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Addressing the Needs of Non-Traditional Online Students in a Credit-Bearing IL Course

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Addressing the needs of non-traditional online students in a credit bearing IL course

Sarah Ralston, Eastern Oregon University
March 2019
Outline

- Background
  - About EOU
  - Online students
  - LIB courses at EOU
- LIB 307: Online Research
  - Role in the curriculum
  - Learning outcomes, assignments, structure
- Outcomes
  - Relationship to GPA & completion
  - Student feedback
EOU
Small, rural, La Grande, OR
1000 on-campus students
1200 online students
39% of students over 25
111 full time faculty, 61 online adjuncts
17-1 students - faculty
22 majors online

- Anthropology/Sociology
  - Anthropology
  - Sociology & Social Welfare
- Business Administration
  - Accounting
  - Global Foods & Agri-Business
  - Leadership, Organization & Management
  - Marketing
- Communication Studies
- Computer Science
- Early Childhood Education
- Economics
- Emergency Medical Services Administration
- English/Writing
- Fire Services Administration (FSA)
- History
- Integrative Studies: Individualized Plan
- Integrative Studies: EOU Minor (+)
  One Minor from Other University
- Integrative Studies: Two EOU Minors
- Politics & Economics
- Physical Activity and Health
  - Physical Education & Sport
  - Exercise Science
  - Community Health
- Psychology
11 regional centers

- Central Oregon
- Burns
- Enterprise
- Gresham
- Hermiston
- John Day
- Ontario
- Pendleton
- Portland
- Roseburg
- Salem
Background

EOU Library
5.5 Full time library faculty

- Systems
- Reference and User Experience
- Acquisitions & Instruction
- Reference & Instruction
- Instruction
- $\frac{1}{2}$ time instruction
EOU Library

Instruction

- 2-3 credit-bearing courses
- Integrative FY Seminar
- Course integrated instruction
- Digital learning objects
- High school outreach
EOU Library
Credit courses
- 30 year history
- LIB 127: Information Literacy
- LIB 307: Online Research
- LIB 327: Research Topic Exploration
- LIB 317: Business Research Methods
Questions?

Next: About the course
Gen Ed: Natural, Mathematical & Informational Sciences (SMI)
Required for Integrative Studies
Strongly recommended in Business Administration
Strongly recommended by regional advisors
I encourage students to take LIB 307 because it gives students the foundation needed for all other classes in their college career. When students complete the course, I always hear "I should have taken that class my first term". The skills they learn in LIB 307 help them be successful in their other college courses.
"I see it as a tool for my non-traditional students to 'catch up' on research skills. This is especially important to those that have been out of the college scene for a while and could benefit from new approaches to library resources."
First and foremost the content of the course is not only applicable to the success in their degree, but useful information to have after they leave EOU. Being able to effectively and efficiently find the information you need can be the difference between success and failure for students and working professionals. As advisors we hear all the time that students want to take courses that will be relevant in the "real world." I think this course does that for them.
It is also a great class for students that are looking for a couple of additional credits since it is both upper division and an SMI.
Characteristics of EOU online students

- **Common**
  - Have full-time jobs and/or children
  - Bring transfer credits from more than one institution
  - Are driven to complete quickly
  - May need degree to advance in career
  - Non-traditional aged

- **Not uncommon**
  - Serve in the military
  - Stop and start frequently
AGE RANGE OF STUDENTS TAKING LIB 307

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>21.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>16.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>14.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>15.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40+</td>
<td>32.70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 79% 25+ (Non-Traditional)
- 48% 35+
Questions?

Next: Course design
LIB 307
Online Research
Tools and Strategies
Outcomes: Student Feedback

I feel I have already reaped the benefits of the new techniques taught in this class. I just received feedback from my Intro to Community Health professor regarding a second large, Undergraduate Writing Requirement, assignment and she told me my submission was one of the best papers she has ever received. Without a doubt, the new research tools and techniques I learned in this course will serve me well in the future.

