

Seamless Virtual Service: An Academic Library Response to COVID-19

Karen F. Kaufmann and Claire A. Miller

Seminole State College of Florida

Abstract: The impact of the coronavirus, COVID-19, disrupted higher education and, more specifically, academic libraries across the globe. This crisis requires a 21st century solution. This case study examines the seven-week period of rapid transition from a traditional physical academic library with a hybrid approach to instruction and service to a one hundred percent online library in response to social distancing guidelines and campus closures. The response highlights the importance of flexible and iterative planning, cooperative and collaborative problem solving, and librarian self-efficacy.

Keywords: academic libraries, campus closures, COVID-19, crisis, distance learning, higher education, pandemic self-efficacy, virtual reference

1. Introduction

1.1. The Pandemic: COVID-19

Pandemics are an experiential factor that has impacted humanity for centuries. Throughout history, the world has experienced epidemics that have rocked the world, communities, and families. The 1918 flu pandemic was responsible for 20 million deaths globally and was reported to have killed 6% of the population of India (The Economist, 2020). In 1958 and 1967, flu pandemics were responsible for over a million deaths (Ghendon, 1994). In the 21st century, how are we reconciling with the COVID-19 pandemic that is impacting the global populations politically, economically, and more importantly, at the community and personal level? Today as we experience the COVID-19 pandemic, and the impact on our own communities – what can we learn? Just as the country of India weathered the 1918 flu pandemic, there may be the notion that certain populations are already so toughened by hardship and so another virus or pandemic won't hurt them (The Economist, 2020). This case study will illustrate how academic librarians, information professionals, are well prepared to pivot and provide seamless library services during hardships. Though there may be challenges, concerns, and uncertainty, library professionals employ self-efficacy, resilience, innovative and creative solutions to unimagined



circumstances, as presented by COVID-19. Academic libraries recognize that this pandemic, identified in early 2020, presents hardships for our work environments and for the communities we serve. The Seminole State College of Florida (SSC) academic library responded to this pandemic environment by implementing approaches to continue our work by strategically serving our academic and community users. Together library staff and librarians developed ways to reach and teach in our communities of practice, which include students, faculty, administrators, staff, and other constituents.

This case study will outline how this seamless delivery of library services and resources unfolded during the Spring term of 2020. Using a variety of methods and platforms, the College Libraries took steps to bridge the unanticipated abrupt move to remote teaching, learning, and delivering library services in a meaningful way. Many institutions of higher learning determined that working in virtual and remote environments was essential to be effective. Our academic library- as part of the higher education institutional landscape- continued to provide library and information resources online and relevant to teaching and learning. The academic library responded in a nimble, rather seamless, user-friendly way to accommodate a variety of needs. Reference, research – as well as library services and resources - migrated to being fully accessible online.

Higher education may seemingly have pivot and flexibility barriers inherently in place as a sector, which has limited the potential navigation of a quick response. This could be compared to the needed new direction of a sailboat when an unexpected storm appears while at sea. The immediate need to change direction or “come about” - turn the sailboat so it is going in a different direction – is essential to weather the storm. This pandemic has provided not just higher education, but specifically the academic library, an opportunity to exhibit the nimble flexibility that has been resonant, but not evident, to our constituents. Let’s explore a little more as we unfold this case study and the library response to the college closure, resulting in the remote working and teaching environment that unfolded over eight weeks in Spring 2020.

1.2. Who We Are

Seminole State College of Florida (SSC) is a full-service education provider, offering bachelor's degrees; two-year college-credit degrees (A.A., A.S., A.A.S.); specialized career certificates; continuing professional education and adult education. Currently close to 30,000 students are enrolled in courses offered across four schools: School of Arts and Sciences, School of Business, Health and Public Safety, School of Engineering, Design and Construction, and the School of Academic Foundations (Seminole State College, 2019; Seminole State College, n.d).

SSC is one of 28 public State Colleges in the of Florida College system. We are a non-residential commuter college located in Central Florida, located just outside the city of Orlando. Many students graduate with their A.A. or A.S.

degree and continue their education here at SSC in one of our Bachelor programs. Some transfer to our partner institution, the University of Central Florida, or to other colleges or universities to complete their educational goals. Whatever the student aspirations are – we are here to be a partner to support academic success and real-world relevance.

1.3. The SSC College Libraries

The College Libraries at SSC provide services across four campuses: Altamonte Springs, Heathrow, Sanford/Lake Mary, and the Robert and Jane Lee Campus in Oviedo, Florida. Faculty librarians provide reference, research, and instruction online and on-campus. They are responsible for collection development, liaison work, college service and professional development as well as teaching information literacy across the curriculum with other discipline faculty. Each full-time faculty librarian teaches the one-credit online LIS 2004 course titled Research Strategies for College Students online, or an equivalent course, at least one time during the academic year. At this writing there are six full-time faculty librarians, three part-time faculty librarians, and one part-time professional status online services librarian.

Most importantly, the College Libraries are committed to providing exceptional research, instruction, resources and services to students, faculty, staff and our community constituents to enhance an information literate community of learners, educators and everyday information users of information. We embrace the idea that the democratization of information is a preeminent goal that information professionals are trained to provide. Together we strive to holistically deliver library services, resources, and instruction to our constituents.

This case study presents the experience of the College Libraries at SSC during the COVID-19 pandemic when the physical college shut down and the College Libraries transitioned at speed to fully virtual delivery of instruction and library services while working remotely. The authors represent varied perspectives which add to the context and substance of the case study. One is a recently hired research and instruction librarian with over a decade of experience in higher education. The other is a tenured librarian with of ten years of service at SSC Libraries in various roles and fourteen years' experience in higher education.

We begin with a literature review and then outline our methods, followed by two sections that explain the how the College Libraries provided seamless delivery of virtual services, and use a timeline to describe the events and application of our methods. The final sections provide a discussion that highlights the confluence of both the experiences, applied methods, and results.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Social Science and COVID-19

This pandemic may assist social scientists uncover 21st century views using methods that are reliable for sociology, psychology, economics, public policy and other social behaviourist disciplines (Flaherty, 2020). This includes the impact of social distancing on different populations such as children and the elderly, isolation, what motivates the wearing of masks, healthcare providers and systems, economic impact, social media, and the social consequences. Our work in the library is a social experience as students read, research, and engage with information. The social science aspects of this pandemic can perhaps lead us as librarians to examine our work and environments to improve the learning spaces and experiences for our users.

