

From Shelves to Synergy: **Creating cohesion and understanding** **through a professional learning** **community**

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Western Kentucky University Libraries
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Abstract

This session outlines an alternative approach to Professional Learning Communities (PLC). Due to decreases in staffing, changes in job descriptions, and the creation of new roles within the library, we developed a variation of the PLC to engage faculty and staff from all departments. This version focused on individuals sharing highlights, challenges, and traditional duties associated with their jobs to increase understanding and appreciation while raising morale and strengthening the sense of community in the library. The session will help you design your own pilot PLC by providing ideas about structure and how to identify possible presenters.

Meet the presenters

- Todd Seguin | OER Librarian
- Ashley Orehek Rossi | STEM Librarian



Today's Agenda

Background of the project

Overview of WKU's PLC iterations

**Mini Workshop –
Outline your own**

Learning Objectives

Attendees will:

- **Recognize potential challenges in building a PLC.**
- **Develop ideas to foster inclusivity, trust, and continuous improvement.**
- **Design a basic framework or action plan for implementing a PLC tailored to their library's context and needs.**

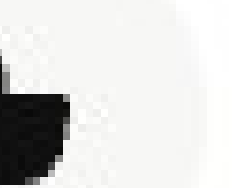


The PLC and why we changed it

Some quick questions



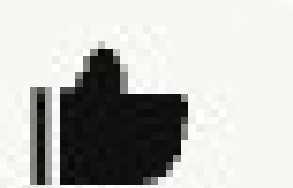
Are librarians faculty or staff at your institution?



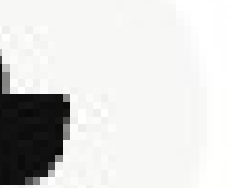
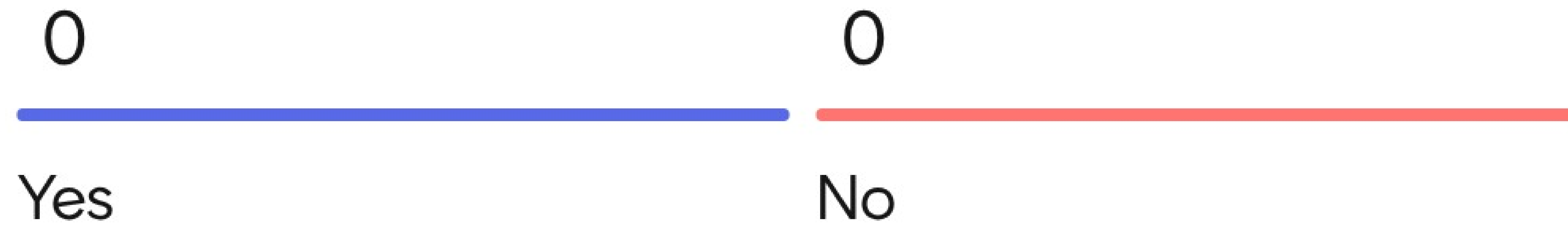
What is your role in the library ?



What type of department are you in ?



Have you had a PLC at your institution now or in the past?



WKU Libraries' Professional Learning Community

The Past

The Present

The Future

The Past (2018-2022)

Leader

- A librarian

Concept

- Structured reading and discussing current trends in academic librarianship

Gathering Frequency

- Monthly

Audience

- Internal department activity

Goal

- Modify and improve upon our teaching, scholarship, and provide service responsibilities

The Present (2023-2025)

