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Collaborative Reference: McQuade Library’s Research Center

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Lyena Chavez, C.J. Wong, Elizabeth Sarkodie-Mensah, & Michaela Keating

A Collaborative, Learner-Centered Reference Services Delivery Model That Meets 21st Century Students’ Dynamic and Evolving Research Expectations and Needs

Space for Student Learning

- Increases in student engagement
  - Deeper, richer information literacy conversations and reflections
  - Active learning – students honing information literacy skills in DIY (Do It Yourself) mode
  - Relationship-building between librarians and students

Space for Librarian Learning

- Librarians blending bricks and tricks
  - Open office arrangement
  - Research Center serves as office space for librarians as well as consultation space for students
  - Flexible to accommodate emerging reference librarian roles (librarians as relationship-builders, guides, and partners)
  - Collaborative problem-solving among librarians is encouraged

McQuade’s Research Center Has Become a Signature Space in Which Social Discourse and Collaborative Learning – Among Librarians and Students – Happen Daily.

"Thank you very much for helping me find this book. I appreciate it. I am so glad that I can get so many supports from our librarians. You are so supportive and efficient. I don't know how to express my feeling of gratitude. Thank you very much." ~International Student

"Thank you so much!!! You are so incredibly helpful :) I’ve been searching these on and off for weeks and I didn’t find nearly as many useful articles. And the ones we printed hit it out of the park! I’m already writing. God bless you, thank you!" ~Student

"I’m just reading [student]’s introduction now, and I wanted to tell you how terrific it is. You did an amazing job helping her to revise her study question and find the relevant articles. I really think it will make a difference to her this semester—and possibly her whole life. Thanks so much for your work with her and all my students!” ~Faculty member, Psychology Department

The Research Center By the Numbers

- 70% of all consultations are 3 or above on the READ Scale
- 58 consultations of 5 or 6 on the READ Scale
- Librarians available 93 hours per week
- 98 Research Appointments
- 18 consultations lasted longer than 5 minutes
- Average Consultation Length: 19 Minutes

Acknowledgements

Pictures taken by Kevin Salemme, Director of Media Instructional Services.

The Merrimack College Community

Undergraduates comprise 91.5% of the student population

Why is a Research Center?

To improve the reference user experience for Merrimack Students by offering an appealing and comfortable environment
- Increase the range of research outcomes
  (Defined as a 3-READ Scale, 4-consultations in duration)
- Embed students in a personalized, individualized approach to make reference services a signature program
- Increase engagement among international, adult learners, transfer students, Compass (MC’s Bridge Program) student populations
- Increased librarian visibility
- In line with other Centers (Math Center, Writing Center, Media Xchange, Library Learning Commons)

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Self Service Office Supplies

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