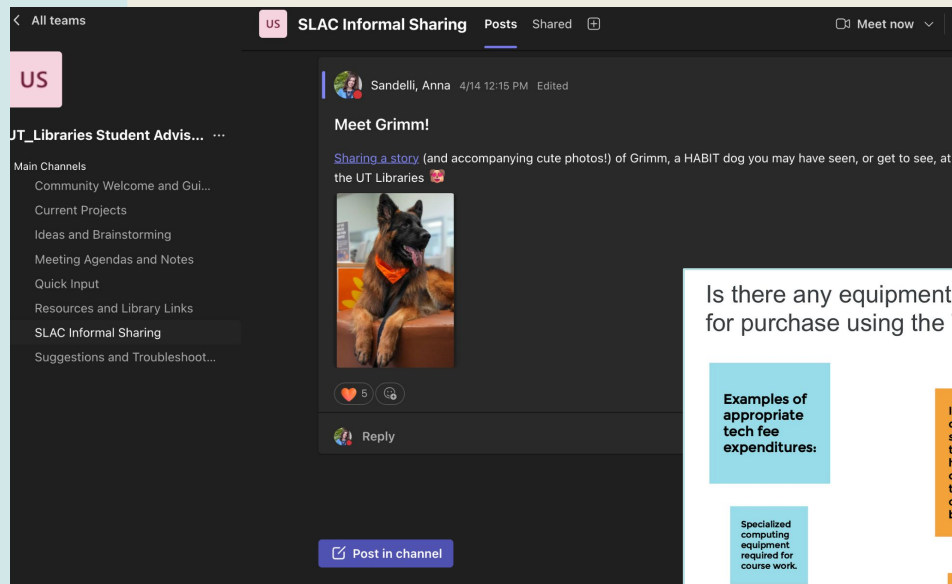
Multi-Modal Engagement



- What the librarian thought (in person *or* online) and what students wanted (both!)
- Virtual sharing space and resource for accessing materials
- Interest in exploring summer as a “stay connected” optional opportunity



Multi-Modal Engagement



Images, left to right: A screen capture of the Student Library Advisory Committee Teams site; a virtual whiteboard of input on the university's annual Technology Fee request

Is there any equipment, software, etc. you would like to suggest the Libraries consider for purchase using the Tech Fee?

Examples of appropriate tech fee expenditures:

Specialized computing equipment required for course work.

Departmental computing lab hardware and software.

GPS devices, still and video cameras, DVD players, etc.

I'd like to see more classroom or teaching spaces for virtual teaching. I'm not sure how many there currently are, but with the increase of online offerings, it could be beneficial to have.

Allowing remote students and CTAs have access to Adobe for editing documents, PDFs, etc.

I think more whiteboards of different sizes could be helpful

I would love to see more projectors or large screens for residence halls and student orgs to use in programming

Someone recently suggested a "happy lamp" therapy light for checkout.

A kinesiology student recently asked me about stop watches and wearable bio-monitoring devices--heart rate, etc.





Assessment as Care

“Drawing from caring practices in nursing, midwifery, and education (broadly speaking), we can begin to construct a version of assessment in libraries and information literacy education that practices and facilities care. This version of assessment will be messy but so is learning. In rejecting neatness and assessment narratives that fit a particular story, we are centering the people at the heart of teaching and learning in libraries and all their complications, needs, bodies, feelings, and experiences.”

(Arellano Douglas, 2020, p. 56)

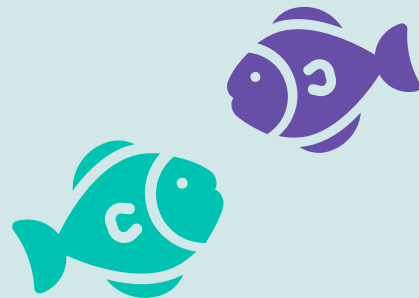


Assessment in Progress



May 2026

- Virtual whiteboard: *What can we continue, consider, and grow?*
- “One thing” reflection survey
 - To create community
 - To support student participation
 - To foster engagement outside of meetings





Facilitation Team

- New approach for 2025-26
- Faculty and staff volunteers
 - Future: student members?
- Modeling what we are creating with students in our own work
- Student enthusiasm for meeting multiple librarians



Facilitation Team in Action



- National Library Week as a pilot project, *spring 2026*
- Collaboration to develop more streamlined and care-oriented mechanisms for collecting and acting on input, *summer-fall 2026*
- “SLAC Syllabus” to develop and iterate, *summer-fall 2026*



Learnings & Opportunities

- Build in time
- Make learning visible
- Build in care
- Take space to reflect



Learnings & Opportunities

- **Make learning and goals visible**
 - Have you shared your learning outcomes with students? And if so, how?
 - Acknowledge the ups and downs and whys; close the loop (Hall, 2023).
- **Reflect on and honor capacity**
 - How are students doing? Your colleagues? And, how about you? How are *you* doing?
 - What will make this work sustainable?

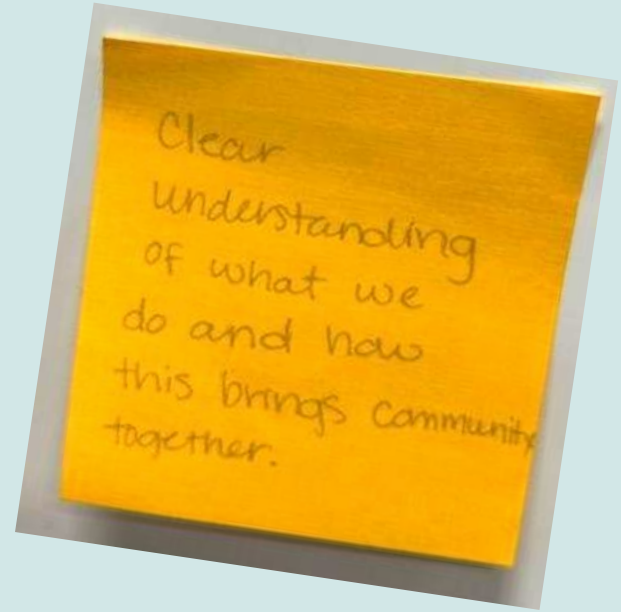


Image: A post-it from a SLAC activity that reads "clear understanding of what we do and how this brings community together."



A Closing Thought

“By tying the library’s success to some students decisions one gives ownership of these decisions to the students. The library is no longer something that happens to students, but something that they do.”

(Browndorf, 2014, p. 88)



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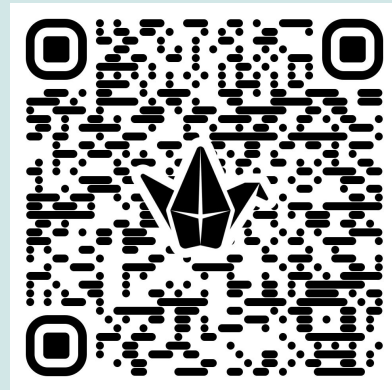
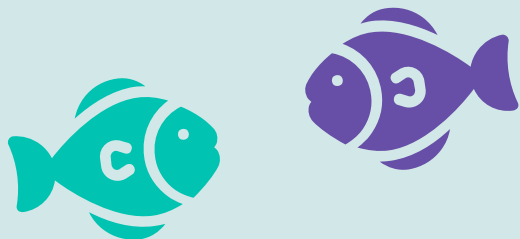
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Reflection and Questions

Think about a student-focused program or initiative in your context.

What would you like to continue, consider, or grow?



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Thank You!

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