2.2 Academic Libraries Response to COVID-19

Some early data from the field reflects how academic libraries across the United States are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Primary Research Group (2020) published ~~results from~~ a survey in April 2020 with results from sixty-seven institutions of higher learning. Represented in the survey sample population were Community and 4-Year Colleges including those offering master's and PhD Degrees, ~~and well as Research Universities~~. Overwhelmingly, 95.52% of respondents indicated that classes were moved online until further notice, and 4.48% had cancelled classes until further notice. Generally, the academic libraries in this survey population indicated the physical library locations were closed, with exceptions for staff or faculty on a limited basis. Before the pandemic, working from remote locations was a rarity, with primarily research universities reporting an average of 0.67% for remote work. Post-coronavirus closures, the remote work percentage across the field rose to 62.69%. As a comparison, 35.17% of community college library employees were working remotely versus 75.1% of library employees at research universities.

In terms of information literacy instruction, the Primary Research Group (2020) survey asked: *Has the library implemented or developed plans to use distance learning or blended learning to a greater extent than usual in information literacy and other in-library classes?*

More than 67% had implemented plans to use distance or blended learning in information literacy classes while close to 18% were developing such classes; 10.45% had not implemented and were not developing online information literacy classes. Community colleges were ahead of the curve here, as 87.5% had already implemented information literacy classes at a distance.

Size of college was also a factor: the larger the college, the more likely it was to have already implemented distance learning in information literacy classes;

55.56% of small colleges with fewer than 1,500 students had information literacy classes implemented online vs. 88.24% of colleges with more than 10,000 students.

Interestingly, the survey also asked specifically if the library experienced a surge in demand for specific eBook collections, databases, or other online resources. In general, few colleges thought so. Shifting library expenditures from print to online resources, such as eBooks, was a universal trend amongst respondents. Some had already begun a shift, and many indicated that a continuation of this expenditure in terms of library resources would continue and expand.

Additional adaptations that academic libraries mentioned included: assertiveness to research requests, use of virtual meetings and email to students and faculty abreast of changes at the library, travel budget moved to online training, and focused use of chat reference.

Generally, the results of the Primary Research Group survey (2020) align with the COVID-19 experience by the College Libraries at SSC. However, in contrast to the average of 34% of community college employees working remotely, 100% of library staff at SSC moved to remote work during this time.

2.3 Self-Efficacy, Change, and Crisis Management in the Literature

One of the trends that emerged in the College Libraries' transition to a virtual library during the COVID-19 shutdown was the "can do" attitude at both an organizational and individual level. This attitude is also known as "self-efficacy," and is described as a person's belief in their ability to successfully complete a task (Bandura, 1986 in Carter et al., 2018). Research showing the positive benefits of self-efficacy on employee outcomes is a well-established part of business, health, and psychological literature (Carter, et al., 2018).

The interplay between change and self-efficacy in an organizational context is explored by Fatima et al. (2020). They note that change-related activities often begin with excitement but fail to fulfil their initial promise. They note that the failure on an organizational level to adapt to change is most often due to employees not feeling ready for a change program. They note the importance of developing a readiness for change. In combination with self-efficacy, this readiness for change is a powerful positive influence in managing the change process. While this research highlights that self-efficacy is an important aspect of adapting and adopting change, responding to a crisis is very different than a planned organizational change.

Laere (2013) notes that a crisis makes organizations more aware of the fragility of the status quo and makes observable both the successes and failures of the organization's key beliefs, values, knowledge base, communication, leadership,

and expectations. In other words, a crisis merely draws attention to both the functional and dysfunctional in an existing system. Unlike other organizational changes, crises stress an existing structure, rather than seeking to change that structure deliberately.

Looking at the impact of organizational trust on both self-efficacy and employee willingness to take action, Ozyilmaz, Erdogan, and Karaeminogullari (2018) found that self-efficacy had a higher positive impact when trust in the organization was high. On the other hand, low trust in an organization could erase the benefits of self-efficacy. If employees believe that the organization's behaviour is predictable and generally supportive of employee decisions, then self-efficacy offers large benefits in workplace problem solving efforts and outcomes. By contrast, low organizational trust means that employees "cannot assume that their actions will be appreciated, valued or reciprocated, or even that their efforts will be successful due to the possibility that the organization may not provide support when needed" (Ozyilmaz, Erdogan, and Karaeminogullari, 2018, p.185). Furthermore, high organizational trust in combination with self-efficacy often leads employees to take on tasks beyond the letter of their job description that benefit the organization as a whole. Without this organizational trust, even employees with high self-efficacy are unlikely to go above and beyond. Therefore, for self-efficacy to benefit an organization in a crisis, trust in the support and goodwill of the organization is necessary.

While there is limited research into the overlaps between crisis management and self-efficacy, Avery and Park (2016) offer a model that they name "crisis efficacy". This model posits that the confidence in one's ability to carry out the action (self-efficacy) is a foundational part of crisis efficacy. In addition, Avery and Park (2016) found that prior successful experiences in handling crisis situations increased the levels of crisis efficacy.

While libraries and librarians are not often thought of as resilient organizations and individuals tested by adversity, the impact of the Great Recession and steadily sinking budgets on libraries in Florida has led to creative problem solving and innovative thinking as organizations struggle to do more with less. In addition, as an institution in Florida, SSC had previous experience with large scale disaster planning and response: hurricanes are a yearly threat. Indeed, in 2017, Hurricane Irma, a Category 5 storm, impacted Florida and the college. Hurricane preparations were explicitly used as a touch point in the earliest discussions of potential closures for COVID-19. While the actions needed were very different, the experience of successfully overcoming crises and disasters provided a belief in the group's collective ability to handle a difficult situation. This crisis efficacy paired with a high level of organizational trust may help to explain the smooth transition of the library into the virtual space. These hardships and our academic library response is an example of resiliency and the

propensity of academic librarians to engage innovative and solutions during hardship.

3. Methods

Situated in a social constructivist theory of knowledge (Vygotsky, 1962), librarians engage in the social and learning experiences of our constituents. While working to provide online teaching and communication in various modalities, faculty librarians used a social constructivist approach by learning together and learning from each other. This resulted in highly engaged and highly productive work and deliverables of library virtual services. Librarians worked to pivot their instruction, reference, and resources to a fully digital information environment to provide exceptional user experiences, which are of utmost importance and significance to the work of the College Libraries.

Outlined for this case study are the methods employed over the course of eight weeks which included the following approaches:

- a. Collegial dialogue on specific tasks
- b. Task assignment/Task agreement/Project Management
- c. Use of Microsoft TEAMS technology
- d. Use of multiple delivery technologies

The experience of migrating to fully remote work and online delivery of all aspects of the library work was challenging, despite the fact that some embedded online instruction, many library resources, and online chat were all part of our pre-existing services. However, the majority of instruction, much of our reference, and all support staff and paraprofessionals had taken place in the physical library space on-campus. The College Libraries experienced the “messiness” of moving from an on-campus delivery of resources, services, and instruction to online delivery of all these library services.

