

Anne Grant and Diana Finkle

Taking face-to-face library workshops for freshmen online

From instruction to introduction

As the needs of academic library users evolve, so must the ways that librarians chose to interact with those users. A great deal of energy has been spent focusing on the first-year student in the university setting, but is this the best focal point for instructional efforts? After an extensive brainstorming session, the librarians at Clemson University decided to refocus time and energy from the first-year students to upper-class students and faculty. That's not to say that this very important group of students was ignored, but the face-to-face sessions that had been provided to incoming students was shifted to online tutorials. This freed up time to devote more workshops to more advanced students and faculty.

Where we were

Clemson University is an advanced degree-granting institution with more than 19,000 students and nearly 2,000 teaching faculty. The libraries provide access to more than 3 million items in print and digital formats. There are 14 teaching librarians, an instructional designer (Diana Finkle), and an instructional coordinator (Anne Grant) who lead the workshops for students and faculty.

In 2008, the library was invited to be part of an extended orientation course required of all incoming students called Clemson Connect. This zero-credit course required all freshmen and transfer students to complete four required components that covered Summer Reading, a diversity workshop, technology information about the electronic

portfolio requirement, and an information literacy portion.

From 2008 until 2011, librarians provided a 50-minute, face-to-face workshop for every incoming student, which meant teaching more than 200 workshops in the fall semester and about 30 each spring.

In 2011, Grant called the teaching librarians together to brainstorm the future of library instruction at Clemson. When it became apparent that our focus needed to shift to advanced students and faculty, we decided to move our first-year workshops online into a tutorial format. This would free more than 200 hours of our time that we could apply toward finding new avenues of support for our constituents.

First attempt

As instruction coordinator, Grant gathered a group of five librarians in the Spring of 2012 to create tutorials for incoming students for the upcoming fall semester. After consultation with the rest of the teaching librarians, we chose five topics to cover in these tutorials:

- What Does the Library Have for You? (0:51)—An introduction to library services and resources.
- Starting your Research (2:20)—An introduction to the research process.

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- Evaluating and Citing your sources (2:02)—a discussion of scholarly versus popular articles, as well as information on citation.

- How to Find a Book (1:54)—Logistics of locating a book in the library.

- How to Find an Article (2:21)—Brief coverage of the ways that full text could be accessed via the library.

Each of the tutorials was created to be less than 3 minutes and was embedded in the course management system within a quiz with questions about each tutorial. These tutorials were created using both PowerPoint with voiceover and iMovie. The group created scripts and all tutorials were created in-house by librarians and library staff. The tutorials were included in the Clemson Connect course, hosted on Blackboard, and launched in Fall of 2012.

Hired in January 2013, instructional designer Finkle led the charge to rework the libraries' Clemson Connect content. In March of 2013, we distributed a Survey Monkey survey to all students who had completed the tutorials the previous semester.

Feedback

While only 10% of the approximately 4,400 Clemson Connect alumni responded, these responses were on the whole well-thought and insightful. When asked to rate the videos' average content, pace, and length on a Likert scale, students were slightly positive about the content and pacing and mostly neutral regarding the length. Students were slightly positive about the videos' relevance during that semester and indicated the videos were more relevant as they progressed in their studies. Although the difference in relevance was not drastic, we interpreted it as a nudge toward "just in time" instruction.

When asked the open-ended question of what they remembered about the tutorials, almost 17% of students responded or indicated that they remembered nothing. The average student likely spent 10 to 15 minutes on the libraries' segment, yet nearly 1 in 5 retained nothing from the experience.

While the videos themselves are certainly one source of low retention, we felt the

milieu of the Clemson Connect student is a significant factor. Clemson Connect is a multi-part, zero-credit course that is required at a time when students are adjusting to the university and perhaps to the college experience as a whole. It is no surprise that students would have little time, energy, and memory to dedicate to five videos that comprise less than 25% of a class that is required yet not awarded credit.

Given the realization that "all at once" instruction was neither memorable nor valuable, we shifted our focus for Clemson Connect from instruction to introduction. We did not want to undervalue such an excellent opportunity to expose new students to the libraries. However, we re-envisioned our interaction more as a handshake—a warm and light way to make ourselves known but not monopolize students during such a stressful and chaotic time.

New directions

In response to the feedback, we developed and created three new instruction items:

- How Can We Help You? (1:47)—An introduction to library people and services.¹

- What's In It For Me? (1:43)—An A-to-Z list of library resources.²

- Interactive Cooper Library map³

The first video was created by recording and editing a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation in Adobe Captivate. The second video was created in Sparkol Videoscribe with audio recorded and edited in Audacity. We uploaded the videos to a Clemson Libraries YouTube account⁴ so we could ensure the availability of proper closed captioning. Based on previous experience and a general understanding of the Internet, we chose to disable comments and likes on these and all Clemson Libraries YouTube videos. An added bonus of using YouTube was the ability to access detailed view statistics and demographics.

