Best Practices in Distance Librarianship:

1. Learning Styles
2. Time zone, culture, and language barriers
3. Use technology appropriately
4. Privacy
5. Assessment
6. Evaluation
7. Standards and Guidelines

1. Accommodate various learning styles

Use a variety of media including but not limited to video, audio, and text. Give users various methods of learning the material.

2. Recognize time zone, culture, and language barriers

In the virtual environment students are located across the globe. All students will not be able to attend real-time sessions. Any real-time material must be recorded for later viewing, or created in an asynchronous format as well. Cultural or language barriers must be taken into consideration for equal learning opportunities for all learners. When speaking to students through Web conferencing or video,

3. Use technology effectively

Be sure all audience members have the necessary plug-ins and bandwidth for high end applications. Use technology that offers the most flexibility for the largest number of users.

4. Respect users privacy

When capturing data in recordings or through email, always omit any identifying information the user provides.

5. Assess learning

Create learning outcomes for any distance learning service or product. Evaluate student learning to ensure outcomes are being met. Be sure the audience is clear in goals and outcomes of the instruction.
6. Evaluate materials

Evaluate users’ perception of the learning materials. Capture usage statistics for asynchronous learning materials periodically.

7. Be aware of Standards and Guidelines

The instructor and creator of learning materials should be aware and informed of the following standards and guidelines:

Standards for Distance Learning Library Services:

http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/guidelinesdistancelearning

Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education

http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/informationliteracycompetency


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The author describes the planning and development of an online multimedia instruction tool for off-campus graduate level students in Education. The tool uses Macromedia Flash for animation, MP3 files for voice narration, text, still images, and screen shots. By incorporating several different types of technology and media, the tool appeals to a variety of learning styles. Offering non-linear navigation, the tool also allows students to jump to the information they seek and repeat sections as need.

The article considers how to incorporate teaching methods that have proven successful in traditional classrooms into a digital learning environment. The authors discuss five steps for fostering collaboration and increasing communication in online courses. 1. Expose students to tools for digital collaboration, 2. Develop student comfort by introducing new tools gradually, 3. Create assignments that require hands-on use of each tool, 4. Evaluate student progress giving feedback, answering questions, and encouraging more in-depth use, and 5. Require reflection and self-assessment where students describe what they’ve learned and how they’ll use the new tool.


The author discusses software options, production tips, and project management techniques for creating library tutorials using screencasting software. Covering basic library resources and services, the animated tutorials provide asynchronous bibliographic instruction to remote users from the library’s website. The article also describes the use of Google Analytics to perform assessments and track usage statistics.


The fast growth of distance learning programs requires the realignment of assessment to assist relevant stakeholders. This article shows how the Nash Model for Improved Demonstration and Reporting of Organizational Performance can assist stakeholders at academic libraries in the aligning of assessment to provide relevant information on distance education services. The use of a venn diagram demonstrating the overlap of assessment and the Nash Model, along with several bullet lists of relevant materials, are helpful in illustrating the author’s research.

The author discusses the importance of assessment in creating a high-quality distance education program. The merits of several types of assessment (e.g., authentic assessment) are discussed. The author presents the results of a survey of distance education students. The survey questions are included as an appendix, providing a useful model for others wishing to conduct a similar survey.


This article looks at best practices for tutorial development. The authors conducted a literature review of articles related to tutorial development and present recommendations based on their results. For example, the authors discuss the importance of establishing objectives for learning objects prior to their development, and the use of standards, such as the ARCL IL competencies to help guide the project and provide a framework.


Recognizing the increasing popularity of online information literacy tutorials, the authors collaborated between two institutions in Regina, Saskatchewan, to examine and customize open source tutorials for use in information literacy instruction. They review the process of securing grant funding and deciding which open source tutorial will best suit their needs. There is a checklist provided for academic librarians considering customizing a tutorial to meet the needs of their students.

The author examines the use computer game-based learning in a freshman composition course to promote active learning. Students in three classes played a computer-based game that required them use physical library materials. Student responses and assessment conducted by the librarian demonstrate that this was an effective method of instruction.


An academic research librarian working together with a professor of education evaluate the effectiveness of their model of collaboration in delivering distance instruction for public school teachers in remote, rural Alaska Native communities. They discuss their collaboration in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the instruction. They also examine the challenge of effective communication via audio conference. Finally, they discuss how their own assumptions, beliefs, and practices were changed by this collaboration.