4. Case Study

4.1 Seamless Virtual Service: Task and Delivery Technologies

Like many libraries, SSC College Libraries maintain a subscription to the Springshare suite of applications:

- LibGuides hosts webpages and finding aids while LibCRM allows customization and coding of guides,
- LibCal offers appointment, event, and space reservation management,
- LibAnswers combines a FAQ database and live chat platform,
- LibStaffer gives timeclock and scheduling software,
- LibInsight tracks statistics using customized forms, and
- LibWizard provides online quizzing and tutorial hosting.

These applications formed the backbone of the library's transition to virtual mode, not only because we already had access and experience using these tools, but also because the tools are entirely controlled by the library. Like many other academic libraries, SSC College Libraries have limited input or control over our website or other tools provided by the college but managed by other departments. In the short time frame and quick turnaround of the campus closures, partnering with other departments took a backseat to using the tools we had on hand.

LibGuides formed the hub of our communication and outreach to campus stakeholders through our "Library Virtual Mode" guide. Students, staff, and faculty could easily find information about which library services were available and how to access them in one place. This guide also included faculty resources, including expanded access offered by many academic publishers. We also linked to the guide directly from the library homepage and used an LTI integration with Canvas (our learning management system) to make this guide the default "Help" page in all courses. An LTI allows seamless integration between different technologies, in this case, between LibGuides and Canvas.

LibCal had been used primarily as a space reservation software, but a small pilot project was underway before the closure to use the platform as booking system for both in-person and virtual reference consultations. With the transition to Library Virtual Mode, this pilot project was expanded to offer virtual appointments with librarians. While only 32 appointments were made over the 7 weeks of this case study, students who used the service expressed their appreciation for the service. In a time of upheaval and uncertainty, the personal contact and longer timeframe allowed librarians to do the deep dive reference transactions that would previously have taken place in person.

LibAnswers (which includes LibChat) had been in use for several years as an FAQ and virtual reference desk, but mostly without a set schedule. Some librarians staffed extensively, while others contributed only an hour or two a week. LibChat quickly became our virtual service desk staffed by both library staff and librarians on a consistent schedule. The addition of the 24/7 chat service staffed by a global cooperative, which had been considered but not adopted before the closure, offered expanded access to our students.

LibStaffer had not been previously used at the SSC College Libraries, but the need to consistently staff chat through LibAnswers led to its adoption. This software primarily allowed shift swapping, and a transparent schedule for all staff.

We also used a range of college-provided and outside tools. Phone communication with campuses closed was handled using a combination of approaches.

Cisco Jabber app could be installed on employees' personal smartphone. This software would transfer a call from one's desk extension to one's personal device. While not all faculty or staff opted into this program, it offered a way for students to reach us while maintaining privacy.

Campus voice mail on each campus was updated to reflect the closures, and staff continued to check these lines from off campus. In addition, the Cisco phone system allowed voicemail from the main service desk to be shared with the library email.

A **Google voice number** was created for the library as a whole and staffed by a small number of volunteers. While the total number of calls remained low, this phone line offered immediate access to a human. In at least one case, a student called the number in crisis, and the ability to speak with a college employee helped calm them down until the correct department and resources to help them could be located.

Microsoft Suite was extensively used in the transition to virtual mode.

Outlook email and calendars formed the backbone of our workflow in Library Virtual Mode. Without the ability to pick up the phone or walk down the hall to talk to a colleague, email offered the next best thing. While the LibChat staff channel sometimes helped, the ability to leave messages asynchronously and arrange meeting times became even more important.

Teams had been used by a few working groups before going virtual, but it became essential as a shared document repository and work area in the transition to virtual mode. In addition to the existing teams, new teams were established. These included "COVID -19 and Library Instruction" which became the work area for the virtual mode transition. A social space titled "Library Fun Times," created in week two, offered a way for library staff to connect and share in an informal space. "Reopening the Library" became the workspace for our eventual return to campus, and several existing and new work groups moved their work into Teams. In short, the number of teams tripled during this seven-week period.

Planner was used briefly for allocating tasks during week one and two. During these early weeks, Planner allowed a transparent prioritization of what needed to be done by each librarian and staff member. But usage fell dramatically after that. The self-efficacy mindset among librarians and staff may have contributed to this: since everyone was on top of what needed to be done, the formal work of allocating and assigning tasks felt unnecessary.

Additional educational tools for teaching and learning were employed and strategically implemented by librarians.

Canvas is the college's LMS. Canvas is managed by the eLearning department where instructional designers and systems analysts shepherd the work of faculty to design and deliver course content online to students. A program of embedded librarians in Canvas existed before the transition to Library Virtual Mode, but it quickly expanded during the transition.

Canvas Commons provides a space for both local and global content to be easily shared amongst teaching faculty. Instructional content is identified using Creative Commons protocols so users can determine the limits to reuse. During this period of transition, librarians created, edited, and uploaded new and old content to Canvas Commons which was linked from the faculty resources page in the Library Virtual Mode guide.

Panopto is video capturing tool used to enhance and provide active learning and student engagement as well as providing the opportunity for faculty to build their online presence for students. Faculty librarians use Panopto to capture short video greetings, instructional recordings, or full lectures and place them in Canvas to enhance student and faculty interactions and provide the personalized online classroom.

Zoom, an online video conferencing software, had been used at SSC for some committee and work group meetings before the closure. While not all librarians had accounts before closure, the college announced the day after we officially went virtual that a site license had been purchased. This allowed faculty librarians expanded access, as well as basic accounts for all library staff. Zoom quickly became the meeting platform of choice for appointments, work groups, and synchronous course instruction in the virtual environment. As news stories about "Zoom bombing" started to proliferate, updates were made to how we integrated Zoom into LibCal for appointments. These improvements prevented any instances of "Zoom Bombing."

4.2 Seamless Delivery of Virtual Services: Timeline

This section offers a weekly outline of the progression of adapting the College Libraries to virtual mode. Continuing the social constructivist approach to address the COVID-19 college closure, librarians worked together to uncover new tasks and ways to address these tasks working remotely and delivering virtually library content and services to our users. Navigating the currents and winds required a recognition of guiding our work with the acknowledgment of the needed "coming about" or turning in a new direction to be effective.

Week Zero (March 9-15) Forecasting and Planning

SCC returned from Spring Break on March 9, 2020. On that day, Morgan Tracy, Library Director, sent out an invitation for a Zoom meeting for the following day to discuss plans to respond to COVID-19. At this point, Stanford University, Columbia University, and a large number of other colleges primarily

in the Pacific Northwest (Redden, 2020) had cancelled classes or moved instruction online. College closures that had, to some, been unthinkable the week before break suddenly became a possibility.