- Winter 2018 LIB 307 student

Just wanted to say that I was very thankful for this class this week while doing a research paper for another class, I knew where to look for scholarly articles rather than trying to search only on Google. Thanks!!

- Spring 2018 LIB 307 student
Outcomes: GPA & Completion

- **GPAs tend to be slightly lower**
  - (Four year average)
    - 3.22 → Students who took LIB 307
    - 3.29 → Students who did not take LIB 307

- **Completion rates tend to be higher**
  - (Six year Graduation rate, eight year average)
    - 58% → Took a 300 level LIB course
    - 53% → Did not take a 300 level LIB course

* Neither of these differences are statistically significant.
Welcome to LIB 307: Online Research Tools and Strategies

I hope this class will help you better understand information and the nature and nuances of online research, as well as help you with your research endeavors for other classes. By the end of the course you will be able to:

1. Differentiate types of information systems and sources, determining when to use a particular research tool.
2. Formulate search strategies based on the structure and features of the research tool you are using.
3. Revise initial search strategies when appropriate in order to effectively satisfy an information need.
4. Apply knowledge of how to effectively and efficiently use discipline specific tools to address an information need.

How to get started:

This course is organized in modules. To access the modules, use the navigation menu to the left, or choose one from the grid below. Take some time to look around, read the welcome message on the Start page, and the Syllabus. You will be held accountable to the policies in the syllabus, so please read it before beginning the course. Please don't hesitate to contact me with questions!
Lib 307 Course Introduction

Module 1 (4/1 - 4/7): Information Sources, Cycles, Need, Ethics, & Research in Disciplines

Module 2 (2 weeks 4/8 - 4/21): The Free Web (Websites, Google Scholar, Government Information)


Module 4 (2 weeks, 4/29 - 5/12): Databases

Module 5 (2 weeks, 5/13 - 5/6): Research Process/Plan

Final Project (2 weeks, 5/27 - 6/9)
Module 1 (4/1 - 4/7): Information Sources, Cycles, Need, Ethics, & Research in Disciplines

- Lib 307 Module 1: Overview

- Module 1 Discussion
  Apr 7 | 5 pts

- Lib 307 Module 1: Lecture and Reading Materials

- Lib 307 Assignment 1: Information Analysis
  Apr 7 | 20 pts
Module 1 Overview

Steps in this Module:

1. **DISCUSSION:** Describe the process you currently apply to academic research, including the types of search tools (e.g., Google, databases) and sources (e.g., books, websites) you use
2. Read the **Assignment instructions**
3. Watch the **lecture** and read supplementary materials
4. Complete **Assignment**

Topics:

- **Introduction to information**
  - Overview of information sources, information cycle, information characteristics, information need, and research in disciplines
  - Intellectual property, copyright

Learning Objectives:

- Students will be able to:
  - Identify sources of information
  - Articulate how information is produced and distributed
  - Identify the differences between various types of information (primary, secondary, etc.)
  - Identify specific uses appropriate for different sources/choose best source
  - Outline information need
  - Define and differentiate intellectual property/understand its importance
Module 2 Overview

NOTE that this module is 2 weeks long, with 3 different assignments.

There is a lot of content and work to do, so pace yourself, and pay attention to due dates. I have given suggested due dates for completing the readings to help you stay on track. These are set up as 0 point "assignments."

Steps in this module:

1. Watch the lecture and read supplementary materials
2. Complete Assignment 2: Website Evaluation
3. DISCUSSION:
   - Do you think understanding how search engines work influences your searching behavior?
   - How do you evaluate online information resources in your everyday life?
   - Do you find it easy or difficult to distinguish between User Generated Content and institutionally published information?
4. Complete Assignment 3: Google Scholar
5. Complete Assignment 4: Government Resources

Topics:
- Information found on the Web
- Search engine design
- Privacy issues
- Website evaluation

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:
- Explain the difference between the Free Web and subscription resources.
- Articulate how search engines work related to algorithms, web crawling, privacy, etc.
- Evaluate website content for use in a topic area according to given criteria.
- Make a distinction between User Generated Content (UGC) and institutionally published information on the Web.
Readings:

**Reading on Academic Disciplines:** Handbook for Writers *Ch. 3: Thinking Through the Disciplines* (read section 3.1: Exploring Academic Disciplines). Saylor Academy (2012).