This article discusses how quickly produced, simple, short, and highly relevant screencasts are teaching diverse users library skills of various kinds. Three librarians – one in reference/instruction, one in systems, and another in technical services – discuss how they are using screencasts with audiences including students, faculty, other librarians, and library staff. The librarians conclude that high relevancy, quick production, basic editing, short duration, highly visible marketing, and some level of assessment are key to screencasting success. Included in the article are a literature review, brief case studies of the authors’ experiences, tools for screencasting, basic technical and production tips, and some information on marketing and assessment.

This chapter, the final one of this book, looks at what librarians have done in the past when it comes to assessing library instruction for distance learners. The difference between assessment and evaluation is discussed, as well as larger trends in education, such as a movement toward learner-focused, outcomes-based, assessment-rich education. The chapter mentions distance learning programs and how they’ve changed over time as their institutions and technology have changed, and the author looks at the library community and their efforts (or lack thereof) to assess information literacy for remote users. The chapter explores the role of accreditation in assessing distance library services, types of assessment, and refers to the guiding documents issued by ACRL and other organizations.


Authors illuminate nine areas for librarians and distance educators to consider in maximizing success of information literacy (IL) instruction delivered by distance means with teaching faculty. Best practices include: designate a librarian to serve as a contact for distance educators, know who are potential collaborators, liberally share IL and library information, have librarians participate broadly across the institution, have a robust online presence for the library, establish clear roles and objectives, tap into librarians with teaching expertise, be engaged in both providing and attending professional training, and assess all efforts. This article examines both the 2005 ARL SPEC Kit on information literacy (IL) instruction in distance education and the library literature in order to help librarians be successful in creating information-literate students.


In this article the authors define terms and concepts related to screencasting and give context for how screencasting tools were being used in academic libraries at the
time of the writing and recent past. They discuss best practices for using
screencasting software for reference and give examples how the software has been
used at California State University, San Marcos. Jing is the screencasting application
most focused on by the authors. The article also points to the need for more
research on screencasting in libraries.

Chakraborty, M., & Victor, S. (2004). Do's and don'ts of simultaneous instruction to on-
campus and distance students via videoconferencing. *Journal of Library
Administration, 41*(1), 97-112. doi:10.1300/J111v41n01_09

The authors in this article give a detailed explanation of the challenges faced by a
librarian at Nova Southeastern University in teaching library workshops face to face
and through video conferencing simultaneously. It includes an explanation of the
videoconferencing technology used Nova Southeastern, including PictureTel and
Polycom. The article includes lists of benefits, drawbacks, and lessons learned in
making the best use of videoconferencing for library instruction.

using Camtasia studio. *Journal of Library & Information Services in Distance Learning,
3*(1), 23-30. doi:10.1080/15332900902794880

This article gives a detailed overview of the benefits of using Camtasia to create
online video tutorials. The author includes descriptions of her experience using the
software and offers tips for producing and distributing tutorials. She also describes
how the tutorials benefit both on and off-campus students.

directions in professional development: Applications of digital video, peer review,

Retrieved from  http://baywood.metapress.com/link.asp?id=g9e9lcq1h50x4n23

Faculty in library science, counseling, and teacher education for classes with both
traditional on-campus students and distance students incorporated the rules of active
learning to develop professional skills using digital video technology. In each of the
programs, an interactive situation was role played, recorded digitally, peer-
evaluation through Critical Friends Feedback program. The authors focus on the
importance of the principles of active learning as they apply to undergraduate education, as outlined by Chickering and Ehrmann. Other practical learning management issues are discussed, such as the use of an interactive rubric assessment system, having models to refer to, using a randomizer program to assign students into pairs or small groups, formalizing the permission process, and providing an alternate assignment to accommodate various learning styles and student comfort levels.


The authors developed a blog for each of ten courses that were provided information literacy/library instruction, monitored the use, posted updates to her presentation information, and surveyed the students about the blogs’ effectiveness. While the student use had been fairly low, many responded that it would have been helpful. In addition, academic librarians were surveyed about their use and opinions of blogs, especially in information literacy instruction. Most librarians felt it was an easy, inexpensive and fun format to interact with students and peers. Several key factors were noted in the effective use of blogs for instructional purposes: faculty collaboration, marketing and visibility, and competition from course management software which often include discussion forums or bulletin boards that students frequent.


