Culture of Collaborative Creation

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Land acknowledgement

The University of North Carolina, Charlotte is located on the traditional territories of the **Catawba**, **Waxhaw**, **Cheraw**, **Wateree**, and **Sugeree** peoples, and, as many of us are settlers, migrants, or descendants of those forcefully brought to this land, we are here because this land is colonized. I ask you to join me in acknowledging the **Catawba**, **Cheraw**, **Sugeree**, **Wateree**, and **Waxhaw** peoples community, their elders both past and present, as well as future generations.

[UNC Charlotte land acknowledgement](#)

How can we make Zoom...

MORE

Productive
Creative
Relaxed

Exhausting
Isolating
Dull

LESS

The approach

Use Zoom for synchronous coworking sessions that are:

- ▷ Unstructured
- ▷ Creative
- ▷ Collaborative and highly participatory
- ▷ Driven by a concrete goal (e.g. resource creation)

At Atkins Library

Zoom coworking sessions began organically out of the Scholarly Communications Committee.

Through these Zoom coworking sessions, we were able to create:
- [Copyright guide](#) for our institutional repository
- [LibGuide](#) and [downloadable PDF](#) on how to publish your research, as well as [outreach materials](#) for these resources
- [Guide](#) on how to publish open access and retain author rights
- [Proposal](#) for changes to a grant outreach and application system to encourage open access publishing
- Usability review of language on our institutional repository [website](#)

Example: Copyright Guide

Creating the [institutional repository copyright guide](#) involved:

Coworking collaborators: Copyright & Licensing Librarian, Engineering Librarian, and Digital Scholarship Coordinator

Coworking sessions: Two one-hour coworking sessions to generate the [content](#) for the guide, which we then sent to the library's Graphic Designer to create the handout.

Evaluation: Reviewed the resource at the next committee meeting, soliciting feedback.
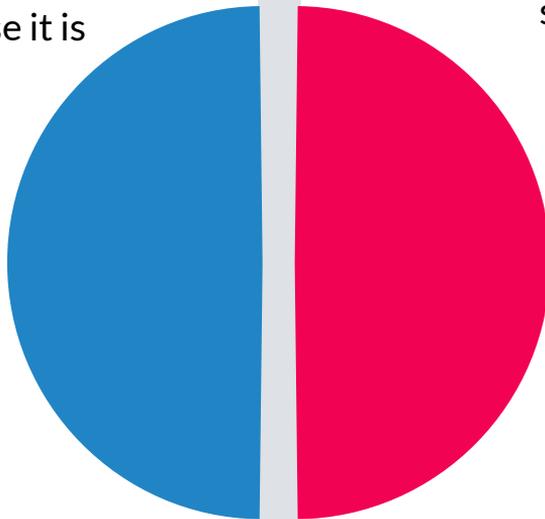
Strengths

Spontaneity of ideation: Social discussions are more fluid and relaxed.

Accountability: Work gets done because it is scheduled on multiple calendars.

Socializing in a remote world: Sessions built enthusiasm and unity amongst coworkers.

Collaborative boost: Sessions operated using a "yes, and" mentality; discussions built and informed the deliverable in a way that working independently couldn't have.

Zoom encourages participation: For shyer employees, the format is less intimidating than collaborating in person.

Considerations

Chit chat and socializing: The more relaxed, unstructured approach means meetings can start with socializing (but that's important anyway).

Scheduling deadlines: Projects may take more sessions than you realize, and finding calendar availability across teams can be tricky.

Less oversight: Work is distributed and not coordinated by a manager, so the work can feel less structured and requires self-starters or enthusiastic project members.

Keys to making Zoom coworking sessions work

Small groups
Small number of participants (ideally with different expertise) allowed for more robust idea generation and active participation from all involved.

Deliverable-driven projects
The smaller project format made big ideas and goals concrete, transforming theoretical or unwieldy discussions into tangible results.

Proactive projects
Coworking sessions were proactive instead of reactive, allowing us to create without pressure or constraints.

Volunteers
Having folks volunteer to work in these groups meant people were genuinely interested in the projects and motivated to participate.

Clear end dates
Once the deliverable was created, the project was over and the group dissolved. This let people join projects as their schedule allowed.

Flexible expectations
Projects evolved as we brainstormed together, and we were open to new directions and creating additional projects.

Questions / Contact

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