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### Engaging Students in Information Literacy: Lessons from Our Library Ambassador Program

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## Engaging Students in Information Literacy: Lessons from Our Library Ambassador Program



# Engaging Students in Information Literacy:

Lessons from our  
Library Ambassador  
Program

Lydia Gwyn & Jonathan Wilson, Sherrod Library, East Tennessee State University

# Today's Discussion

- What is the Library Ambassador Program?
- Engaging Students in Info Lit in our program & beyond
- What we teach our students & how: active learning strategies

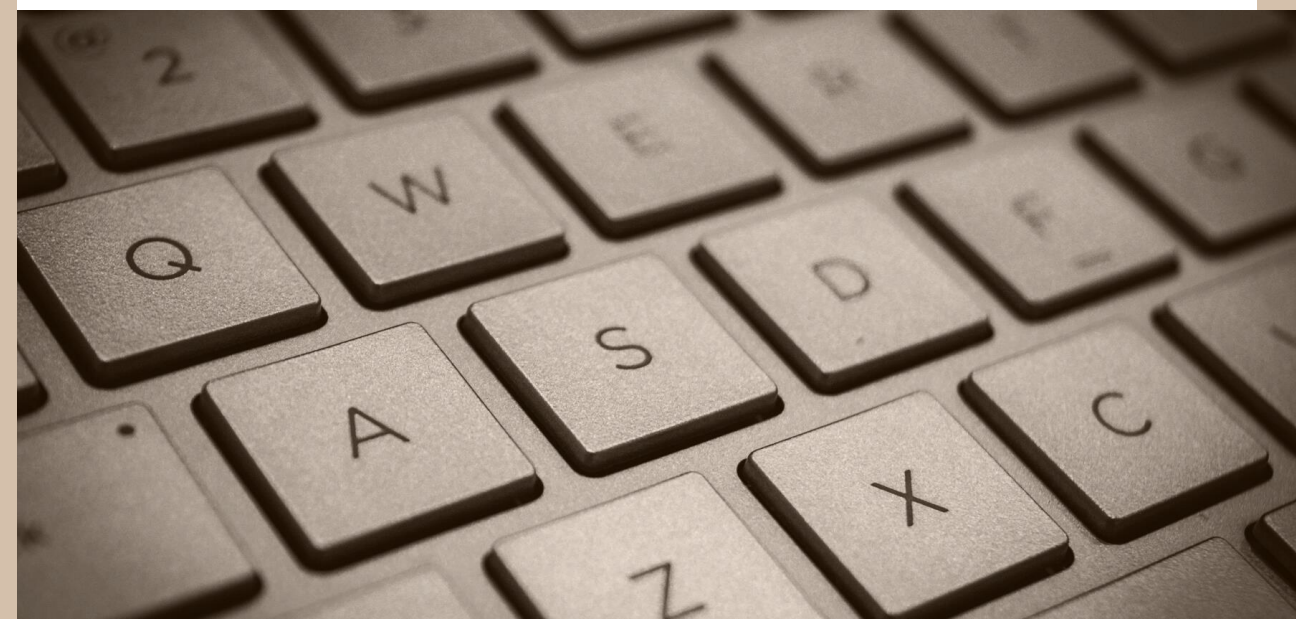




# What is the Library Ambassador Program?

## A PEER-MENTORING APPROACH TO RESEARCH HELP

- 25 undergraduate student workers trained in information literacy and library resources for two semesters
- After training is complete, students are deployed across campus to help students with their research



Think of ambassadors as research tutors



# Deployment Locations

7

main campus  
locations

1

satellite campus  
location

132

hours of coverage per  
week (main campus)

12

hours of coverage per  
week (satellite  
campus)