A comparison of e-mail reference and chat reference services led to a continuation of providing e-mail reference service rather than using a chat reference service. The major benefit of chat reference was the ability to co-browse, push and pull websites with the patron. This was considered not as beneficial as e-mail reference, which provides the librarians the ability to 1) transcend language/speech problems as patrons are often able to read a second language easier than speak it; 2) take time to reflect on the question and provide a response tailored to the patron’s needs, or refer the question to a subject specialist librarian; 3) patrons weren’t limited to excessive phone time while librarian searched for the answer, or wait in line while librarian was working with other patrons. Patron feedback was received via a survey to those served via e-mail reference, and the user satisfaction rates were overwhelming. A major factor in the survey results noted that the e-mail response was referred to
several times by the patron, especially if links to tutorials or other help pages were provided. The most beneficial part of this article is the appendices, which include the “E-Mail Reference best Practices,” and the survey used.


A case study of collaboration between clinical nursing and library faculty to create course specific online library instruction modules. The project’s goals, process, and end products are explained. Included are the authors’ “lessons learned,” describing the group’s ongoing communication, the expertise each team member brought to the collaboration, and how the team decided which content to include.


The authors describe how the growth of both distance education and information technologies creates the potential for information overload for online students. To combat such an occurrence at the University of Central Florida’s online graduate certificate program in nonprofit management, the authors initiated a collaborative effort between librarians and the online faculty member. Team teaching the library component of the course and creating online library instruction modules that outline the library research process for students were the main focus of this collaboration. Positive feedback from students and the expansion of this
collaboration to other academic departments are evidence of this collaborative effort’s success.

This article presents the author’s “… research, discoveries, and experience with using WebCT Campus Edition and Vista, ePortfolios, and Wikis to deliver online information literacy instruction as part of fully online, Web–enhanced, or hybrid courses.” The article also provides models of librarian/classroom faculty partnership/collaboration.

In this handbook, the editors bring together research from 83 scholars representing over 15 countries from North America, Europe, South American, Asia, and Oceania. Where once “going to work” meant a physical destination with daily face-to-face collaboration with colleagues, the reality of today’s business community, certainly from a global perspective, is increasingly virtual. In their chapter, Florea, Rafeldt and Youngblood discuss the Nursing Information Literacy Program implemented at Three Rivers Community College “to assist nursing students in developing skills such as critical thinking and problem-solving, technological literacy, information literacy, and collaborative and cooperative learning.” The expectation is that others may use this program as a model for developing information literacy programs that can respond to the needs of the virtual work environment.

The authors discuss the results of an assessment of an online tutorial for finance students. While online tutorials utilizing streaming media software are increasing in use, the authors wanted to test the value of such tutorials compared to face-to-face instruction. In their study the authors tested student retention following a Value Line online tutorial session. Results demonstrated that while the tutorial received an overall positive rating from students there was a preference exhibited for face-to-face instruction, and only 30 percent of students were successful in meeting the learning objectives of the assignment. The authors’ conclusion is that
online instruction, while valuable, will, at least in the foreseeable future, not replace face-to-face library instruction.


The authors provide a comprehensive analysis for the use of online tutorials as a replacement for or supplement to basic research skills in library instruction classes. Examples of how online tutorials are used by the authors, assessment of student feedback, and working collaboratively with colleagues to ensure the tutorials are designed to meet undergraduate learning styles will provide readers ideas on how to implement online library tutorials to their student population.


The author provides background of two types of online tutorials used in her library in which “Tutorial A” uses multiple assessment methods while “Tutorial B” does not have its own assessment and only provides an overview of how to use a business database. To assess the effectiveness of “Tutorial B” the author relies on COUNTER data to report the number of times the database is accessed. The article becomes an advertorial for the use of COUNTER and its efficacy to assess instructional programs.

The William E Harrah College of Hotel Administration (Hotel College) at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) has a large distance education population to serve. The college created virtual focus groups to find out if the subject guides were an effective substitute for face-to-face instruction. The article discusses how to create focus groups and how the feedback from the groups can be used to increase effectiveness of subject guides.


At the University of Tennessee Health Sciences Library and Biocommunications Center, librarians are creating online tutorials to show patrons how to access and use the library’s electronic resources. This article describes their process of and experience with creating the tutorials, including the evaluation process.