After briefly investigating the feasibility of a homegrown, handcoded map project, Finkle searched for an existing map creation service. A free 30-day trial of MapsAlive provided enough time to explore the service and

create much of what became the published map. Existing architectural floor maps, after a few updates, served as the map framework. For each of the six floors, a color-coded study zone overlay was created as well as “hotspots” for points of interest, such as service areas, call number ranges, and some employee offices. Although the service offers some hotspot icons, we chose to custom-create a set using Clemson colors.

The tutorials and map were embedded in a quiz within the “Library Tutorials” section of the Clemson Connect Blackboard course. The quiz included one question about each video and four questions about the map. We emphasized the map to foster a connection between virtual and

physical information and introduce students to key facts such as the floor numbering and the noise levels expected for each study zone.

The libraries’ portion of Clemson Connect was open for approximately two months. During this period, the first video received 4,245 views, and the second received 4,220. These view counts indicate more than 95% of Clemson Connect watched both videos. Audience retention—the average percentage of the total video watched by users—was 81.7% for the first video and 87.4% for the second. No data are available on interactive map usage; however, a mobile-compatible library map is a valuable asset to have year-round.

The big picture

Once incoming student instruction was replaced with online tutorial content, our librarians were able to shift focus and provide

a series of drop-in workshops for students, faculty, and staff. In the Fall of 2012, we offered 43 drop-in workshops that had a combined attendance of 276. In the Fall of 2013, we offered 47 drop-in workshops that had a combined attendance of 127. Librarians also offered a series of graduate student boot camp workshops in the Summer and Fall of 2012. In an attempt to find new ways to reach

out to faculty and students, we formed an instruction and outreach team with representatives from instruction, circulation, and marketing. One major project was the creation of a “library menu” for faculty that presented library resources and services in a fun and interesting way. The team developed a market-

ing plan for library instruction and we hired two student “marketing assistants” for the Fall 2013 semester. The students provided advertising for the library workshops and other library services in new and innovative ways. We also provided library workshops online for the first time via Adobe Connect. We chose that method because it is currently used in many courses, should be familiar to students, and is supported by the university’s information technology department.

Where we go from here

In the midst of all this change and adventure, we made sure to learn from our efforts, successes, and challenges. The marketing students needed more structure for daily and weekly projects. We should have advertised workshops earlier in the semester to be sure

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A screenshot of the Interactive Cooper Library Map, created with MapsAlive.

most comprehensive collection available to researchers, this serial is an important addition to the USF Libraries Holocaust and Genocide Studies collections. Early issues discuss quotidian matters and include advertisements targeted at the German-speaking population in Argentina; however, the conservative monarchist paper eventually espoused substantially pro-Nazi editorial content and racist cartoons. Although many German colonists in the northern provinces of Argentina were taken in by Nazism, a great number of Germans in Argentina actively opposed Nazism. The largest German-language paper, *Argentinische Tageblatt*, stood in opposition to *Deutsche de la Plata Zeitung* not only as its competition but in political leaning. Declining revenue from Jewish advertisers, however, crushed *Deutsche de la Plata Zeitung* financially by the late '30s; and, with Argentina declaring war on Germany in 1944, publication officially terminated.

Books and other materials related to cowboys and the settling of the Southwest have been acquired by Booth Library at Eastern Illinois University. The collection of the late Ned Brasel, formerly of New Orleans and Nash-

ville, contains nearly 1,000 items rich in history and literature of the Southwest and includes materials on Western art, farming and herding, cowboys and women of the Southwest, and biography. Brasel's notes, clippings, and relevant cards for each item have been retained in the University Archives. Most materials are available for loan, while others reside in Special Collections and may be used in the library.

Some 500 works on the Haskalah—the Jewish Enlightenment in Europe that began in the second half of the 18th century—have arrived in the Cornell University Library, thanks to the generosity of an alumnus. The books and ephemeral publications on the Haskalah will strengthen the Library's Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections as a growing repository for collections in Jewish intellectual history, joining the papers of historian and legal expert Guido Kisch and Cornell's own Professor Isaac Rabinowitz, first chair of the Department of Near Eastern Studies. While much of the Haskalah material is in literary Hebrew, there are also many works in German. A compilation of rare pamphlets in Hungarian preserves a number of rabbinical sermons from that country. Places of publication range from Amsterdam to Odessa. *~*

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to get on the radar of faculty and students sooner. The online modules for incoming students seemed to work well as an introduction to the library; we surveyed those students in the Spring of 2014 to test this conclusion and found out that the modules are largely a success and only the virtual map could use minor upgrades. Attendance in the online library workshop was low and more user input is necessary to find out what the best mode of instruction should be for library constituents.

Overall, the changes have been enlightening and energizing. We have established momentum toward responsive and positive interactions with the campus community. We

will continue to seek the most effective way to fulfill the needs of library users, while reaching out to those not currently engaged with Clemson Libraries.

Notes

1. Direct link to unlisted How Can We Help You? video: <http://youtu.be/L1VhXcYIJ5Y>.
2. What In It For Me video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5TuiqHa728>.
3. Interactive Cooper Library map: <http://tour.mapsalive.com/34473>.
4. The Clemson Libraries' YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/user/ClemsonLibraries. *~*