Outreach to Student Support Services at the University of Alabama: Engaging While Including

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### Outreach to Student Support Services at The University of Alabama: Engaging While Including

#### Student Support Services Overview:
- Aims to increase retention & graduation rates of marginalized students
- Designed to identify & provide services for students from “disadvantaged” backgrounds
- Receives funding through US Department of Education’s Federal TRIO Programs
- Support students through academic tutoring, course selection advisement, financial aid information, and transfer student resources

#### Demographics of Students:
University of Alabama SSS Program serves over 200 students per year

**Students must be:**
- First-generation college students
- Students with limited family income
- Registered for accommodations with University’s Office of Disability Services
- Have at least one academic need (low GPA or test scores), failing grades, or majoring in an under represented, highly-demanding major

**By the numbers:**
- 91% average retention rate
- 94% students in good academic standing
- 72% graduate in 6 years or less

#### Our Partnership with SSS:
- A comprehensive personable outreach program designed to engage with students on multiple levels, while recognizing pressures & needs of individuals in the program
- The intention was to build a close relationship with the students, and interact with them in a familiar space to reduce library anxiety
- After the relationship has been built with the librarian, students more likely to visit the library & utilize library services offered

#### Best Practices:
- **Libguide:**
  - Created specifically for SSS students
  - Information designed to help familiarize students with the Library, including location & hours, online resources, accessibility information, and news & events

- **Weekly Outreach:**
  - Provide students with one-on-one research consultations, reference & citation help, and general information inquiries
  - Arranged during high traffic periods for visibility & ease of interaction within the SSS building

- **Instruction:**
  - Built to engage the students with our collections & resources
  - Designed for students to learn research skills, website navigation, and other library services offered

- **Website Presence:**
  - Useful information: library homepage, link to libguide, Ask-a-Librarian FAQ page
  - Librarian contact information & research consultation request link

- **Open House:**
  - Held at the beginning of every semester to introduce ourselves to new students & reconnect with current students
  - Food & drinks provided by SSS; the Libraries provides swap to give away

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**Presenters:**

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