

THE COLLECTIVE

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On the Fly: Discovering Assessing the Impact of “Hidden Labor” Practices

Convenor(s):

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Brief Description of Program:

In 2019, Elon University's Belk Library submitted a white paper proposing an institutional repository. Beyond considerations of cost, storage space, and foundational policies, we had no expectations about lessons to be learned. This process forced us to reckon with our own ignorance of the work that goes on around us, both within and without Belk Library.

Libraries famously do hard work so patrons don't have to, but the effect of this “hidden labor” on our workplace culture often goes unexamined. A series of issues with our calendar software provided a case study in what this looks like and how it burdens library staff.

Synthesizing these lessons, our Assessment Librarian conducted interviews with librarians and paraprofessional staff to better understand the scope of this “hidden labor” and its impact. Findings from these interviews may serve as a framework for capturing these unrecognized practices and increasing cross departmental functionality.

Tags:

Estimated Session Attendance:

NOTES FROM SESSION: