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Into the Unknown: Working Together to Forge a New Department in a Library Reorganization

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Into the Unknown: Working Together to Forge a New Department in a Library Reorganization

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Interested in learning more about Clemson
University Libraries Reorganization?



About Clemson University and CU Libraries

- State land-grant institution established in 1889, located in northwest South Carolina
- Over 27,000 students and over 5,600 employees
- Recent R1 designation
- Over 800,000 print titles
- 1 million + ebooks, 700 + databases
- 81 employees
- 6 facilities

Why a Reorg?

- Aligns Libraries' organizational structure with the Libraries new role as an R1 and in best achieves campus strategic priorities.
- Effectively integrates the University Press into the Libraries' organization.
- Provides flexibility to incorporate future positions as the needs arise.
- Promotes synergies between work with similar functions to improve the flow of work processes and communication.
- Promotes transparency and the free flow of ideas and information among everyone in the organization.
- Enables the Dean of Libraries to focus on external objectives and strategic directions such as fundraising and promoting awareness of Libraries' services.

Questions, Concerns, and Stressors

- What will the new division be like?
- How will job duties change?
- What is happening with current vacancies and new positions?
- How will split positions be implemented?
- What will the new reporting structure look like?
- Do my new colleagues understand what I do?
- What do new position titles mean?

Proposed Solutions

Relationship Building

Show how people and positions relate
Use StrengthsFinder results to highlight similarities
Create ways for people to be together apart from work
Find ways to better introduce and integrate new colleagues

Open Communication

Give frequent updates division and team happenings
Check-in with teams and team members individually

Coping Strategies

Check in with self; participate in self-care
Create a culture of being allowed to say no
Remember to be kind
Promote healthy boundaries
Appreciate and respect the time of others
Find a way to vent to a neutral party

Library-wide Projects

Workplace Culture Report – highlights challenges faced by all employees (communication, morale, resource, training)
Employee Satisfaction and Development Assessment Report – conducted to understand organizational issues with staff advancement

Division Events

Throughout the summer of 2022, the new Division of Collections and Discovery participated in three events

- 1 Getting to know each other with Library Reorg MadLibs, describing our jobs using metaphors, and eating pizza
- 2 Exploring division members' StrengthsFinder results with trainers from human resources and welcoming our new Associate Dean.
- 3 Participating in the Libraries all-employee Professional Development Day where the focus is on library-wide strategic planning

Assessment

Determining whether or not our efforts made a difference to our teams is very important going forward. Reorganizations are not just a one and done event, so monitoring how staff are adjusting, taking temperature checks, and keeping dialogue open going forward will help us know where to turn our attention and what should be adjusted going forward.