Tiny Shelves Student Concert Series

Abstract:

We propose a monthly concert series in the Library featuring student bands and musicians. These concerts will be filmed and then placed on the campus’ and library’s Youtube sites. The goals for the concerts are to increase a sense of campus community among students and to increase the use of the Library’s and campus’ social media sites (Youtube, Facebook, Twitter), to visibly promote creative extracurricular student interaction with the university.

Narrative:

We are applying for a $1,000 grant to host an acoustic concert series in the 5th floor atrium in the Franklin D. Schurz Library. Our proposed project is inspired by the popular NPR Tiny Desk Concerts, in which unique musicians and bands play brief, 15-minute concerts in the NPR offices and are recorded for distribution on the internet. By partnering with the Office of Student Life to book musical acts and Instructional Media Services to provide high quality video, we seek to both provide an entertaining addition to campus culture that will appeal to students and create high-quality video content to raise Indiana University South Bend’s profile on social media sites such as Youtube, Facebook, and Twitter. While the positive correlation between academic success and retention has been well established in studies by Krista Sorio, Elizabeth Mezick and others, non-academic programs are also highly important in forging relationships with students and the community. Christina N. Baker’s study of under-represented college student populations, extracurricular activities, and student success listed involvement in activities in the arts (including performing arts) as one of the key extracurricular activities that promote student success, noting “the expressive structure of art provides an outlet for students to express themselves and achieve a sense of empowerment…which may improve academic performance.” Such involvement forges positive associations between students and the university, strengthening bonds and increasing the likelihood of retention. Further, our proposed concert series will serve as another draw for the library, which, as an institution, has been proven to positively associate with retention.


Our proposed concert series would host one student musician or band per month during the regular semester in the atrium, a glass-roofed room on the 5th floor of the Franklin D. Schurz Library. Free to the public, the concerts would be primarily acoustic to avoid any noise-based distractions. Money for the grant would go to paying musicians/bands a $50 honorarium for performing, refreshments, and posters to advertise the concerts. We have sought out partnerships with other university entities in planning this concert series. Joel Langston, Manager of Instructional Media Services in Information Technologies, has agreed to oversee video production of each concert for distribution via the Internet. Scott Strittmatter in the Office of Student Life, has agreed to partner with us in recruiting student musical acts and promoting shows, and we already have a list of student bands (such as the Improv Group and Titan Toners) and student musicians to contact. As we continue the project, we would like to expand our partnerships to include the Office of International Student Services, the Ernestine Raclin School of the Arts, and the Office of Communications and Marketing.

We will also be partnering with these groups in promoting the concerts on our Twitter and Facebook pages, helping to raise the social media profile of the library and IU South Bend throughout the community. We will use the concerts to bring viewers to the Library and campus Youtube sites, in hopes of building a stronger video presence for students and potential students. We will contact the staff of the Preface, the student newspaper, and ask them to write a story about the series in the paper’s entertainment section, further raising awareness.

We believe it is important to create a variety of cultural offerings for students to engage with the university is in recreational settings. Doing so will create, among students who participate, a sense of community and shared culture, thereby increasing a student’s desire to return to campus. The concert series will directly engage students in university programming, and highlight this engagement to the rest of the student body. In addition, we seek to increase library usage by students by forging positive associations with the institution. Studies have shown that students with a higher level of library interaction are more likely to be retained than students who rarely enter the library\(^5\). With this in mind, universities have recently looked at ways to increase library usage in all respects, including installing spaces where students can relax recreationally.\(^6\) By forging a partnership with student performers, we hope to create a unique cultural offering that not only increases library usage, but instills in students a sense of


campus culture. We believe this will provide a strong motivation for participating students to continue on at IU South Bend.

Assessment:

We will measure success of the concert series in a number of ways:

- We will do a headcount of the number of attendees
- We will have an evaluation form at each event, (see sample in the appendix)
- We will keep track of the number of YouTube hits for each concert
- We will keep track of the number of “friends/followers” of the concerts Facebook/Twitter pages
- We will measure our off-campus advertisements (links from off-campus blogs/webpages, “shares” or “likes” on social media, etc.)

Grant Participants:

- Craig Finlay, Assistant Librarian, scfinlay@iusb.edu, & Julie Elliott, Associate Librarian, jmfelli@iusb.edu, Library, Co-Team Leaders
- Joel Langston, Manager, IMS/IT, jblangst@iusb.edu
- Scott Strittmatter, Director of Student Life, Office of Student Life, sstrittm@iusb.edu

Budget:

8 concerts (4 per semester)

$50 honorarium for each band = $400

Light refreshments at concerts = $300

Promotional posters = $300

Total: $1,000

Timeline:

Spring 2014: Recruit performers for 2014 concerts

Summer 2014: Begin promotion

Fall 2014: Begin concerts (1 per month during fall & spring semesters)

Spring 2015: Review assessment data and revise project as needed

Appendix:

Sample Concert Feedback Form:
Your feedback is very important to us

Please turn form into library staff member or the comment box

How did you hear about this event? (Check all that apply)

- E-mail
- Library Web Site
- IUSB Events Calendar
- Newspaper
- Poster
- Listserv
- Flyer
- Radio
- Other Social Media ________________________________

Are you a (please circle):

IUSB Student/Faculty Member/Staff/Community Member

Do events like this add to your campus experience at IUSB?

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Do events like this one make it more likely that you will spend time at IUSB? (1, not likely to 5, very likely)

1 2 3 4 5

Do events like this make the Library seem more welcoming? Scale of 1 to 5 (1 not welcoming to 5 very welcoming)

1 2 3 4 5

Would you like to see similar cultural offerings at IUSB? If yes, what? ________________________________

Will you attend additional library concerts?

______________________________________________________________

Suggestions for Student Performers ______________________________________

Additional Comments/Suggestions _______________________________________
Project Director: Julie Elliott
Co-Investigator: Craig Finlay
Project Title: Tiny Shelves Library Concert Series
Amount of this request: $1,000

Type of Proposal:
- Faculty Research Grant
- Curriculum Development
- Seed Grant
- Research Project Initiation Grant
- Other: Vision 20-20 Grant

Special Needs:
- Human Subjects
- Animals
- Biosafety: Pathogenic agent
- Human tissue or fluids
- Recombinant DNA

Brief layman's description of project:
We are looking to host a concert series featuring student performers modeled after NPR's Tiny Desk Series.

APPROVALS:
Project Director: Julie Elliott  Date: 3/3/14  Comments: 
Chairperson:  Date: 3/3/14  Comments: 
Dean:  Date: 3/5/14  Comments: 