Guillot, L., Stahr, B., & Meeker, B. J. (2010). Nursing faculty collaborate with embedded librarians to serve online graduate students in a consortium setting. *Journal of Library & Information Services in Distance Learning, 4*(1), 53-62. doi:10.1080/15332901003666951

This article discusses “a collaborative model for providing cost-effective online library services to new graduate students in a three-university consortium”. The universities educate nursing students in a completely online environment. Through the courseware management systems, students can access a health science librarian that has been embedded into the software. There are recommendations for faculty and librarians who are interested in this model.


In this article, Indiana University participated in a pilot project to create screencasts for their distance students. The purpose of the screencasts is to assist students with the university’s resources. Development for visual learners, application and capability of screencasts was also discussed. Hines, S. S. (2008). How it's done: Examining distance education library instruction and assessment.


The author argues that the Internet poses a threat to teacher-librarians by undermining information literacy skills through: the false assumption that all information can be found on the web; information overload; and that Internet research is a stand-alone process. Teachers can also use the Internet and their own Intranet independently of the teacher-librarian. Technology provides an opportunity if the teacher-librarian clearly defines their purpose and role. The teacher-librarian can ensure their expertise is valued by proactively serving as an expert on web searching, organizing information, and developing Web sites.


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This article reports on a survey conducted of 143 institutions to obtain data on how their libraries provide instruction for their distant populations. The author wanted to determine if libraries provide instruction, and how that instruction is provided and assessed. Demographic data from the libraries was compared to their instruction and assessment. The authors’ assumption that large libraries would provide more instruction that smaller libraries with lesser budgets proved less significant factors
than the efforts of individual librarians. Results included that libraries are supporting their distance populations but are not assessing their services.


This article addresses U.S. stock market behavior after World War II. The authors argue that a major technological development causes the stock market to become temporarily undervalued. In particular, the authors look at the arrival of information technology and show that older, more established companies active in the stock market were not ready to make use of these new developments—as a result, their value fell.


The authors of the article address the role of technology in promoting information literacy and discuss research, best practices, and resources that can help library instruction accommodate these new technologies. Some particular technologies addressed in the article include e-books to develop reading skills, desktop publishing to support writing skills, and online tools that can help students evaluate web-based information. The article also includes challenges educators may encounter when implementing these technologies in the classroom, as well as the points of view of some educators who question the value of technology in reading instruction.

The author has interviewed Professor Michael Scheuermann, Distance Learning and Faculty Development Consultant at Drexel University about how he uses librarians as TA’s in his classes. This enables the librarian to contribute to the class and develop a rapport with students, enabling them to do better research. This allows the professor to focus on the class, not teaching about the library. This type of co-working environment has been very beneficial for the students in that they now have someone to work with in the library and are aware of the resources that can help them with their studies. The interview ends with other possible activities such as participating in departmental meetings at all levels and developing stronger ties with professors.


In this study of Master’s degree students, one class was given a pre-test prior to instruction and feedback was shared with the students. The second class received no pre-rest and both classes took tests after receiving instruction. Students who took the pre-test scored better on the post-test and “reported greater library/research experience and less reliance on browsing”.


The author looks at how the use of Learning Management Systems (LMS) has grown in the last seven years. She also discusses how LMS have ignored or circumvented libraries by various means and ignoring the resources libraries can provide. The article discusses many good ideas of including the library through working with the LMS group on campus, professor, and liaison programs. The article concludes that libraries and librarians should be aware of or working outside of the library for the benefit of students.

After surveying 517 new items on library instruction and information literacy, the authors highlighted useful resources for Academic, Public, School, and Special librarians. In 2008 Web 2.0 was a prominent subject of teaching, as well as a tool for teaching, literacy. Other new themes included the impact of cognitive development, American Association of School Libraries Standards, social theories, and self-perception on those receiving information literary instruction.


This article discusses the book "Exploring the Digital Library: A Guide for Online Teaching and Learning," by Kay Johnson and Elaine Magusin. Part of the *Online Teaching and Learning* series, this book teaches how to “develop digital libraries, design electronic course reserves, create information literacy tools, and provide other library services essential to high-quality higher education online.”


The author talks about libraries and librarians needing to see their webpage from the view of the student. Making it clear to students the hours, policies, forms, etc. and that they are easily located and clearly defined. The problems facing many libraries still are: how to provide services to distance learners at the same level as on-campus learners. Libraries need to address the problems of providing new services to students including bibliographic instruction, research resources and other needed tools all in a seamless information environment. The article includes a survey taken
by librarians at different types of libraries and how they meet the needs of their students.