At the meeting on Tuesday, March 10, both full and part-time librarians were called on to discuss plans for how to go virtual. The director's take was that we were likely to go virtual within the month of March, but there was no clear timeline. Despite a certain amount of shock and concern, the librarians began very quickly to think critically about what services the College Libraries currently provided, and how (or if) those services could be transitioned online.

The collaborative brainstorming session revealed three broad areas to address. Services that could not be replicated in an online environment, including study space, physical books, printing, and computers were quickly listed and set aside. Electronic resources that were already available online and would form the backbone of our virtual library were noted and set aside. The final piece were those services that would need to be dramatically expanded, altered, or re-invented to move into an online environment. These pieces included our online chat presence, research consultations, and face to face library instruction.

Bringing all these pieces together under one roof would be the Library Virtual Mode guide. This guide would form the front line of our COVID-19 response by clearly listing what services and resources were available if we did transition. The director set a short deadline: the guide was to be ready for publication by Friday, March 13. At the same time, other teams worked on several other urgent projects to address the services that would need to change.

The first of these services was the library chat service. While the SSC College Libraries already used the LibAnswers interface complete with an integrated pop up in the library catalogue and guides, staffing was handled on an ad hoc basis; a few librarians were on chat for most of the day, and evenings were covered by the part-time evening librarian. In anticipating a greater demand for the chat service and needing to find a virtual equivalent of desk staffing for our public services library assistants, two major changes were made. The first was that all public services staff were trained on LibChat. The other was a consistent and equitable chat schedule was proposed for the first time.

Research consultations were another service that needed to change in virtual mode. While some librarians met with students online or by phone, it was not an integrated part of our offerings. Luckily, there was a small pilot project underway at the time using LibCal to book appointments. This pilot project quickly morphed into offering appointments online using LibCal as the scheduling and confirmation software.

On March 11, all librarians were given basic accounts in Zoom. While Zoom had been used at the college before, not all librarians had access. This basic account would allow all librarians to have one on one meetings with students and host short meetings. On March 14, the day after it was announced that all classes would be moved online, the college announced that all faculty, including librarians, had access to a full Zoom account to allow us to host meetings of up to 100 people for unlimited time. This change allowed far more flexibility for librarians in virtual mode.

Library instruction was also noted as a service that would need to adapt, but no immediate steps were taken to address it at this time.

Finally, the technology needs required to work from home were a concern. The library director sent out a survey to see who would need a library laptop, and the process of installing the integrated library system (ILS) system onto home computers were tested. Interestingly, many library staff had either old or no computer technology at home, and the survey became a triage system.

On Friday, March 13, the decision was made to close the college entirely for one week (Seminole State College, 2020). Classes, even those that were already online, were cancelled, and faculty (including librarians) were instructed to use the week to transition to a 100% online instruction model.

At this point, the triage system for technology was tested. To accommodate all library employees, many library laptops were sent home with staff so they could work remotely. Most staff still needed to use their own devices, but in the end, everyone had something that mostly worked.

Week 1 (March 16-22): Tacking for the Come About

In SSC's first week of COVID-19 shutdown, campuses were closed, and classes cancelled for a week. The abrupt shift in timeline from a hypothesized shutdown at the end of March to the reality of being a 100% online institution felt jarring but manageable due to the preplanning work that had been done during week zero.

The staffing during week one was initially unclear. The administration was working through who could work and for how many hours. There was some initial confusion if part-time librarians including our part-time online services librarian (a professional staff member who manages LibApps) were permitted to work during this week of college closure. By Wednesday, all of the librarians and our professional staff member would be allowed to work during our transition week. This sort of bureaucratic minutia was largely handled by the library director. This work force dilemma, however, was not a deterrent or hindrance to moving "the library" online. Those who could work did and began to prioritize how best to deliver the communications needed to support students and faculty working remotely.

During this week, the library director hosted daily Zoom meetings with the librarians for updates on the rapidly changing information. In addition to daily updates from higher level meetings, these daily ZOOM meetings became the central location for collaboration, project management, and troubleshooting on every aspect of taking the College Libraries online. While some tasks were assigned to specific people, most projects were divided on a volunteer basis as librarians stepped up to creatively solve problems. In short, the library director had administrative responsibilities, and therefore, librarians were expected to handle all non-administrative aspects of the library.

At this point, the list of services that urgently needed to be transitioned formed the focus of the librarians' efforts. The Library Virtual Mode guide was mostly completed but continued to be revised and updated through the week. On Tuesday, March 19, the guide was highlighted on the library website front page for the first time. Despite the college being officially closed, the guide received 91 hits the next day.

During this week, the library chat platform received a trickle of traffic. The librarians answered only 7 chats. Many of these questions were a result of students looking for information from other parts of the college. Unfortunately, we often did not have answers for these students, as most other departments were only available by email during this transition week.

Two developments in the library chat program helped make this service ready for virtual mode. The first was the decision made by the library director to start 24/7 chat coverage through Springshare. While local coverage continued from 8-8 Monday-Thursday and 8-4 on Friday, the cooperative would take over on evenings and weekends. The cooperative covers only a small proportion of the total chats, but the expanded coverage offers more comprehensive support for our students.

The second major change was scheduling chat shifts. LibStaffer was used to make a schedule for both librarians and public services staff. LibStaffer was used because it was already part of the library's Springshare suite of products, but the learning curve on this product was steep. The process of setting hours and assigning shifts took an immense amount of time. While the system offered some advantages, including the ability to swap shifts and manage time off as well as integrations with LibCal and Outlook, the setup and onboarding process was far from easy. During this week, while public services staff were being trained, each librarian covered the chat desk for approximately 12 hours spread out over the work week.

While LibStaffer was a completely new software, the pilot project already underway with LibCal appointment booking offered a much easier experience.

The pilot project team drafted a best practices document for setting up virtual appointments and faculty librarians opted into the appointment booking model. Before COVID-19 each campus library handled all scheduling internally. With the shift to a virtual library underway, our systems and schedules became much more integrated and unified. The shared systems of chat scheduling and appointments showed a major shift underway: a campus neutral scheduling approach.

Finally, the College Libraries put processes into place to deal with phones and voice mail. Librarians could choose to have their office phones forwarded to their mobile phones using the Cisco Jabber app, and many did. All other library phones had new voicemail messages on them with notifications of the closing and how to reach us online. The main library reference number was set to forward voicemails to the main library email as a voice recording, and these messages were answered as part of chat shifts. In addition, a Google Voice number was set up and staffed by library employees (both public services staff and librarians) who volunteered to answer calls.

