

34th National LOEX Conference

Moving Targets: Understanding Our Changing Landscapes

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Overview

The conference was held at the Marriott Inn & Conference Center, on the campus of University of Maryland, May 4 – 6, 2006. Lunch was provided on Friday and Saturday, allowing conferees an opportunity to learn more about each other and practices in other academic libraries.

Keynote Speaker

The keynote speaker on Friday morning was Scott Walter, Assistant Dean of Libraries for Information and Instructional Services and Visiting Assistant Professor of Teaching and Leadership at the University of Kansas. His address was titled “Teacher/Librarian 2.0: Upgrading Your Instruction for the Net Generation (and Beyond)”¹. Scott was a very engaging speaker. His opening question was: how do we remain relevant on campus and as professionals? He showed a short segment of footage from “The Obsolete Man”, an episode from *The Twilight Zone* about a librarian who is obsolete in a dystopia. He talked about books and the internet and how to renew knowledge. He talked about learning goals such as creative and critical thinking, quantitative and symbolic reasoning, information literacy, communication and self in society, new expectations and skill sets. He then talked about continuing education and adult learners stating that the librarian as a teacher is not obsolete. He cited programs at University of Indiana, the Instructor College at the University of Michigan, the Institute for Information Literacy, an immersion program, and other models. He ended with saying professional identity is as a teacher, not a faculty member. His presentation is available at: <<http://www.lib.umd.edu/loex2006/scottwalterloex2006.ppt>>. I recommend reading it.

Concurrent Sessions Attended

Assessment Builds Strong Programs Eight Ways! It’s Good for You!²: The presenters detailed the opportunity afforded to assess their information literacy program when their library’s strategic planning process, the university’s accreditation self-study and the general education program happened during the same eighteen month period. Students are required to take a two credit Information Literacy course at California State University East Bay. The course was redesigned and assessment morphed from using only pre/post multiple choice and true/false tests to using tests in conjunction with the development of student portfolios for class work and self assessment through an essay. Instructors designed a rubric for the assessment of student portfolios. In that process

¹ Friday, May 5, 2006. Presenter: Scott Walters, University of Kansas.

² Friday, May 5, 2006. Presenters: Tom Bickley, Kyzyl Fenno-Smith & Steve Philbosian, California State University East Bay.

instructors began to look in depth at teaching information literacy. It was a rewarding experience for the library staff, faculty and students. Their presentation is available at <<http://www.library.csueastbay.edu/loex2006.htm>>.

How They Learn/How You Teach: Building Library Instruction Sessions for Multiple Learners³: This breakout session provided an excellent summary of all the things students are coping with in a wired learning environment and the range of skills among students such as keyboard and mouse skills and use of different operating systems, as well as the concepts being taught in a one shot instructional session.. The presenters engaged the attendees in identifying ways students are unique, reminded the audience about “cognitive load theory” and then offered the SCILL model of Instructional Considerations: Subject, Community, IT Skills, Library Awareness and Learning Styles, detailing information about each component. The then discussed strategies instructors can use to engage all students in a wired classroom in a one shot instructional session. This presentation is also available at <<http://individual.utoronto.ca/newman/research/Slides-postpresentation.ppt>>.

Zeroing in on Moving Targets: Strategies for Reaching Transient Teachers With Library Instruction⁴: The presenters were concerned with the non permanent staff (adjuncts, instructors, lecturers, visiting contingent faculty, teaching associates, teaching faculty, graduate students that teach) which has up to 90% of the contact with first and second year students at the University of Illinois. They may have little or no knowledge of campus resources. The presenters then offered statistics on the skills of first year students from an OCLC White Paper on the Information Habits of College Students (2002) – A Wellesley study found: fewer than 2% considered non-internet sources, students were overwhelmingly susceptible to advertising, misinformation and propaganda, and when they needed help finding information 60% went to friends, 33% to professors and 20% to librarians. UIUC surveyed their “transient teachers” about the student population, the type of research and resources they required and the best ways to communicate with them. The findings helped to develop ways to be visible (attend faculty meetings, develop liaisons,) offer faculty-only learning opportunities, meet new faculty and graduate assistants, and be persistent – repeat messages about library instruction! The presenters offered an annotated bibliography and a copy of the presentation.

What Does First Person Shooter Have to Do with Library Instruction⁵: The presenters provided an absolutely fascinating account of their foray into gaming to attract the attention of Millennials. Information on the thought process, time, staffing, and effort it took to create a module of a game to teach the research process was provided. The simulation shown was very sophisticated. If the game becomes available through George Washington University, it will be worth consideration as a tool. However, in addition to the time taken for development, it takes considerable time to play the game. I would like

³ Friday, May 5, 2006. Presenters: Jeff Newman, Pia Russell, University of Toronto.

⁴ Friday, May 5, 2006. Presenters: Susan Avery, Emily Rogers, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

⁵Friday, May 5, 2006. Presenters: Ann Brown, Paola Ceccarini, Cathy Eisenhower, George Washington University.

to see statistics on usage and comments from students on the game when it has been in place for a year.

Assessing the Foundation⁶: Assessment for the integrated library instruction at University of North Texas involves pre, post and “post post” testing using web based software developed at the university. The librarians were interested in learning if they were teaching the students the things they needed to know. After identifying the skills “necessary for success at research paper assignment”[s] they prepared questions that would demonstrate the skills needed. The software was built to follow the path a student took in answering the questions. The actual test was demonstrated. After analyzing the results of the new test, the librarians were able to emphasize specific points during their instruction to address student needs. By using a “post post” test they were able to confirm that students were retaining the skills taught and library anxiety decreases after instruction.

The university may offer the tool as freeware or for cost recovery.

A copy of the PowerPoint presentation was distributed.

Student Poster Sessions

Student Poster Sessions were a new feature at the conference this year. The concepts presented provided food for thought, especially the “Benefits of a Reading Club in an Academic Setting” by Elizabeth Schneider at the University of Michigan. I plan to see if there is interest at Benedictine. Descriptions of the presentations are offered at <http://www.lib.umd.edu/loex2006/posters.html>.

Thank you, LIBRAS, for supporting attendance at this conference!

⁶ Saturday, May 6, 2006. Presenters: Gayla Byerly, Annie Downey, University of North Texas.