In the context of high school online learning, the authors described components of successful distance education. The design of a course, training of instructors, and characteristics of an exemplary student are unique to the online environment. The authors recommend hybrid classes that blend online and face-to-face interactions to acclimate high school students to the new online learning environment.


Using Live Classroom software from Wimba, Regent University Library offers library workshops for its online students. This article examines students’ comments regarding the strengths and weaknesses of online workshop and discusses the use of online synchronous workshops in the future.


Today’s information is being created and shared in Web 2.0. Librarians, particularly school librarians, need to be active participants as this medium dominates information sharing for young people.


This case study follows the development of a university research course from proposal to 6 years in to its actual implementation. The Information Research and Resources (IRR) course (required for all entering Regent university students except law students) represents a fifteen hour course that was developed for in-person as well as distance delivery via the Blackboard course management system. The authors outline the course’s modules, assessment strategies, modifications over time, and highlight problems, lessons learned, and the conclusions that may be drawn from their experiences.


The authors use a case study, the development of a new community college satellite campus (and its associated distance learning students) as a context to drive discussion about the tools and practice needed to initiate streaming video content. To answer questions about just how to develop rich library services via streaming video, the authors focus on two areas of thrust: Planning & Production and
Technical Requirements. The focus in this article is clearly on best practices. The authors provide a link to the videos produced as part of the case study.


enGauge, a framework authored by the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL), outlines factors that are critical to the effective use of new ICT tools to support learning in schools. In this article NCREL authors extend their existing framework toward looking at the types of competencies students must possess in order to participate fully in the age of information. The authors use an integrative literature review methodology to arrive at what they refer to as enGauge 21st Century Skills. This publication represents a kind of “white paper” that defines new information and communication technology (ICT)-associated literacies, attitudes, and practices.


The authors look at the library’s use of web-conferencing to work with online-only classes, one-shot sessions, as well as to supplement library instruction sessions. Assessment results have been compiled from students using surveys and debriefings. The article addresses the following questions: is Web conferencing a viable option for distance students in online only classrooms, and do faculty and students benefit from this type of instruction?


With the increase of students utilizing online courses, librarians are challenged to maintain visibility in the online world. The author suggests approaches for librarians to connect with their online community. These suggestions consist of
coaching students face-to-face service, as well as within a learning network, where librarians co-teach online courses alongside educators.


The author extends the previous research identifying core competencies implemented as a strategy and proposes a model that discriminates between these core competencies by examining associated concepts similarities and differences. An exploratory study was conducted through a variety of methods, including surveys, meeting records and archive documents. The author’s model advances the knowledge and management of core competencies.


Because more and more students are taking classes online, libraries need to create instructional content that serves these students. This article looks at the design and implementation of online research tutorials at Kansas State University.


This article discusses the efforts by librarians at Central Missouri State University (CMSU) in taking on the role of co-instructors of online courses. In 1999, the first “embedded” librarian in a nursing course via Blackboard was initiated by nursing subject library liaison, Mollie Dinwiddie. The article describes how Dinwiddie was instrumental in eventually creating her own Blackboard library for her subject areas and how this practice successfully continues to this day with other librarians at CMSU.

*Distance Education Report, 11*(2), 4-7. Retrieved from

http://www.magnapubs.com/newsletter/story/1038/

Through the Inclusive Libraries Initiative, three organizations in Canada (Athabasca University, Northeast Community Board for Persons with Developmental Disabilities, and the Libraries Branch of Alberta Community Development) worked to “find ways to attract and serve patrons with disabilities”. Much of what they found, including “Building an Inclusive Library”, can be applied to serving distance education students.


This is a study to assess the quality and effectiveness of an online citation tutorial, *APA Exposed: Everything You Always Wanted to Know About APA Format but Were Afraid to Ask*. Created by a team that consisted of research and instruction librarians, learning specialists and a professor, this tutorial teaches students to properly cite sources. In order to assess the tutorial a mixed research methods model was used that combined an online survey, website traffic tracking software, email and a Google search. The article analyzes and reports the findings of the study, which indicate “a need for high-quality online citation instruction and that the tutorial meets this need”.


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The authors look at the various aspects of gaming, including characteristics of “gamers, motivational and engaging aspects of digital games”, and the parallels between gaming and finding information. Furthermore, the article discusses how to include gaming techniques into the library classroom.