Leader

- Todd

Concept

- Learn about all the unique and individual roles within the libraries

Gathering Frequency

- Every other Month

Audience

- All library employees

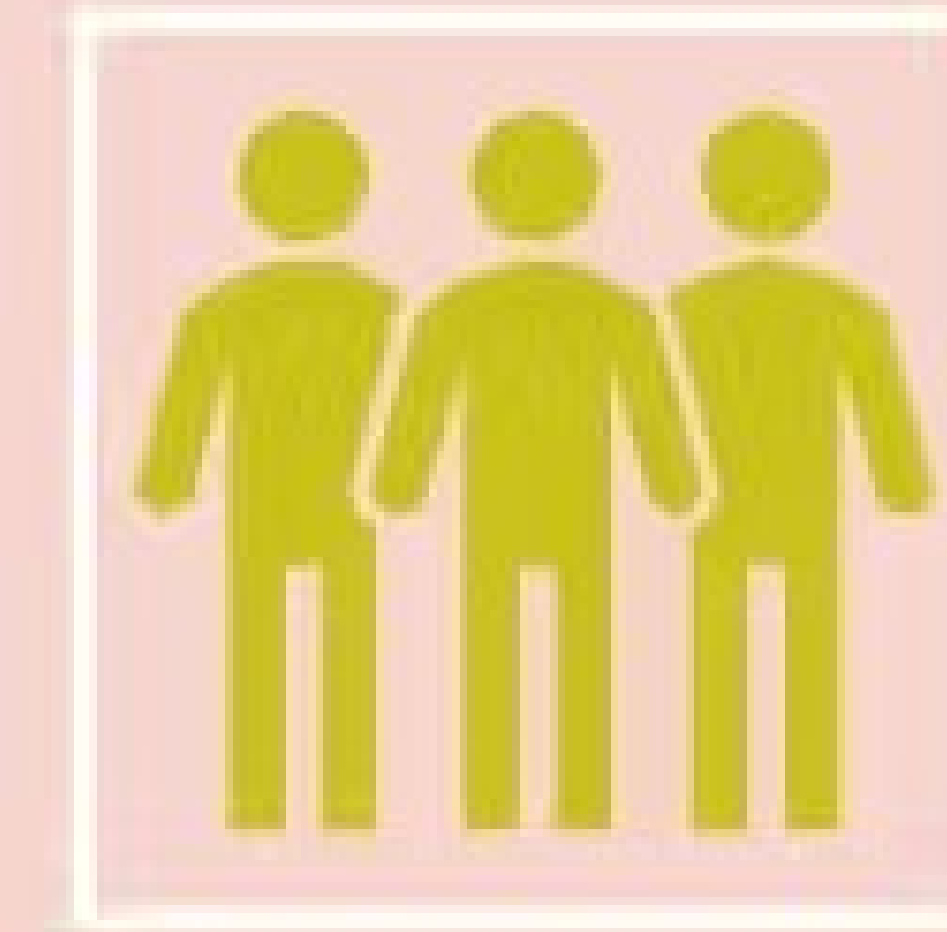
Goal

- Create cohesion *among all* library employees

Benefits of the new PLC



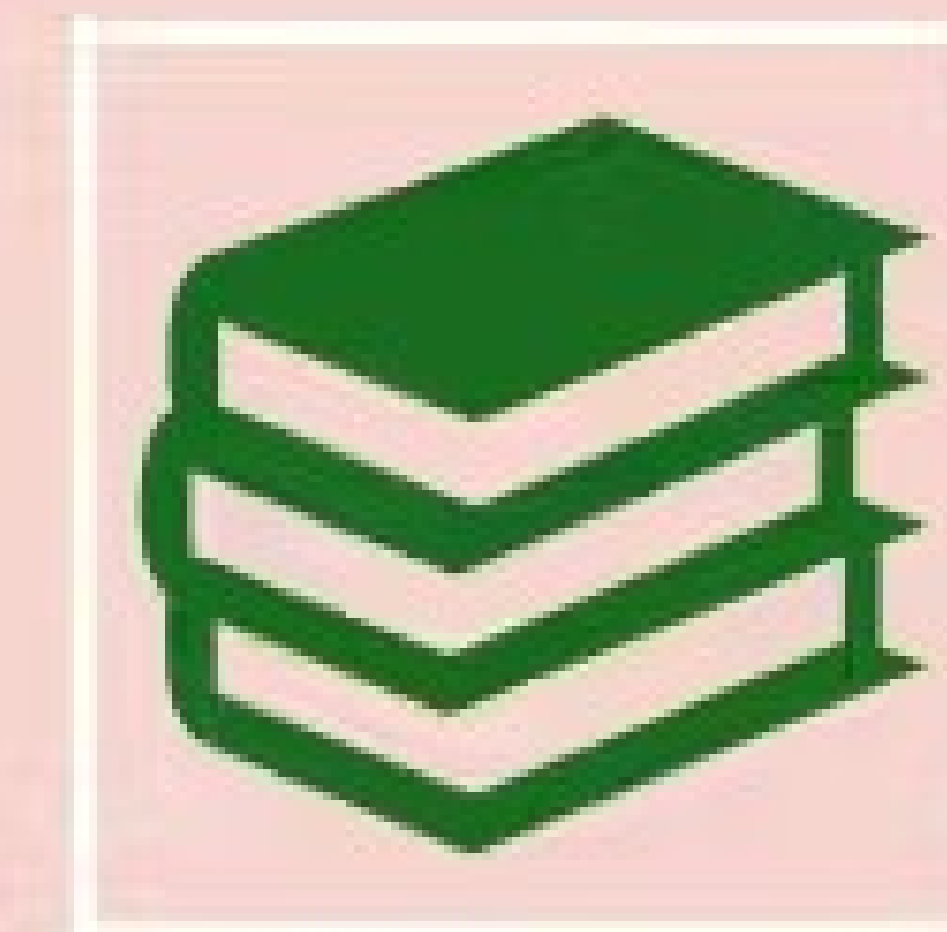
Brings people together



People are seen



Increases understanding



Better library service

Break!



The Future (2026 and beyond)

Leader

- Todd and Ashley (and rotating)

Concept

- Interdepartmental understandings of each individual role and responsibilities

Gathering Frequency

- Monthly? Quarterly?

Audience

- All library employees

Goal

- Better morale = Building community

Possible Topics



Mock instruction sessions



Focus on P&T



Public services skills and etiquette



Brainstorm dump



Bring your dream



“Job shadowing”

Possible Topics (from Gemini)



**Technology or
Software Adoption**



Policy Review



**Identifying Training
Gaps**



**Handling
Challenging
Situations**



