The Academic Library & Online Learning

Empowering Students through Flexibility, Customizability, and Convenience

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Presentation Objectives

- Address information literacy as an instructional concept
- Share study of learning information literacy skills online vs. face-to-face
- Discuss the study’s implications for empowering learning
Information Literacy Defined

“The ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use and share that information for the problem at hand.”

National Forum on Information Literacy

AAC&U: LEAP Essential Learning Outcome

ACRL: Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education

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Study Background

● Optional instructional workshops for three upper-level sociology courses (n=36)
  ○ Varying levels of knowledge and experience

● Offered content online / in-person
  ○ Identical, except for delivery method
  ○ Online modules embedded in CMS
Scholarly Foundation

- Upper-level social sciences students: more likely to work with e-resources than a librarian
- Online learning effective in providing point-of-need instruction
- “Embedded librarianship” in online / blended / face-to-face courses
Study Conditions

- Quasi-experimental design: pre/post-test
  - Five questions aligned with IL standards:
    - Starting the search process
    - Keyword / subject searching
    - Accessing subject-specific resources
    - Identifying scholarly / peer-reviewed sources
    - Advanced research strategies and tools
  - Perceptions of the library as research resource
  - Perceptions of online learning’s effectiveness
Findings

● Online vs. face-to-face instruction:
  ○ Both saw improved learning outcomes
  ○ No significant differences between formats
  ○ Use of both formats = higher scores

● Pre / post-test of library’s relevance:
  ○ Significant difference in perception of:
    ■ Library’s / librarians’ availability for assistance
    ■ Availability of relevant content through the library
    ■ Ability to access relevant content through the library
    ■ The library as the first step in research
      ● Online students - significant difference compared to face-to-face students
Teaching & Learning Takeaways

● Online IL instruction = F2F IL instruction
  ○ Gives librarians / instructors options for teaching while considering:
    ■ Convenience
    ■ Flexibility
    ■ Customizability

● IL instruction impacts perception of library’s role in research
  ○ For librarians:
    ■ It’s working - continue to embed!
  ○ For subject instructors:
    ■ Might this improve students’ research results?
Did We Hit the Target?

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- Discuss the study’s implications for empowering learning

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