**Reading on Source Selection:** *Selecting the best information source.* University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign - University Library (2013).

**Reading on Source Types in the Disciplines:** *Primary, secondary and tertiary sources.* Mark O. Hatfield Library, Willamette University.

**Reading on the Information Cycle (in the context of an event):** *The Information Cycle.* University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign - University Library (2012).


**Reading on Characteristics of Information:** *Characteristics of Information.* Old Dominion University - ODU Libraries (© 2010-2012)

**Conclusion:** These readings are intended to make you think more critically about your information choices in the future. What type of information source will best meet your need? Have you considered publication timelines and what barriers they may present? How can you identify analytical information compared with factual information, and why would it be important to know the difference? Depending on your major, or the subject matter of a given class, you may need specific types of types of information that are preferred by that discipline. Some disciplines rely more heavily on primary information than others. Some also prioritize currency - how current the information is, or how recently it was published. In fields like science and technology in which new information is being continuously developed, currency is very important. Pay attention to publication dates, whether you are using the information for a class or any other reason. Finally, whatever information source you choose, make sure you are allowed to use it, and that you are using it ethically. The readings below address the ethical use of information with consideration of intellectual property, copyright, and plagiarism.

**Additional Readings: Intellectual Property, Copyright, & Plagiarism**

Make sure you are familiar with the ethical issues of information use in a college setting, including intellectual property, copyright and plagiarism.

- **Citing Sources & Plagiarism - Student Guide (Links to an external site)** - Provided by EOU Library with links to online citation style guides, etc.
- **Online Writing Lab (Links to an external site)** at Eastern Oregon University, online as well as by-appointment help for students writing papers.
- **Online Writing Lab (Links to an external site)** Purdue University, contains full-text advice on planning and writing term papers, including help with using commas, writing resumes, formats (such as MLA or APA) for citing sources, non-sexist language, etc.
NOTE that this module is 2 weeks long, with 3 different assignments.

There is a lot of content and work to do, so pace yourself, and pay attention to due dates. I have given suggested due dates for completing the readings to help you stay on track. These are set up as 0 point "assignments."

Steps in this module:
1. Watch the lecture and read supplementary materials
2. Complete Assignment 2: Website Evaluation
3. DISCUSSION:
   • Do you think understanding how search engines work influences your searching behavior?
   • How do you evaluate online information resources in your everyday life?
   • Do you find it easy or difficult to distinguish between User Generated Content and institutionally published information?
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Topics:
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• Privacy issues
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Module 2: Lecture and Supplementary Materials

**Read and Review**

**Start Here - Lecture:**

https://youtu.be/6wJGRqCP29w

**Readings & Supplementary Materials**

**Section 1: Search Engines and the Free Web**

**Reading on Search Engines vs Databases:** [Compare Databases and Search Engines](https://library.uiuc.edu/compare-databases-and-search-engines) - University Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

**Presentation on the Web, Internet and Search Engines:** [Understanding Search Engines – What is the Web?](https://www.google.com) - Google.com

**Video on Google search:** How does Google search work? Video 7:44 minutes, published Apr 23 2012

How does Google Search work?
Section 2: Privacy


Reading on Google's Privacy Policy: Privacy Policy, Google - Last modified December 2017

Section 3: Specialized Search Engines

Readings on Google Scholar:
- About Google Scholar
- Tips for Using Google Scholar

Government Search Engines (familiarize yourself with these resources, their content and purpose):
- USA.gov
- Science.gov
- govinfo
- About govinfo

Section 4: Evaluating Websites


Reading on Content Farms: Content Farms - Wikipedia. Last modified February 2018.


