Tiny Shelves Student Concert Series—Year two proposal

Abstract:

We wish to continue our monthly concert series in the Library featuring student bands and musicians. We have filmed these concerts and placed them on our library’s Youtube site. In addition, we would also like to expand the series to feature films from our streaming media subscription to Kanopy (the Deep Cuts film series—featuring Anime, Cult Classics, and documentaries of social interest). Kanopy films have full public performance rights, so there would be no additional costs to showing these films.

To increase student engagement with the Library in year two, we would like to begin the concerts/film showings with a brief “opening act” that highlights resources from the library’s collection that are related to the performance. Examples would be the a 5-minute overview of jazz CDs and streaming music in our collection before a performance by a student jazz trio, or a presentation on film resources available in our collection prior to showing of a cult classic film. This way, we would be providing a stronger tie to the library with the concerts/films outside of just its location, and also providing the students who attend the events with additional information about ways we can help them succeed. We would also be providing students an opportunity to get to know more of the Librarians and Library staff, as they will get to know us in an informal, fun environment where we take a few minutes to also share some of our expertise.

The goals for year two of our grant are to increase the number of attendees at the concerts and films, to have more librarian and library staff interaction with students at the events, and for a stronger presence on the university’s social media.

Narrative Year One:

We received a $1,000 grant to host an acoustic concert series in the 5th floor atrium in the Franklin D. Schurz Library. Our 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.

Since September, we have hosted four concerts. The concerts have definitely raised the profile of our Youtube page, as these are the most viewed items on our site. We have received positive coverage from the campus newspaper, The Preface, who listed the concert series as #3 on the “The Top 10 Best of IUSB in 2014.” While in-person attendance has been small, our numbers are growing, with the December concert by The Gidens being our best attended so far. As we continue the project, we are working 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. To that end, the IU South Bend Jazz Ensemble will be performing on February 19,
and we have met with a representative from the Office of Communications and Marketing to help us with more campus-wide promotion.

One issue we have come up against is the booking of the musical acts, sometimes we have not received final confirmation and/or promotional photos from an act in a timely manner, making it difficult to do as much wide scale promotion (lobby poster with full semester line-up, for example). The payment process for performers has also been problematic, as rules regarding the payments to students are more complicated than we had envisioned when we created the proposal.

To address these issues, we would like to include some film showings from our new streaming media service, Kanopy. Kanopy films come with full public performance rights, so there would be no additional cost to showing these films (Kanopy has over 26,000 titles, ranging from award-winning documentaries and feature films to cult classics, and anime). Being able to schedule a film showing instead of a concert when we are having trouble booking a third act during the semester will help us in terms of scheduling and timely promotion, as well as provide us an opportunity to promote our new streaming media service. As for the payment of student performers, when we wrote the grant last year, we were unaware of the various accounting rules related to paying students who already worked on campus, etc. and we have found that the students are less interested in the $50 payment than they are in the opportunity to perform on campus and have a professional video shot. For year two, we would like to propose doing away with the honorarium.

At this writing, we have $778.82 left in our grant. We will be hosting 3 concerts this spring, so another $150 will be spent on performer honorariums. We found that a one-time purchase of pre-packaged candy (approved by the Events office), was sufficient for our catering needs, so we have only spent a small portion of the amount we had earmarked for catering. As we have our spring line-up set, we will be able to mount a larger promotional campaign, but we will not spend our entire $300 budgeted for promotional posters. We estimate that we will have approximately $400 left in our grant at the end of the semester. We would like to request to roll that money over into our account for next year.

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. We feel that the Preface coverage of the series has begun that process (two of the bands featured in our series, The Tides and Half Fiction, later performed at The Preface’s student concert this fall). Our concert series directly engages students in university programming, and highlights 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. By having the “opening acts” in year two, we hope to have students not just have positive associations with the library as a place,
but with the librarians and library staff as people who can help them. 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.\(^1\) 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.\(^2\) By continuing our 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:**

- Evaluations form information from the concerts are attached. An overview of the numbers:
  - *The Preface* (student newspaper) listed as one of “The 10 Best of IUSB in 2014:”
    “The Tiny Shelves concert series was among one of the top favorite events for many students. The event was held in the Schurz Library on campus, where it featured area bands. The mix of music and the campus library created the perfect temporary getaway from a hectic class schedule for many students.”
  - September — Von Strantz, 12 attendees & 165 views on Schurz Library Youtube page
  - October — The Tides, 16 attendees & 156 views on Schurz Library Youtube page
  - November — Half Fiction, rescheduled due to weather, 9 attendees & 152 views on Schurz Library Youtube page
  - December — The Gidens, 18 attendees & 217 views on Youtube

**Grant Participants:**

- Craig Finlay & Julie Elliott, Library
- Joel Langston, IMS/IT
- Scott Strittmatter, Office of Student Life

**Budget:**

A mixture of concerts/film showings (3 per semester)

- Light refreshments at concerts = $50
- Promotional materials (flyers, lobby posters) = $350

---


Total: $400 (carried over from this year’s grant)

**Timeline:**

Spring 2015: Begin working with Office of Communications and Marketing to explore new avenues of promotion, continue to promote concerts and review assessment data. Work on interviewing performers to get their feedback on experience.

Summer 2015: Recruit fall 2015 line-up & Recruit librarians and library staff for “opening acts”

Fall 2015: Concerts & films

Spring 2016: Review assessment data and revise project as needed
Erika Zynda  
Office of Research Administration  
A247  
South Bend

Project Director: Craig Finlay  
Name:  
Submitting Dept.:  
Phone #:  
E-mail:  

Co-Investigator:  
Name:  
Submitting Dept.:  
Phone #:  
E-mail:  

Project Title: Tiny Sodies Concerts

Amount of this request: $1,000

Type of Proposal:
- Faculty Research Grant
- Curriculum Development
- Seed Grant
- Research Project Initiation Grant
- Regional Research Grant
- Other: Cultural development

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

Brief layman's description of project:
A series of student concerts and films shown in the library atrium as desktop online video produced by AHS to add to the cultural fabric of Europe.

APPROVALS:

Project Director:  
Date:  
Comments:  

Chairperson:  
(If applicable)  

Dean:  
Feb 18, 2015