

Mentoring NextGen eScience Librarians: Cornell Science Librarians Step Up

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OBJECTIVE

Cornell University Library (CUL) and the School of Information Studies at Syracuse University (SU) are nearing the completion of a partnership to support SU's eScience Fellows Program by offering a mentorship program for enrolled students. The program introduces students to the practice of science and eScience librarianship, and provides students with opportunities to be exposed to world-class science libraries as well as innovative eScience projects.

METHODS

Each student is matched with a librarian-mentor at Cornell for one-on-one mentoring. Other elements of the program include:

- In-person events at Syracuse and at Cornell;
- Opportunities for students to participate in the life of CUL at large via in-person and remote participation in CUL events and programming, and regular communication to students on issues of interest at CUL;
- Virtual interaction and collaboration, including blogging by program participants on their work and experiences;
- Possible project and internship opportunities.

RESULTS

After the first year, students responded quite favorably to the mentorship program. Distance between the two institutions is a challenge, and students requested more opportunities for face-to-face and virtual interaction. The program has been most successful in familiarizing the students with the work of eScience librarianship and the library profession as a whole.

CONCLUSIONS

Mentoring students for careers in eScience, careers for which we ourselves may not have been formally trained, presents both challenges and opportunities. Students gain valuable perspective from practicing librarians, while librarians are exposed to emerging the technologies and practices associated with the new discipline.