Section 5: User Generated Content

Also known as the Participatory Web, "user generated content," or UGC, refers to information that can be found online that was not created by institutions, agencies or established publishers. It means content that has been created by the average user, such as you or me. This includes blog posts, tweets, status updates, memes and more (read more about this in the reading from Section 4, Evaluating Web Content).


Reading on Social Media as a News Source: Separating Social Media's Fact From Fiction Amid Crisis - NPR Digital Life, Celeste Headlee, host (2013)
Module 3 Overview

Module 3: Reading and Activities: Primo Search

Module 3: Reading and Activities: Keyword searching

Module 3 Activity: Key concepts and keywords
Apr 28 | 5 pts

Module 3: Assignment 5 - Primo Search & Information Comparison
Apr 28 | 15 pts
Module 3 Overview

Video Announcement From Instructor:

https://youtu.be/iB0a3--PpNQ

[This is an old video. A new one will be posted in the week that the module begins (around 4/24).]

Steps in this module:
1. Read the text and complete the activities in the Reading and Activities section for this module.
2. After finishing the readings, complete and submit Assignment 5.

Topics:
- Pierce Library Primo Search
- Advanced search strategies and techniques
- Library Discovery Services, trends and issues
- Access and navigate EBooks using various vendor/provider interfaces
- Keyword searching

Learning Objectives:
- Demonstrate the ability to use library discovery system organization and functions (fields, limiting, sorting, visual cues, subject terms/descriptors)
- Refine or revise search process to retrieve specific information.
- Employ library discovery service search features to determine types and extent of information available.
- Identify topic key concepts and potential keywords
Module 4 Overview

Video announcement from instructor:

Highlights:

- **READ THE INSTRUCTIONS**
  Make sure you choose an appropriate subject specific database for your assignment in this module or you will lose points. Instructions are provided.

**Module Overview:**
1. Read all materials and view all links in this module.
2. Complete the tutorials and answer the quizzes in the tutorials.
4. Respond to the Discussion prompt for this module.

**Topics:**
- Database structure
- Subscription bibliographic databases
- Advanced search strategies and techniques
- Ethical and societal trends and issues relating to use of proprietary databases

**Learning Objectives:**
- Demonstrate ability to select appropriate subscription database for particular need
- Demonstrate ability to use database functions and features (field searching, limiting, Boolean logic, truncation, thesauri/controlled vocabulary)
- Critically evaluate database content using appropriate criteria
- Demonstrate an understanding of the structure of subscription databases
- Demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of proprietary database use
Module 5 Overview

Module 5: Reading & Activities - Research Process

Module 5 - Readings..... - Understand the Assignment

Module 5 - Readings..... - Topic Selection

Module 5 - Readings..... - Background Reading

Module 5 - Readings... - Appropriate Sources for Information Need

Module 5 - Readings..... - Access tools

Module 5 - Readings..... - Search / Evaluate / Select

Module 5 - Readings..... - Effective and ethical use of information retrieved

Module 5: Assignment 7 - Final Project Prep
May 26 | 20 pts
In module 5 you chose a topic that you had already researched for another class.

This topic must be approved by me before you proceed. Do not use the same topic that you used for this class, unless it is a variation of the topic that requires you to find new sources (other than sources you already used in your assignments). I want to see new research – not a recycling of research you have already done.

Research the topic in the resources that we have used in class. Take advantage of advanced searching techniques and strategies covered in this class to find the most relevant, high quality results.

Consider the work you did in Assignment 1, exploring the types of information resources used by scholars or people who work in specific disciplines, and choose appropriate results.

**You must use the following search tools:**

- EOU’s Primo (you may choose articles, ebooks or other formats, based on what is most appropriate for your topic)
- Google Scholar
- Government information resources (whichever is most appropriate for your topic)
- A general database (e.g. Academic Search Premier, LexisNexis, JSTOR)
- A subject-specific database

Evaluate each tool, describing its pros and cons as well as its appropriateness for the topic. **You must describe each of these things to earn points. See below for scoring.**
Thanks!

Any questions?

You can find me at:
sralston@eou.edu
fin.
Credits

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