Week 2 (March 23-29): Coming About; Manned and Ready

Week two marked the start of a 100% virtual library with students in online classes. At this point, the public services staff joined librarians on the chat schedule, and each librarian's shifts were reduced to 8 hours per week. A consistent chat schedule was established, and the social functions of the library were moved over to a dedicated Microsoft Teams space, "Library Fun Time" to keep the chat channel clear. With the addition of the public services staff, we developed a protocol of screening before picking up chats and transferring to librarians as needed. This week also included practice sessions for the many staff members who had only received a brief training in the chat system prior to the move to a virtual library.

Some surprises emerged: chat traffic did not increase dramatically as expected; indeed, a comparison to 2019 Spring Term revealed only a modest increase in the total number of questions answered. However, compared to the previous week, a larger percentage of questions were related to library topics, though we continued to get an assortment of questions for other campus departments.

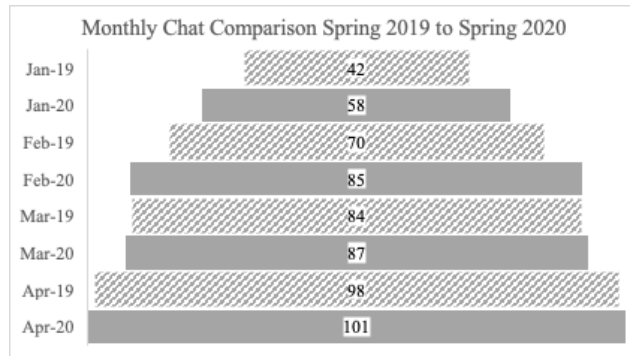


Figure 1. Monthly Chat Comparison Spring 2019 to Spring 2020 (not including 24/7 chat implemented in March 2020)

With students back and classes in session, the shift to online instruction moved into action. Some faculty cancelled library instruction outright, but many faculty kept library instruction in the new modality. Librarians delivered asynchronous modules, synchronized zoom sessions, and customized video content. Unfortunately, keeping statistics during this time took a backseat to delivering instruction. Tracking which classes were cancelled versus those that moved to an embedded or virtual model was not a priority, and the existing tracking systems for instruction did not fit the changing circumstances. This is clearly an opportunity to tweak our tracking systems to be more flexible moving forward.

This week also marked the ramp up of our efforts to use the SSC Library Facebook as a marketing tool in our virtual incarnation. During this week, the marketing work group released an announcement about the library Google voice number (March 24), the extended due dates for all library materials moving forward (March 25), and a post highlighting our eBooks (March 25). Other minor tweaks to library functions included changing the default help page on every guide to the Library Virtual Mode guide and moving from daily librarian meetings to a weekly meeting. The previous week of frantic activity had paid off; while we were still learning how best to deliver online services, the major functions of the library had successfully been transitioned.

Week 3 (March 30- April 5): On Course

Week three continued the trend of minor improvements without major disruption. Some technological problem solving paid off; the integration between Outlook and both LibStaffer and LibCal was finally functional after some assistance from the CTS (Computer and Telecommunications Support) department. This change made the workflow between products and systems

seamless; librarians no longer needed to manually add chat shifts or student appointments to Outlook.

In addition, after some coverage in the news of “Zoom bombing,” we changed how we integrated Zoom with LibCal for appointments. As the week wore on, we also had a conversation about how to track “no-show” appointments in our statistics, and a new category was added to LibInsight. At this point, the virtual library services felt like the new normal, and work resumed on older projects that had been set aside during the rush to transition to a virtual format.

The marketing work group continued to promote online resources through Facebook. This week offered a post linking to the Library Virtual Mode guide (March 30) and links of library ambient noise soundtracks (March 30) which were marketed as an option to help replicate the experience of studying in the library.

Week 4 (April 6-12): Looking Out

Week four was the beginning of the discussion of what an eventual return to campus would look like. A “Reopening the Library” Teams group was created, and discussion began to examine what such a return might look like. While the college had not yet announced when we would be re-opening, the consensus was that we would not be on campus soon.

Since remote work online would continue, we began investigating changes to the library catalogue to make it easier for students to locate electronic resources in partnership with FALSC (Florida Academic Libraries Services Cooperative), our state-wide consortium, which is responsible for managing our catalogue. Librarians drafted a wish list of features, including better sorting by material type, changing the default order of material in a search, and a dedicated tab for e-books. A dialogue began with FALSC about what was possible within the limits of the program.

Facebook posts were lighter during this week; we re-posted the library ambient noise soundtrack (April 6) and promoted the Summer term course re-take option (April 10) offered by the college. This option would allow a student who had withdrawn due to COVID-19 to re-take the course during the summer term for free.

Week 5 (April 13-19): Staying on Course

As the weeks went on, new problems needed to be resolved. On April 15, the college officially announced that campuses would remain closed for the Summer term, and only online courses would be offered. In addition, reductions in part-time staff and part-time librarian hours were announced for summer, and one part-time staff position and one part-time librarian were furloughed. While not unexpected, this change shuffled chat hours and coverage for the summer.

As Summer registration moved into high gear, students registering for summer or in need of transcripts began to encounter issues with library fines. As mentioned earlier, all new fines on materials that were on loan when campuses closed were suspended. But students with older fines began to come out of the woodwork. Since the public services staff were sharing chat duties with librarians, these types of chats, voicemails, and emails were referred to staff. The policy was that the hold would be temporarily lifted to allow a student to register for Summer term, then the staff member would reapply the block a week later so that students were still responsible for the materials they had borrowed. During the COVID-19 summer college closure, the library director determined not to receive library materials. Book drops were closed, and students and faculty were urged to keep items until the campuses reopen.

Library service promotion was a major focus during this week. In addition to posts promoting our streaming Criterion Collection films (April 16), sharing author events by Penguin/Random House (April 14), and linking to the Library Virtual Mode guide (April 16), the library promoted the Library Chat program with both a text post (April 15) and a Facebook Live interview (April 16) with Ross Martin, librarian, and a similar chat (April 14) with Claire A. Miller, librarian, about LibCal appointments. The Marketing team also brainstormed and began planning a virtual “Pet Parade” to replace our popular therapy dogs in the library event. The Pet Parade would be a social show and tell event open to college students, staff, and faculty. A group of library librarian and staff volunteers organized the event. Participants (registered through a LibCal event) would join a Zoom meeting which would then be shared via Facebook Live. Each participant would get to talk briefly about their pet.

