

A Close-Look at a Residency: Bridging Literacies in Academic Library and Museum Teaching and Learning

Yuqiao Cao, *Pauline A. Young Resident and Visual Literacy Librarian*
University of Delaware Library, Museums and Press



Background

Can a residency position be a leadership position?

Yes!

The Pauline A. Young Residency Program

At the University of Delaware Library, Museums and Press, the Pauline A. Young Residency program offers the opportunity for new professionals to build a diverse portfolio that meets both the professional goals and interests of the resident and the service and operational priorities of the organization.

The Residency is designed to accelerate professional growth and career advancement through a variety of professional work experiences, mentoring, committee service and conference attendance.

Visual Literacy Librarian

Cross-Departmental Position: The current resident is working as the Visual Literacy Librarian at both the Museums and the Library's Student Success and Curriculum Partnerships (SSCP) Department.

Unique Structure: The museum galleries and the library are under the same organization, allowing the resident to lead efforts in transforming teaching materials and approaches to integrate visual literacy skills into diverse instruction programs.

Build on Passion and Institutional Need: The resident establishes the leadership role in identifying and bridging the visual literacy skill gaps on campus.

Residency Expectations



Museum Visits
Design and lead student visits



Library Sessions
Teach research skills and concepts to freshman composition courses, with emphasis on multimedia



First-Year Program
Contribute to the development of programming, include Common Reader programs



Instruction
Participate in a instruction training program, including class observation, reflection, and discussion



Collaboration
Develop co-curricular educational programs focus on visual literacy



Reference and Instructional Services
Provide research assistance

Building a Unique and Self-Driven Residency

Being one of the only few librarians with "visual literacy" in the title, the resident sees this as an opportunity to build a position from scratch. The residency expectations are flexible, with room for exploration and innovation. Therefore, while fulfilling the position expectations, the resident further develops the Visual Literacy Librarian position based on instruction, collaboration, and outreach goals. The resident finds new ways to teach visual literacy through cross-departmental partnership, emphasizing larger-scale instructional projects the resident leads or participates in and how they advance the library and museum's teaching presence on campus.



Museum Teaching and Learning

- Develop learning outcomes to guide instructors' expectations and lesson planning for all museum visits
- Teach classes from the natural science fields with multicultural art collections
- Outreach to majors that are non-traditional museum visitors is a priority, such as inviting more STEM classes for an interdisciplinary approach to visual literacy skills

First-Year Experience Exhibitions

- Collaborate with the First Year Experience Librarian in curating online First-Year Experience exhibitions
- Embrace student-created works that demonstrate students' ideas about social issues are valued in an academic context
- Visually engage students in learning about the university and valuable visual materials in Museum galleries and the Special Collections



Advocacy for Visual Literacy

- Participate in projects where visual literacy informs information and media literacy
- Introduce visual literacy lesson plans for incorporating visual materials in writing assignments
- Contribute to the research guide, "Busting Fake News: Evaluating Online Information," by introducing strategies for visual material evaluation and popularizing the guide as a campus-wide resource in workshops



Need Assessment on Teaching Visual Literacy Skills

- Visual learning happens everywhere, yet the university has no formal need assessment of faculty teaching visual literacy skills
- Launch a campus-wide survey, "Needs Assessment on Teaching Visual Literacy Skills in UD Classrooms," to understand the trends of using visual literacy skills in different fields, students' learning barriers, faculty and instructors' teaching needs, and ways to support teaching visual literacy, especially in the STEM fields



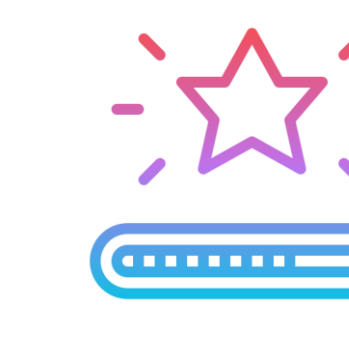
Reflection



Flexibility: Bridging visual literacies through various innovative projects is made possible by the flexible structure of the residency program. The resident has the freedom and support to initiate or participate in projects that tackle teaching visual literacy from new angles, reflecting institutional needs and individual professional development goals (e.g., liaison role).



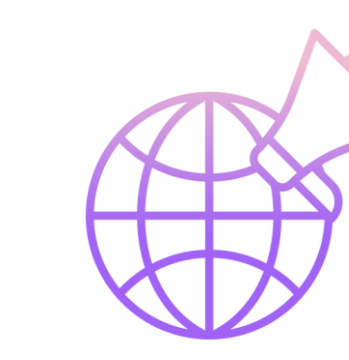
Communication: The timely and effective communication with the museum supervisor, the SSCP department head at the library, and the HR for the residency program forges a strong working force that directs the resident in building the experience with the priority of personal learning goals.



A Learning Position: The program provides the opportunity for the resident to be the lead in creating a new position in the field of academic libraries. The residency as a learning position opens the possibility of experimenting and shaping inventive and unique future roles.



Collaboration and Organizational Support: Building upon a culture of collaboration, the organization familiarizes the resident with stakeholders and potential partners. Whether it is a cross-departmental partnership or a personal project needing colleagues' insights, the support from coworkers and the organization ensures the resident's success.



Outreach: The resident is encouraged to reach out to individuals and departments on campus for relationship building and large scale projects: the campus-wide assessment made possible by Institutional Research staff, joining the First Generation College Student Committee to promote the library's presence, and forming in-person connections with faculty from different majors to expand the possibility of library and museum teaching and learning.

Want to learn more?



Contact

Yuqiao Cao, *Pauline A. Young Resident and Visual Literacy Librarian*,
yuqiaoc@udel.edu
Twitter: @YCBritte

References

<https://library.udel.edu/residency/>
Photo credit: <https://www.udel.edu/udaily/2020/october/nursing-classes-students-learning-on-campus-safety-precautions/>