The success of online courses depend on active student participation with both the instructor and other students. The authors took the approach of drawing on the methods, philosophy and content of the main stream, ensuring the students were IT literate, asking questions that were important to the course of study and structured to encourage free and open debate, and allowing unhindered debate.


doi:10.1300/J111v45n0301

The article reviews literature on distance library instruction and looks at the various teaching methods that distance librarians used covering the 1980’s – 2000’s. It also compares instruction services at a large American University and a large Caribbean University.


The 2002 Conference Proceedings on the Connected Classroom include keynote speaker Dr. Cooper’s PowerPoint presentation on the intersection of learning and technology with chaos. There are 21 papers in Track 1: Effective Integration of Technology into Teaching & Learning. The presenters and authors cover such online education topics as best practices; collaboration; the role of student personality; information literacy; GIS; online issues and solutions involving a lack of computer skills, cheating, motivation, interaction, and workload; video production; student surveys; special needs students; and faculty ownership of IT initiatives.
Track 2: Technology Tools for Use in the Classroom contains 4 papers on an online graduate course, streaming video, virtual reality, and IT’s help desk.


SUNY Plattsburgh Dean Oberman spoke to the elements needed for a successful information literacy program which requires an entire institution’s support. She focuses on the Best Practices Initiative which calls for collaboration and is testing theory to guide practice. What criteria are necessary? Phase I dealt with ideal characteristics of Best Practices, set in ten categories. The paper centers on the librarian-as-teacher. Oberman identifies knowledge of the curriculum, collaboration with department faculty rather than personal relationships, and aligning with a department’s pedagogy as significant factors. Phase II dealt with librarian, faculty, and administrator teams who specified best practices in information literacy programs at their institutions. The Final Phase will describe model programs and disseminate that information in graduate library schools, immersion programs, and professional development.


Research in cognitive psychology and education and its applications in designing library screencasts and multimedia tutorials are used to discuss and provide guidelines for effective use of streaming multimedia tutorials in academic library instruction. Cognitive psychology research requires that multimedia tutorials need to minimize cognitive load and simplify content. Research on effective online instruction indicates that best practices encourage interactivity and control, student engagement and feedback, and promotes critical thinking. Guidelines are summarized in a checklist that can be used for designing and creating streaming multimedia tutorials.

The article focuses on the embedded librarian model, which allows the librarian to be part of the course as an assistant instructor. The embedded librarian pilot project at Daytona Beach College, where a librarian was embedded in one of the BAS online courses, is described. Issues related to student responses, student success, librarian-faculty collaboration, the embedded librarian’s time commitment, and future planned changes are discussed.


The article describes the collaboration between a librarian and a chemistry professor at developing a web tutorial intended to teach evaluation of web information to students taking the “Chemistry in Daily Life” course. The tutorial, based on the ACRL’s *Information Competency Standards for Higher Education* Standard 3, includes a library assignment. Research literature in regard to designing web tutorials, effective library instruction, and student online behavior is discussed. A section of the article is dedicated to analyzing students’ use of the tutorial and learning outcomes.


This literature review compares library services for distance learners with those offered for traditional learners and concludes that many library services offered to distance students are largely equivalent to library services for traditional students. The literature indicates that, in order to respond to the evolving information needs of students, librarians need to answer questions in regard to the type of information resources used by students, types of resources that students consider important, and the way students perceive different sources of information.
Students experience difficulty choosing best research tools and do not feel confident about searching catalogs and library databases because of the controlled vocabulary which can be frustrating to use. Convenience is the most prevalent reason for selecting a source and students stick with resources that are familiar. Many students do not really understand the difference between the catalog and article databases. When creating problem-based information literacy tutorials, librarians need to consider higher order thinking skills: comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. In regard to distance learning information literacy instruction, the importance of collaboration in areas such as environment, partners, communication, teaching, assessment, and challenges/opportunities is emphasized. The literature also indicates that online library services such as obtaining a student ID/Library card or the existence of a manual of distance student library services are important.

Other successful ways of serving online students are embedding links to library materials in online course platforms, embedding librarians in online courses, or regular assessment and evaluation of library services for distance learners. Document delivery allows libraries to offer online students similar services that are offered to face-to-face students. The literature also emphasizes the importance of adequate funding and support for supporting distance learning programs.