Week 6 (April 20-26): Clear for Running

At this point, the focus shifted to preparing for Summer and wrapping up the Spring term. New LibStaffer schedules were generated to cover both the changes in staffing and the traditional summer reduction in hours. Internal testing and discussion of the proposed changes to the library catalogue continued, and librarians approved a new tab for eBooks and a new sorting facet for materials “Available as eBook”. The hope was that these new features would make it easier for students to locate materials in the online environment.

On social media, the Pet Parade Preview (April 23) served to test the logistics and promote the event. The preview highlighted some streaming problems, but it did serve to raise awareness of the event. Other Facebook posts this week highlighted streaming resources (April 20).

Week 7 (April 27-May 3): Moving Forward

The Pet Parade (April 28) was the first event to move traditional library programming into a virtual experience. The event was well received on Facebook; thirteen members of the college community joined librarians to share

cute pets. Beyond the video participants, 43 unique individuals liked, shared, commented, or clicked on the video, while 438 people saw the event. While this event was certainly not academic in focus, it did highlight that the library was still part of the campus community.

The previous weeks of discussion with FALSC paid off: on April 28, the new catalogue changes adding a dedicated eBook tab and an “Available as eBook” filter went live, and FALSC offered these customizations to all 40 public college and universities across the state. The self-efficacy, hard work, and willingness to advocate for our users now had an impact beyond our institution.

The other major project during this week was a discussion of how to market instruction to faculty while the campuses remained closed. As part of this project, a major revision of the faculty resources page on the Library Virtual Mode guide was completed. These edits focused on moving to a menu which both highlighted the ability to request customized content as well as highlighting resources that were already available, such as tutorials for databases and the research foundations tutorial. A contact page for all librarians was also added to the guide.

5. Discussion

This discussion will address three major areas that emerged from our case study: communication, library management and project management. Each of these areas will be discussed with the overarching theme of how the College Libraries moved to operating virtually during the COVID-19 college physical campus college closure.

5.1 Communication with Our Users

Communication was a central component for effectively transitioning the College Libraries to a fully online environment. Identifying key components and constituents with whom we needed to communicate with became a priority. These constituents included librarians and staff as well as members of the college community at large. Internal communication amongst the librarians and staff is addressed in sections 5.2 and 5.3.

Providing specific types of information emerged as an ethos of migration to new platforms to deliver “the library” at Seminole State College of Florida. This was guided by state and local government requirements, as well as the College authorities providing guidance and support structures for the library to serve students and faculty during the post COVID-19 Spring 2020 semester.

Library communication needed to be effectively delivered to students and faculty using online platforms when the College closed in mid-March 2020. The types of communication included instructional or teaching components; informational types of content to guide our users to the information directly or refer them as needed to other departments at the College; and providing

directional information such as how to communicate with a librarian, what to do with books that have due dates when the campus is closed, or what to do with interlibrary loans. These primary areas of communication needs – the library communication ethos - had to be addressed quickly to accommodate and support students, faculty, and the college community at-large. This library communication ethos served to inform the library communication delivery modalities that emerged and improved over the timeline from week zero to week seven.

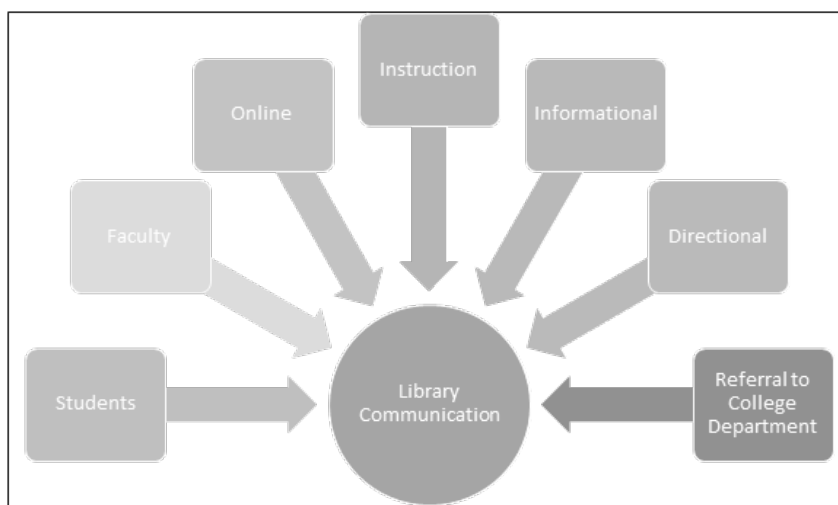


Figure 2. Library Communication Ethos COVID-19 Spring 2020 (Kaufmann, 2020)

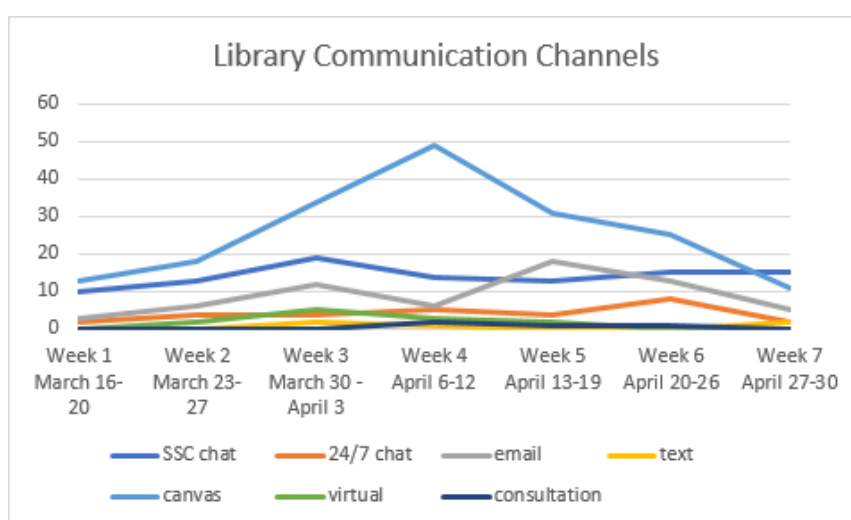
Several communication channels were identified to deliver and receive information across a variety of platforms and access points. Library communication interaction data was collected over seven weeks during Spring term 2020. As the communication environment was more clearly identified, a holistic approach to the management of the instructional, informational, and directional types of information began to take shape and the organizational structure of information needed for our college community began to emerge.

Communication Channel	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7
phone	0	1	6	6	5	5	3
SSC chat	10	13	19	14	13	15	15
24/7 chat	2	4	4	5	4	8	2
email	3	6	12	6	18	13	5
text	0	0	2	1	0	0	2
Canvas (LMS)	13	18	34	49	31	25	11

virtual	0	2	5	3	2	0	0
consultation	0	0	0	2	1	1	0

Table 1. Communication Channels Data Weeks 1-7

As these communication channels were identified the components of self-efficacy and trust as well as the willingness to implement new approaches uncovered both the functional strengths and dysfunctional challenges for the College Libraries (Laere, 2013). The confidence demonstrated by the librarians to carry out the needed activities in this crisis demonstrates perhaps a high level of “crisis efficacy” as identified by Avery and Park (2016).

