

SLO#8: The Student Effectively Collaborates for the Achievement of Individual, Organizational, Professional, and Societal Goals.

On February 21, 1986, Nintendo released the very first game of the Legend of Zelda series, which is a game series that is one of the most iconic and beloved video-game series of all time. Not long after you start the game, you get introduced to this old man character, who, in my own personal opinion, coins one of the most famous quotes of all time in Nintendo history. That legendary quote is “It’s dangerous to go alone! Take this!” For me personally, I feel that this a very appropriate quote for not just the story of my life, but also for the library field as a whole. I happened to use this quote to assist me in making an analogy in one of my classes. It represents the fact that no matter what road, door, or task that you tackle, it is impossible for you to overcome those obstacles all by yourself. In order to achieve personal, professional, organizational, and societal success, you break down your tall walls and allow your colleagues in so that they can work with you. It is a valuable and eternal lesson that has been taught to all forms of life for countless millennia.

This lesson is still being taught now through this particular objective, which has been furthered instilled in me via the classes in this program. While all of the assignments that I have accomplished put emphasis on the importance of collaboration for the purpose of achieving critical goals, there were a few that really drove that point home for me. The very first thing that comes to mind was the needs assessment project that my peers and me worked together on in the LIS 650 – Library Administration class. For me, this assignment not only taught me how to work with different people, which include the focus group of the needs assessment as well as my peers, but also how to work with people online. I have to admit, I was nervous at the prospect of working with people that I have never met in person. However, that nervousness went away pretty quickly as we began communicating with each other via WebEx and email. Collaborating with one another in the interest of achieving individual and professional success, we assigned each of us a part to contribute to the project and just went right to work. Although, I wasn’t able to do any of the fieldwork, on account of the fact that I was too far away from the chosen survey site, I was able to at least create the survey itself for our group to distribute to the chosen audience. Overall, it was a great first experience that taught me that everyone in the team has different strengths and capabilities that can be used towards the collective success of not just your team, but the library as a whole as well. Also, I personally try to be cooperative with the team and pull my weight. While it is important that you voice your opinion and concerns to the team, you also don’t want to be constantly arguing with them as well. Finding that balance is the key to effective collaboration.

In order to keep that balance when your collaborating with your peers, you also have to be ready to adapt whenever an unexpected situation tries to force you off the road towards the success of both yourself and your society. That’s something that my LIS 610 - Collection Management group and I learned when we worked on our academic library project. About halfway through the project, one of our members, due to the unpredictable rollercoaster that is life, had to leave the group. While it was mostly

unexpected, we were able to quickly adapt and get the project completed in a timely fashion. This was a really important assignment for me, because it represents the undeniable fact that not everything is going to go according to the plan that you and your group have created. There are going to be unexpected bumps in the road along the way, so you and your group have to all be ready to adapt to these challenges as one collective unit. That is one of the things that make up effective collaboration.

While both these assignments, as well as the rest of the assignments that have contributed to my growth, have allowed me to grow my skills in regards to working with my peers, they only allowed me to better collaborate with just my colleagues. To really know and understand what collaboration is really about, you need to get out into the field and work with the very society that you will ultimately serve. I was fortunate enough to get that opportunity in the LIS 662 – Diverse Client Groups class, where I got to collaborate with my own community for the purpose of creating a product that would benefit them. I have to tell you, it was a completely and totally different experience as opposed to all the group assignments that I have done up to this point. Working with the very community that you are creating information products for makes accomplishing individual, professional, organizational, and societal goals a lot easier. After all, it is these very people who those goals are being based around. What better way to achieve those goals than to collaborate with the people those goals are going to help. Thinking about it that way, LIS 662 provided me with a vital, surreal experience that will be a tremendous help for when I began my career, which will be all about getting out of your comfort zone on a daily basis.

Getting and staying out of your comfort zone regularly is absolutely vital if you want to effectively collaborate with the community that your library serves. How will you create effective information services to meet your community's needs if you don't give yourself the opportunity to work with that very community? It allows you to personally connect with the community, as well as give them the opportunity to take part in the development of these services. That way, it makes the users that you are targeting more inclined to use those services since they have directly contributed to them. This is called "crowdsourcing," which I personally believe is another excellent way to promote collaboration between the library and the community. Working side by side with another to create and develop resources and services will ultimately help human society as a whole evolve and thrive, which is the goal of all information organizations.

This is how most library and information professionals exercise effective collaboration in order to effectively serve the users that come through their doors. All of these classes have taught me that as a librarian, I need to constantly reach out to people and get out of my comfort zone in order to exercise effective collaboration. Not only that, I also need to do it with a certain smile on my face that shows people that I am easy to work with. In other words, the ultimate key to accomplishing this learning objective is to practice the awesome, classic philosophy that is in the Toy Story song, "You've Got a Friend in Me." Ultimately, putting yourself out there and showing your peers and the community that you want to work side by side with them will allow not just you, your career, and your organization to grow, but it will also allow human society as a whole to

grow as well. As they say it in the Three Musketeers, “All for one and one for all!” That is a philosophy that I will make sure to exercise on a daily basis as I continue to climb the mountain of success.

Artifacts

LIS 610 – Collection Management – Group Collection and Advocacy Project -
<https://uncg-lis.libguides.com/c.php?g=875089&p=6283354>

LIS 650 Library Administration and Management – Assignment 2 – Needs Assessment

LIS 662 – Information Services for Diverse Client Groups – Term Project