The article provides an overview of the administrative philosophy and guidelines for online library services and discusses established and emergent best practices and strategies. The guidelines are based on the ALA *Guidelines for Distance Library Learning Services* and support equitable access to library services regardless of the patrons’ proximity to the physical library. Traditional library services are offered in different formats. While reference services are provided via e-mail, toll-free number, chat, or Web inquiry forms, instruction services are offered through online tutorials, teleconferencing, or discussion forums. The role of the online librarian is expanding and new skills are needed such as technological expertise for online research, and web design skills. As the Internet technology transformed library interactions, administrators need to rethink and improve service models in order to address the change from the one-on-one model to the online juggling of multiple patrons simultaneously. Electronic
communication data can be collected in order to inform staffing, scheduling decisions, and collection development.

Some strategies to improve online library services for post-secondary learners in order to address the demand for anytime, anyplace learning are suggested:

a. Integration of information literacy skills into the course content by providing links to library resources in the course management system emphasizing that the learner is expected to use the library resources
b. Creation of course-specific web pages and management of thread discussions in the Discussion forum
c. Management of user awareness and efficient access of library online resources.


The article examines research data on academic library user preferences related to five communication media (paper-based pamphlet, 2D webpage, 3D immersive GUI, and graphic representations) used to offer two forms of library instruction, physical library layout and information literacy topics. A survey was applied to forty-two participants. The research findings indicate that the 2D webpage was the preferred communication medium and that the 3D immersive GUI received considerable preference and evidence to support further research on its use for information literacy instruction. Data analysis also shows lack of preference for audio-only communication medium. Future research on using digital gaming for library instruction will continue.


The nursing librarian at Michigan State University describes her experience at creating, promoting, and assessing library tutorials for nursing students. The tutorial topics were selected based on essential library resources, research skills, frequently asked questions, and faculty recommendations. Camtasia was selected as the screen recording software. The author presents the use of the Power-Point plug-in, the Timeline, the Zoom-n-Pan, and the callout feature as
Camtasia tools and techniques. The tutorials were promoted through web pages, inside ANGEL course management system, on blogs, and emails. Tutorial surveys were placed in Camtasia and in ANGEL and the majority of respondents found the tutorials helpful. Future plans in regard to additional tutorials, improving promotion and tutorial assessment are presented.


The authors describe a model at Indiana University-Purdue University at Fort Wayne (IPFW) where librarians developed short scripts covering reference services, online resources, and document delivery options for distance students by using MediaSite Live on a CD-ROM. The CD-ROM evolved into an online version.

The article also describes the embedding of a library component, “Ask a Librarian”, in an Intermediate Expository Writing online course. The library module had two instructional components: a pre-recorded series of mini-lectures and a discussion forum. The student survey demonstrated that the project was a success. The discussion forum proved to be an effective and efficient means to conduct library instruction for distance learners. The following year a tutorial on how to link to full-text articles was attached to the lectures. The results of a new student survey demonstrated similar results, but the participation in the discussion forum dropped. The drop was explained by the lessening of the instructor involvement in the forum. It is concluded that students’ perception of instructor participation determines how students perceive the library instruction session. The “Ask a Librarian” project is an evolving model for faculty and librarian collaboration at IPFW. The challenges that librarians face are updating the WebCT library component to reflect the changes on the library’s website, new resources and services, and managing the time devoted to working with online students.


This article describes the implementation of the chat reference service, the Instant Librarian, at the University of Buffalo libraries and how librarians incorporate active learning strategies and promote self-directed learning within a positive online learning environment. The service addresses the needs of patrons comfortable with instant messaging and sharing files over the Internet and who would not normally come into the library for assistance. Besides describing the methodology used to setting up a library chat reference, the authors discuss new ways to promote active learning in a virtual setting.

Virtual reference provides opportunities for teaching moments when librarians can teach about selecting keywords, formulating a search phrase, and how to access the full text of the citations. The authors suggest different techniques to address the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education when providing chat reference services. The user surveys show that users value quick, helpful answers and the ability to obtain help from any location.


The brief article reveals how an English professor and embedded librarian team teach an online course. Klinger and Lau work virtually as they are on different campuses. They highlight distinct benefits to themselves and their students. They enumerate these advantages: course feedback and improved design, mutual training in technological challenges within the LMS, accessible research support for students via IM and chat, and a better understanding of assignments and course pacing.