**Figure 3. Library Communication Channels**

The communication channels used to effectively address the library communication ethos were launched and the types of interactions are depicted in Figure 3. The communication for instruction and reference were especially noteworthy in terms of high user contact. Communication via Canvas, our course management system at the college, was the most used means of communication by the library. This included librarian interactions with students and with faculty to deliver instruction in a variety of ways. Interactions consisted of course modules, embedded librarian work, Panopto teaching videos, and delivery of streamed media for classes. The SSC library chat was the next highest used means of communication for users and the library. This chat included both librarians and para-professional staff, so public service questions as well as reference questions could be seamlessly transferred and answered by the needed personnel. The third highest used communication channel over these seven weeks was email. Email consisted of personal email communications with students, faculty and staff or emails received and

responded to through the library email account. These communication channels provided virtual access and quick responses for our college community.

Reflecting the library communication ethos (see Figure 2) the communication channels used to reach our external clients - constituents outside the library - were essential for a seamless transition for engaging with the library users. Building on pre-existing connections across college departments offered more ways to reach out constituents. For example, eLearning and the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning promoted the Virtual Mode guide. Each component of the library communication ethos was addressed by the communication channels identified and deployed during this seven-week migration to a fully online environment - or virtual mode.

5.2 Library Management

In the literature on self-efficacy, some scholarship highlights that specific management practices can aid and support in the development of self-efficacy. Ahmad, Ishak, and Kamil (2019) found that transformational leadership, which is built on a basis of interpersonal collaboration, aids in the development of self-efficacy for employees. Cai et al. (2019), note that managers' leaderships styles either encourage or inhibit employee and team creativity. As we noted above, Laere's (2013) research highlights that organizations during a crisis event show the cracks and fault lines in the existing status quo, but by the same token, "A crisis cannot be disconnected and discerned from everyday work, as it mirrors it and is a part of it" (p.18). In other words, as we entered the lead up to and duration of the COVID-19 shutdown, the SSC library management structures, habits, and norms were tested.

In the last year, the SSC College Libraries have gone from a multilevel management structure to a much flatter organization. Manager librarian positions that had oversight of the Altamonte Springs campus library and the acquisitions, cataloging, and technical services department were eliminated. This resulted in a shift from the professional position of manager as librarian, to all librarians holding faculty librarian positions, and reporting to the library director. One exception is the part-time online services librarian who maintains a professional status rather than faculty status. As part of our faculty union contract, faculty cannot supervise other faculty, and therefore this shift to a flatter organizational structure emerged.

The library director has, therefore, shifted to serving primarily as a coordinator and facilitator of librarian-lead initiatives. The lead up and duration of the COVID-19 shutdown resulted in the explicit expectation that each full-time librarian would lead a work group on a library wide project and join and contribute to at least one other work group. This allowed librarians to focus on specific projects while at the same time setting the expectation for broad collaboration and collective decision making. Since the work groups were led

by full-time faculty librarians, the director would primarily mediate and facilitate between the librarians and other departments as needed. This structure led to a high level of self-efficacy on the part of librarians. As discussed previously, self-efficacy can be significantly impacted by organizational trust (Avery and Park, 2016; Ozyilmaz, Erdogan, and Karaeminogullari, 2018) These findings dovetail with the SCC College Libraries' experience.

The link between self-efficacy and organizational trust was an iterative development for the College Libraries. As librarians proposed solutions to COVID-19 challenges, the positive management and organizational responses increased organizational trust leading to higher levels of self-efficacy. This synergy fostered high self-efficacy for faculty librarians. Overall trust in the library management to advocate for librarian needs and projects during COVID-19 was high, and with a few exceptions, there was a solid level of organizational trust when it came to the college as an organization as well. As librarians proposed solutions to COVID-19 challenges, the positive management and organizational responses increased organizational trust leading to higher levels of self-efficacy.

Librarian self-efficacy resulted in efficient and timely solutions delivered in virtual mode. As the prospect of shutdown loomed, the library director laid out the problem. From there, the challenge was put to librarians to solve. How would we offer services? What would those services look like? The initial rush to problem-solve was mediated, but not dictated, by the director. Indeed, throughout the shutdown, the director firmly left the nuts and bolts of projects in the librarians' hands. This structure allowed librarians to volunteer for specific tasks, divide the work organically, contribute individual skills and knowledge, and not try to solve the whole problem. Instead, each workgroup tackled a part of the puzzle. This division of effort and distribution of work seems to have been a major factor in the speed of switching to virtual mode.

5.3 Project Management and Marketing

Applying nimble solutions to time sensitive needs was paramount for the College Libraries to offer seamless virtual responses for our college community. Higher education as an industry is not really known for a nimbleness and quick responses to pending projects and initiatives. Barriers in the hierarchical environment often may limit creative, innovative, and entrepreneurial approaches for solving problems. Enter academic librarians who were given the opportunity to execute solutions seamlessly facilitated by library management and college administration as outlined earlier in this case study. Faculty librarians were given the option to be creative, innovative, and collaborative. Outcomes included a variety of options that seemed to produce acceptable results to the administrators. Librarians and management engaged in a collaborative approach for this project- to create seamless library service and deliver it online.

The reality of college administrative management constraints impacting this project, however, was evident. The need for organizational trust (Ozyilmaz, Erdogan, and Karaeminogullari, 2018) paired with librarian self-efficacy were factors that impacted and facilitated this project working towards delivering digital resources and virtual library services. For example, being able to market the library via our computer technology services area and the marketing department was not always possible and constraints became evident. For example, permission to modify the library website and add the link Library Virtual Mode guide was approved, but few other changes could be made. Therefore, finding other avenues to more effectively communicate and market library services were needed. Librarians used creative thought, discussions and collaborated to promote resources. This was accomplished by tapping relationships and using technologies that were already in place at the library. Using faculty librarian liaison connections to faculty and deans became a needful avenue to promote options for remote work, library services, resources, and instruction options. The use of technologies that were already in place by the library, such as Springshare platforms, Microsoft Suite, Canvas, Zoom and Panopto video capturing were employed.

The library Facebook account was a useful tool for marketing the library. Facebook was a recent (August 19, 2019) venue the SCC College Libraries used to communicate with students, staff, faculty. As discussed in the weekly timeline, a variety of outreach efforts were employed using the Facebook page. From highlighting resources to promoting events, these efforts offered a more informal way to reach our constituents. However, since Facebook is a public platform, it is possible that some of the views and responses from this communication venue do not represent our students, staff, or faculty.

