

Valuing the whole student: Supporting student employees/interns in the library through authentic, caring connections

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Tricia Lantzy, Health and Human Services Librarian, CSU San Marcos

Talitha R. Matlin, STEM Librarian, CSU San Marcos

Zemirah Lee, Health Sciences Librarian, Bastyr University

Abstract

During this roundtable, attendees discussed ways to better support students working or interning in the library through authentic connections and communication. Drawing upon the presenters' and attendees' experiences with library interns and student workers, the group discussed the following questions:

1. In what ways is authenticity difficult for librarians and/or student workers/interns?
2. What does it mean to be "truly authentic" in your communications?
3. How are we giving our students meaningful, lasting experiences that will benefit them outside of their time in school?
4. What is the role of privilege in maintaining authentic communication?
5. How do you ensure that you value your student workers/interns as "whole people"?
6. What was a time when you felt truly authentic in your communication with student workers/interns? How do you think approaching this situation with candor benefitted you and/or the student worker/intern? Conversely, can you think of a time you wish you would have been more candid with a student worker/intern?
7. How can we be more authentic in our interactions with students working in the library?
8. What problems might authenticity and caring communication solve?
9. What can we do to better support students who are struggling with mental health issues or with food insecurity?