Staff sustainability through mentorship at Michigan State University Libraries

Overview of the MSU Mentoring Program

- Mentoring is essential to professional development, retention and advancement of MSUL staff.
- Voluntary professional development program that pairs newer staff with more experienced colleagues.
- Mentoring pairs develop goals and activities tailored to their needs.
- Formal program lasts one year.
- MSUL has Mentoring policies and procedures (i.e., confidentiality) and resources: libguides.lib.msu.edu/mentoring

DISC Assessment

- Analyzes working style and places individuals in one or two of four possible categories
- The four categories describe preferences and tendencies in areas such as communication, comfort with risk-taking, and work speed
- Conducted by mentoring program coordinators for every mentoring pair at MSUL

Activities

- Balance job duties and responsibilities
  - Discussions, reviewed evaluation documentation, strategized how to add new criterion II (scholarship) and III (service) activities
- Learn about institutional history and culture
  - Discussions, questions, shared experiences/lessons learned
- Learn about networking strategies and opportunities
  - Shared techniques and past experiences
- Explore shared interests (especially accessibility)
  - Brainstorming, project planning and organization

Mentoring Benefits & Impacts

- Creates opportunities for cross-unit/division communication and collaboration.
- Mentees learn about MSUL culture and history and get guidance and advice based on their needs. They also get to share their perspectives and ideas. This is especially important given recent hiring of many new, early career librarians at MSUL
- Mentors gain exposure to new/fresh ideas and perspectives and get to share their experiences and expertise.
- Mentors are an additional resource for providing support and ensuring staff success