The article examines library services awareness and the needs of faculty offering online courses. The discussion is based on a survey administered to faculty at the University of North Texas (UNT) in order to improve and offer new library services and to determine other ways the UNT Libraries can support faculty teaching online.

The findings showed that faculty were very interested in having a librarian in the classroom and that the role of librarians in online education is to provide library resources, offer instruction in using databases and indexes, and offer information literacy (how to effectively find and utilize information). Faculty also stated that students experienced some to considerable difficulty in locating library information. In regard to student issues with finding information, most faculty stated that students do not know how to search library-provided journal article databases and rely on Google and other non-library websites for information. Other faculty responded that students are not aware of library resources and that they do not know how to evaluate the quality of a resource.

Faculty’s suggestions for other library resources and services included training sessions, improving tutorials for library resources, and updating librarian-created course web pages. The survey results emphasize that a major issue seems to be a lack of awareness of library services, a problem that could be solved by more aggressive marketing of these services through liaison librarians, including links in courseware, enhancing collaboration with CDL, improving the usability of the library website and databases, and adding to the functionality of the distance learners' page. There was also interest in having the library be more than a source of information for students and move into instructing them.


The article describes the use of electronic course reserves for providing information literacy instruction to the first-year students at the University of Florida. After a literature review regarding the use of course reserves and courseware for library instruction purposes, the authors discuss about overcoming difficulties existent at a large university by creating specifically targeted information literacy activities and placing them into the electronic course reserves for students to complete before attending the library instruction sessions. The electronic reserves system used is Docutek. Some of the advantages of using course reserves are accessibility, ease of use, and ease of content modification. The authors describe the design of the Scholarly versus Popular and the Keywords assignments. Future plans include improving communication with faculty and devoting more time to training the instructors.

The article discusses web-based interactive tutorials as tools for providing library instruction to distance learning students. The author analyzes and evaluates tutorials designed for remote library users such as “Dudley Knox Library Orientation” (Naval Postgraduate School), “Online Library Learning Center” (University of Georgia), “InfoTrekk” (Curtin University of Technology, Australia), and “Safari” (Open University, United Kingdom), along with other library web pages and guides for online learners. The author concludes that advances made in general online library tutorials have not been implemented in creating specialized tutorials for distance students. Online tutorials seem to work well for introductory library instruction and information literacy training if they have active learning components. Further research in regard to the effectiveness of tutorials would be helpful for librarians serving distance learners.


The article describes the findings of a survey of 372 online library tutorials, discusses current technologies used in creating information literacy online tutorials, and recommends useful technological tools for developing state-of-the-art and successful library online tutorials. The survey identified the types of tutorials used in academic libraries such as database tutorials, general and introductory tutorials, subject specific tutorials, library-related tutorials, application or software tutorials, and technological approaches tutorials. The author recommends the use of Common Gateway Interface (CGI) scripts, Flash technology, and prepackaged tutorials for creating interactive, multimedia, and game-like high quality tutorials. Examples and links to online tutorials created with each of these technologies are offered.

Based on an online survey and a literature review, the article provides an examination of best practices for embedded librarians seeking to enhance services to online students through a course management system. Best practices for embedded librarians are:

a. Knowing the campus course management system and its administrators
b. Getting a library link in the course management system
c. Going beyond the library link and getting directly involved in individual courses
d. Recruiting help and avoiding become overextended
e. Being strategic with course selection and time
f. Being an active participant in the class
g. Marketing the embedded librarian service.

Best practices point to the importance of collaboration among librarians, teaching faculty, CMS administrators, and instructional designers.


Library Information Science (LIS) lacks a holistic, integrated professional development model for blended environments. The article presents a classroom community of practice (CoP) model for blended learning designed for a “Reference & Online Services” course at St. Catherine University. The development of the model was based on blended learning, constructivist and social constructivist learning, adult learning, and communities of practice theories.

The CoP framework allows the use of the integrated model of inquiry learning and social learning within the context of professional community building. For the online component of the blended learning model the librarian used Moodle as the course management software, a wiki, PBworks, and a chat widget, Yaplet, embedded in the wiki page. The face-to-face component included lectures with Socratic questioning, simulations, and encouraged discussions and problem solving, group work, and student reflections on personal philosophy related to the subject.
The learning outcomes of the CoP model such as acquiring core LIS concepts, practices, values, and leadership skills, as well as preparing students to work in blended environments, are analyzed. Implications for further research are considered.