

**Research  
Desk  
Assistant  
@  
Feinberg**

# What we'll cover over six modules

What are we doing & why?

Basics of Reference Service

- Patron-centered service
- Expert knowledge of library catalog, databases, and resources
- When to direct patrons to a librarian

How to keep statistics & staff chat

# Module 1: Library Building and Statistics

- Know guest login and where to use it  
lc flguest 09NoAccount
- Service Desks
  - 1<sup>st</sup> floor desk services (color printing, posters, laminating)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> floor material checkout and ILL pickup
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> floor desk for assistance with microfilm/fiche and access to presentation room
- Which collections are on which floors (call numbers, DVDs, CDs)
- Location: Special Collections
- Location: Center for Teaching Excellence

# Information at the Reference Desk

- Phone: forward/unforward
- Know emergency evacuation procedures
- Know location/when use emergency call button
- Refer printer questions/Kent Alarm to circulation desk by calling x5182
- Know items in Reference Desk notebook especially call directory LITS

# Statistics/ Knowledge Base

- Please keep track of every interaction!
- Gimlet:  
<https://Plattsburgh.gimlet.us/users/login>
- Login with your username
- Question Labels
- Search Gimlet for answers to questions;  
especially building facilities

# Module 2: The Reference Interview

LEVEL ONE: We answer questions.

LEVEL TWO: We instruct people on how to use the library's facilities, services and resources.

LEVEL THREE: We show people what to expect from the library.

# Our Goals

- **Determine and fulfill** the patron's information need
  - Reference Interview
- **Teach** them 'how to fish'
- **Emphasize** the value of the library's resources and the special knowledge that librarians can share with patrons
- **Establish** a strong relationship and positive view of the library and library staff

# Patron-Centered Service

- Try not to say “No”: take names, questions, number/email and make referrals
  - Special circumstance: tech support! Please direct them to the Helpdesk for password issues .
- Customer service:
  - Greet patrons with an encouraging introduction and eye contact
  - Remain respectful and polite, especially when patrons are upset
- Homework is okay, but only if you still look approachable!



# Reference Interview

- The RI is the interaction between the Reference Desk staff and the patron concerning the nature of the needed assistance.
- Sometimes people don't ask for what they really need...
  - They don't know how to describe it
  - They don't want to look like they don't know what they're doing
  - They're anxious around librarians
  - They're completely lost
- Our job is to figure out what they really need, not just what they're asking for.

# Reference Interview

- Clarifying questions--
  - What class is it for?
  - What type of project are you working on?
  - Do you need a particular type of source, like peer-reviewed articles?
  - When is it due?
- Feel free to get up from the desk!

# Reference Interview: Basic

- Where have you looked already? (this is a great first question!)
- Have you ever searched the catalog before?
- Have you ever used one of the databases?
- Emphasize how to do it on their own & how to get more help
- Show the form to Make an Appointment with a Librarian if more assistance is needed

# Reference Interview: Beyond Basic Questions

- Where are you working from? We can go to your computer.
- Let them 'drive'
- Emphasize saving!

# Directing patrons to a librarian

- Is there a librarian in the building?
- Provide Library liaison contact or refer to [reference@Plattsburgh.edu](mailto:reference@Plattsburgh.edu) for questions you are not about to answer
- <http://web.plattsburgh.edu/library/liaisons.php>
- Always emphasize the kind of questions that librarians can answer..
  - Finding sources for research papers and other information needs
  - Citing sources properly
  - General tips on searching for information in libraries and the free web
  - Understanding how information needs are different across different majors

# Module 3:Library Homepage

- <http://web.plattsburgh.edu/library/>
- Make sure you're comfortable with what information is on all of the links especially
  - Hours
  - Cite Your Work
  - Meet with a Librarian
  - Student Guide
    - Textbooks on Reserve
    - LIB200 Proficiency
  - Faculty Guide
    - Find Your Library Liaison
    - Request a library instruction session

# Module 4: Library Search Tools

- Main search box
  - What does it actually search?
- Discovery (EDS)
- Does anyone use it?
- Tips
  - Default: what is available in library collection
  - Full Text Finder
  - Limiters
  - Subject headings
  - How to save

# Catalogs

Find Books and More (IDS Catalog)

Linked into Request on Inter-Library Loan

PlattCat

Course Reserves

WorldCat



# Library Search Tools Tips

- Catalog Tips
  - Faceted browsing and limiting results
  - Looking at the details not just at Search Results list of titles
  - Following subject headings once you find a good title
  - Advanced Keyword Search
- What do you like/dislike?

# Module 5: Search Tools: Find Articles

- Find journals by title  
(Journals A-Z)
  - Searching a known citation
- Find databases by subject
- Find databases by title

# Library Search Tools

- Databases

- Use for in-depth, subject-specific topics, or students who have already tried Discovery
- Refer to a librarian if possible
- Organization: Find Databases By Subject
- Try these heavily used Databases
  - JStor
  - CINAHL
  - ABI Inform
  - Science Direct
  - Which ones do you use?

# Google Scholar

- Good for easy access to PSU holdings & full-text
- On-campus: connects to our ILL system
- Settings: Library links

# Module 6: SUNY Plattsburgh Collections

- Special collections  
see <http://web.plattsburgh.edu/library/specialcollections/>  
Online Collection guides  
New York State Historic Newspapers
- Digital Commons  
Faculty and student scholarship collections by department  
Yearbooks online  
Plattsburgh Rocks