The library marketing work group led the effort to create content that was useful and relevant to our users, and this team experimented with different types of posts and events. In analysing the data, some trends emerged. Lifetime reach for posts can be a useful metric: it shows how many people have seen the post. Consistent with accepted practice, the SCC Library Facebook page found that video posts had the highest average reach (167), followed closely by photo (159) and link (157) posts. By contract, status posts had the lowest reach at an average of 71 per post. But this metric is somewhat deceptive, as the top three posts, in terms of lifetime reach, were, respectively, a photo post highlighting the Criterion Collection of streaming films (915), a photo post announcing waiving of late fees and extended due dates for all library materials (841), and a link post to an assortment of our steaming films databases (767). In other words, specific posts that offered entertainment, such as the Criterion Collection's collection of classic and contemporary films or immediately useful information were the most popular.

Even more interesting was the breakdown of posts by engagement of unique people. Engagement is defined by liking, commenting, sharing, or clicking on a post. By this metric, video posts far outperformed other types of post. On average, video posts engaged 22.5 unique users, while our next highest engagement category, photo posts, engaged only 8.6 unique users. The top three posts in terms of engagement with unique individuals were the Pet Parade on Facebook Live (43), the Virtual Reference interview on Facebook Live (37), and the Criterion Collection post (35). These posts all offered entertainment, whether in the moment by Facebook Live or by later by accessing the resource.

The decision by the marketing work group to increase both the total number of posts and focus on video posts likely increased the effectiveness of the SSC Library Facebook page in reaching our constituents. However, since the Facebook page is a relatively new development, consistent usage statistics have not been previously kept. While these figures offer guidance as we move forward, trends over time are not yet evident.

Managing this project reveals the resident, but perhaps not always evident, capabilities of the academic library. Library para-professional staff in public services and acquisitions and cataloguing provided needed support to serve constituents, both internal and external, seamlessly. Also evident were academic librarian skills, vision, fortitude, collaborative prowess, and the willingness to move outside of linear lines to be effective with the work of the academic library. Having experienced a non-linear approach to this project, perhaps this could be a building block - the foray - into a more intentional holistic approach for the library. Maybe this campus-neutral approach to providing campus library services offers a glimpse of what can happen as a result of our collective COVID-19 experiences in the College Libraries.

5.4 Delivery of Virtual Services

In an opinion piece in the New York Times titled “Libraries Must Change” written by the President of the New York Public Library (Marx, May 28, 2020), he shares that libraries will play a key role in the recovery of our country post COVID-19. Part of this role includes “offering more digital services” (p. 1).

There are a few specific areas of impact related to the migration of the delivery of virtual services by the College Libraries. Making the library relevant, accessible, and user-friendly were important features during this transition from on-campus to online delivery for our college community. The notion of communication for instruction and reference has been discussed earlier. Let’s turn to the eCollection in the library and digital resources.

eBook and eVideo Collections

The Seminole State College Libraries eBook/eVideo collection purchased just for our institution (not including consortia state-wide collection) grew 2% for the two months between March 15 and May 15, 2020. Assuming this trend

continues, the eCollection will expand approximately 12% over the course of the coming year, and perhaps at a greater rate as the shift from an emphasis of a print collection migrates to a more balanced collection of print and online collections. The College Libraries collection of eBooks and eVideos expanded as an intentional effort was made to increase online access for our users. (See Table 2)

Date	eBooks	eVideos	Total
March 15	13,464	6,994	20,458
April 30	13,650	7,195	20,845
May 15	13,723	7,195	20,918

Table 2. SSC eBook/eVideo Collections (FALSC, Melissa Stinson)

Enhancing our eCollections will be a growing trend for future collection work by librarians. During the COVID-19 shutdown, faculty asked for specific streamed media to embed in their online Canvas courses as well as access to eBooks and course materials online. Unfortunately, the library was not always able to meet faculty demand due to publisher restrictions for course materials.

The eCollections that include all accessible online content provided by both the state-wide consortia and our specific college library is approximated at this writing to be over 60,000 eBook and eVideo titles available for our students, faculty and staff to access (FLVC reports).

This trend to deliver digital resources is anticipated to be more intentional going forward, as noted by Marx (2020):

This experience [coronavirus pandemic] has made it clear to us that libraries must invest — or continue to invest — in digital and virtual technologies and expertise. There is so much more we can do. Every library should aspire to provide the broadest possible digital access to all books and the world’s accumulated knowledge, not just the snippets now available on the web.

Perhaps one of the most pertinent areas for the delivery of virtual services is instruction. This is validated by the data that reflects the use of Canvas – the SSC LMS (see Fig.3) whereby instruction continued to be delivered online by faculty librarians as necessitated by the pandemic of Spring 2020. This includes creating Canvas modules that faculty could easily import into their courses, embedded librarians, the creation of lectures using Panopto video, marketing our availability to engage in synchronous work via Zoom, and using eBooks, library databases, streamed media and faculty liaison relationships to capitalize on seamless delivery options.

6. Conclusion

The response of the SSC College Libraries to COVID-19 employed a social constructivist approach as librarians learned from each other and applied the outcomes to deliver seamless virtual library services. Employing this methodology was supported by a strong commitment to our college community and library mission to make information accessible – the democratization of information. While maintaining the mission of seamless information access, the academic librarians addressed COVID-19 hardship by employing self-efficacy and resilience through innovative and creative solutions to the unimagined circumstances.

While the quick timeline and unique experience of campus closures were challenging, the week zero preplanning work of the College Libraries cushioned the blow. Library management trusted faculty librarians and staff not to panic, but to plan and employ strategic approaches to provide solutions. The library communication ethos and channels were identified for effective dissemination of information in a timely and responsive manner. As the culture of self-efficacy and organizational trust grew, the College Libraries created the Library Virtual Mode: a holistic and campus-neutral approach to library services seamlessly delivered to our students, staff, and faculty. High levels of self-efficacy amongst the librarians led to a collaborative and iterative approach to problem solving. The College Libraries were able to use existing tools, skills, and programs to work around organizational constraints.

The overall new direction or “coming about” embraced new ways to use current technologies and employed creative thinking for our virtual mode. Moving forward, the SCC College Libraries will be using the processes, tools, and mindset developed during this unprecedented change in how we operated. We have already started discussions of how to continue services such as virtual appointments and expanded chat services. It also seems likely that embedded librarians will form more of a core in our information literacy instructional efforts. In short, what we have developed or expanded during these eight weeks will become part of the new normal moving forward.

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