Cooking with Information Resources in the Online Kitchen

This recipe serves up a hearty serving of outcomes-based assessment of student learning in embedded librarian programs. Committed cooks are needed to ensure success at every step of this recipe.

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NUTRITION INFORMATION

This recipe was developed in response to the university's accrediting body requiring demonstration of outcomes assessment. The goal was to gauge and subsequently improve the information literacy of students enrolled in general education courses. The information literacy outcomes within the selected courses focused on keyword identification, selection of assignment-appropriate library resources, and evaluation of information resources.

The recipe served two courses with similar information literacy learning outcomes, but slightly different assignments. Free-range learning ingredients worked well, as they can be adapted for the local instruction program needs. Learning objects and assignments were embedded into the learning management system, and the librarian was made available as an embedded resource in the course. The successful integration of the librarian into the menu depended on the disposition and technical skills of the many cooks in the kitchen, namely the course instructors.

DIETARY STANDARDS

ACRL *Standards for Libraries in Higher Education* (2011) Principle 1, Indicators 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4; Principle 3, Indicators 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4; Principle 4, Indicators 4.1, 4.3; Principle 5, Indicator 5.1, 5.2, 5.3

ACRL *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* (2016) Authority is Constructed and Contextual; Searching as Strategic Exploration

COOKING TIME

Online embedded instructional content development, 2 weeks; assignment development, 2 weeks; rubric development, 1 week; instructor orientation, 1 hour; rubric norming, 1 hour; individual scoring, 2 hours; reporting results, 2 hours

MAIN COOKING TECHNIQUE

Establish learning outcomes, develop assignment to demonstrate student performance of learning outcomes, develop a rubric to assess, establish a method to gather student work, norm the rubric, assess student work.

MAIN INGREDIENTS
- Assignment
- Course instructors
- Students
- Subject librarian
- Access to learning management system (LMS)
- Instructional content/intervention
- Assessment rubric
- Assessors

PREPARATION

For best results, communicate early and often with the course coordinator and department chair. A healthy dose of existing research on the benefits of this meal, a strategy for success, and a good spoonful of enthusiasm help to ensure the support of these vital gatekeepers to getting instructors on board and identifying participating classes or sections. Be sure your kitchen team includes experts with diverse specialties, such as information literacy instruction, disciplinary knowledge, and instructional technology to create appropriate assignments for assessment and to ensure data collection in the LMS.

THE ASSESSMENT

Create an annotated bibliography (or similar) assignment in collaboration with the course coordinator or instructor(s). This should include examples and be written in a language that is at the appropriate level for students. It should also include links to resources, such as databases, online guides, and tutorials. However, the assignment should NOT include the assessment rubric.

Create an assessment rubric based on the wording and expectations of the assignment.

Create one or more assignment modules in LMS, including:
- tutorials
- links to library resources, including library research or course guides, databases, etc.
- worksheets to guide students in strategic identification of topic-relevant keywords
- worksheets to guide students in the strategic identification and searching of assignment-appropriate databases
- evaluation tools (e.g., CRAAP test) to guide students in the critical evaluation of information resources
- links to examples of annotated bibliography (or similar) assignments

Sampling a Taste
Librarian(s) collect a small sample of student assignments through the LMS and assess them according to a rubric, which includes the assessment categories identified in the assignment.

Following a norming session to ensure intercoder reliability, a larger sample (depending on university policies, assessment resources, etc.) is assessed.

ALLERGY WARNINGS
The embedded model relies on good partnerships among various campus departments.

First-time assessment may result in sub-optimal results but should be shared and used for program improvement.

Course value for assignments is key for student motivation.

CHEF'S NOTE
Since the information literacy learning outcomes were the only outcomes being assessed through this project, the rubric-based assessors were all library faculty as they had the best opportunity to evaluate appropriately.