## ENGAGING STUDENTS IN INFORMATION LITERACY

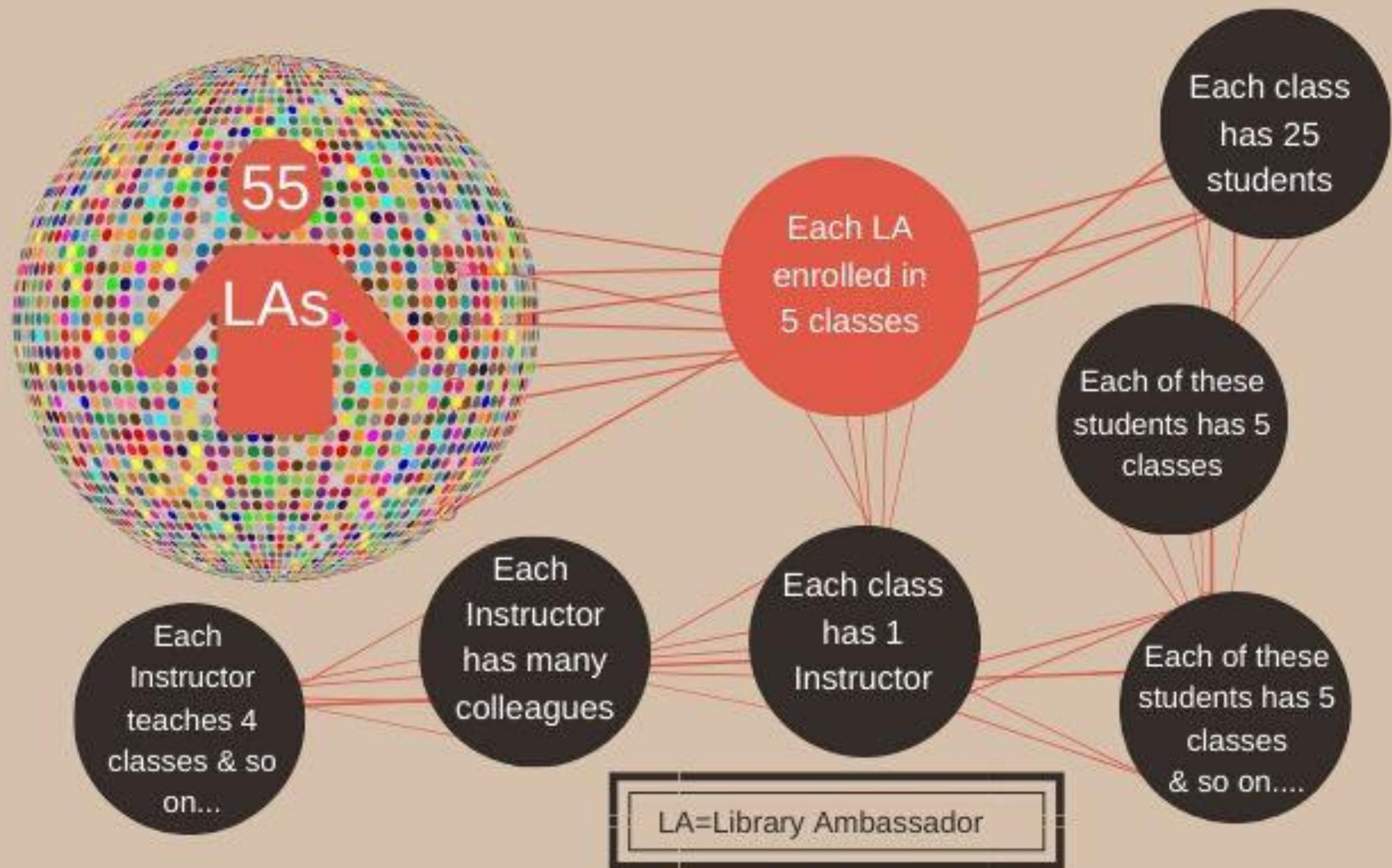
Directly engaging our own library  
ambassadors

## PART OF A LARGER DISCUSSION

Engaging the larger campus  
community by virtue of our  
ambassadors



# Sphere of Influence





# What are we teaching the ambassadors?

## To question

Constructing research questions, narrowing/broadening a topic, choosing keywords with which to search

## To seek

Using library discovery tool & databases, Google Scholar, & the Internet to find quality sources of information

## To evaluate

Using tools such as the CRAAP Test, IF I APPLY, On the Media's Fake News kit, etc. to critically evaluate sources of information





# How are we teaching them?

ENGAGING STUDENTS IN INFORMATION LITERACY

High Impact  
Education Practices <sup>2</sup>

Collaborative Assignments  
& Projects

Active Learning

Students are in charge of their own learning & engage in the learning process

Games &  
Roleplaying

Info lit card games

Student/Ambassador  
Roleplaying



# Active Learning & High Impact Instruction Practices

- Opportunities to teach & design their own tools & assignments
  - Teach portions of our one-shot library instruction sessions
  - "Teach Us Your Database" presentation
  - Designing their own evaluation tool
  - Deployed ambassadors return to the classroom and teach reference interview, database searching techniques, etc.
  - Engaging in and designing portions of their assignments
- Each class contains group work and a presentation element
  - Different group arrangements each class period (i.e. Harry Potter House or learning style)
- Each class period provides a Judgement-free, collaborative learning space
  - Collaborative assignments, which emphasize problem-solving as a group and take into account each person's own life experiences and knowledge
    - Students from diverse backgrounds and varying levels of college experience

# Games and Role-playing

- Gamification engages multiple learning styles
- Search & Destroy database searching card game
  - Teaches databases limiters, Boolean operators, keyword searching basics
- Trust Issues source evaluation card game
  - Teaches how to evaluate various types of sources
- Role-playing with real-life reference questions taken from our library's LibAnswers account
  - Good examples of the types of questions they may see in the field
  - Teaches the reference interview
  - Helps with anxiety before deployment
  - Allows for practice, practice, practice



1 Association of College & Research Libraries (2015). "Framework for information literacy for higher education," *American Library Association*, Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework>

2 Kuh, G. (2008). "High Impact Education Practices," *Association of American Colleges & Universities*. Retrieved from <https://www.aacu.org/leap/hips>

# References



# Thanks



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