**Learning from Each
Other**



**Feedback
Mechanisms**

Challenges and Considerations



Challenges

- Scheduling
- Generating Interest
- Admin support



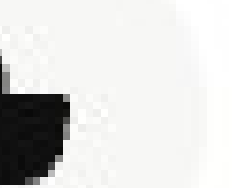
Considerations

- Location
- Modality
- Incentives

Some more quick questions



About how many employees does your library have ?



Who will be your intended audience?

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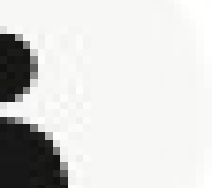
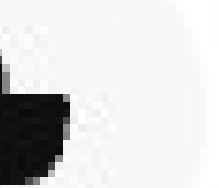
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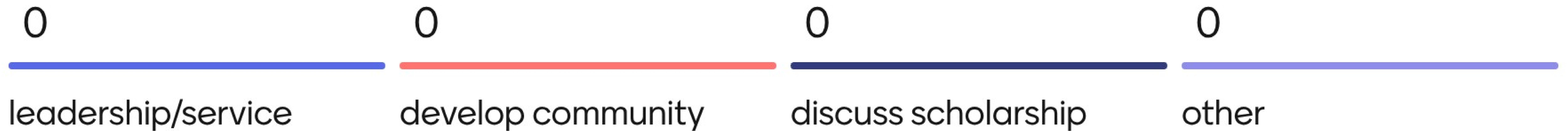
your department only

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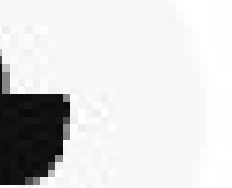
everyone in the library



Why do you want to start/alter your PLC?



What might be some difficulties?



How might you overcome them?



Your Turn!

Mini Workshop

Your Activity

This links to a Virtual Worksheet in Google Docs.

Save a copy to your Google Drive!



Thank you and Good luck creating your PLC!

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