

LOEX 2010 Attendance Report

April 29-May 1, 2010
Dearborn , MI

I begin this report by thanking LIBRAS for providing the funding that made my attendance possible. As an attendee and presenter at LOEX, I continually find a wealth of new ideas and inspiring librarians at this conference. In addition to my position at Columbia College, I also teach as an adjunct in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, Dominican University. I am always eager to learn more about instruction, teaching and learning theory, and practical and novel applications for teaching. LOEX provided many such opportunities. Due to the current financial climate affecting higher education, travel funding for professional development is difficult. By making this opportunity available to librarians in LIBRAS, continuing education is possible for many librarians who wish to participate. Thank you again for providing this opportunity.

Opening Plenary – The Value of Teaching in Learning

Dr. Brian P Coppola (University of Michigan)

Using an example from his own undergraduate education Dr. Coppola discussed the impact of two very different styles of teaching and learning on his own pedagogy. Dr. Coppola explained the style of teaching used in his undergraduate Chemistry class was one that was a strictly convergent and contrasted this with his experience in an undergraduate Art class, where the divergent teaching styles were used. In Art class, Dr. Coppola was asked to “draw feet” – a metaphor he used consistently. After the first few weeks the students in the Art class would explain what they saw in their colleagues work – in effect teaching each other.

Since that time, Dr. Coppola has endeavored to recreate this divergent teaching style in his Chemistry classroom. By creating Structured Study Groups students, self-identified and highly motivated, were able to assume the roles of teachers and mentors, in addition to that of student. The students in these SSGs created supplementary materials outside of class that supported student learning for everyone. By creating the materials themselves, the students were put in the position to teach it – one of the best motivators to learn something.

Dr. Coppola’s examples (available at <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~bcoppola/teaching/index.html>) provide additional support for the role of active and collaborative learning in higher education. Finding ways to adapt and apply his innovations – and those of the other conference presenters – is always the challenge after attending LOEX.

Breakout Sessions:

Ask This Librarian: Integrating Library Tools into the Online Learning Environment

Molly Beestrup and Kerri Willette (Columbia College Chicago)

Presentation:

http://www.lib.colum.edu/services/faculty/embed/share/LOEX2010/LOEX_slides.html

Kerri Willette and I presented on a project we undertook in 2009 to enhance and build on a project begun by our predecessors at Columbia College to embed library resources in the students' academic home – the LMS. Using a variety of tools – from LibGuides to deliver the research guide and course guide content, to Library H3lp to deliver the live Chat option, to a php library to generate custom links, to search boxes for the catalog and select library databases – we built an enhanced widget that faculty could easily add to their course pages in either LMS used on our campus. We also worked with four faculty course partners to pilot course-specific research guides and included assessment of the widgets and guides into this program. The final piece of the project was to market the service to faculty across campus. The marketing efforts are ongoing, but have been more successful through the instruction program with faculty that already incorporate the library into their courses.

INFORMATION LITERACY: Taking the “I” Out of Instruction

Suzanne Hinnefeld (Goshen College), Tiffany McGregor (Neumann University), and Julie Zamostny (Hood College), and two remote presenters from Utah State University and Johnson and Wales University.

A panel of librarians that participated in ACRL's Immersion Program presented on some of the methods they incorporated into their teaching after attending the Teacher Track. Three presenters were present and two additional presenters sent along video presentations about their innovative techniques.

Goshen College Library created an interactive orientation program for new students – a Groove-In, a 1969 themed day with limericks, prizes and passbooks. At Johnson and Wales University, the librarian created a Jeopardy style game using Clickers in the classroom. Students competed against each other in small groups and argued about the correct answers, displaying a level of engagement seldom seen in the library instruction classroom. An instruction librarian at Hood College integrated role-playing techniques to better reach an ESL class. She posed a controversial – and student-focused – question about social networks getting students into trouble on college campuses. The role-play scenario had students placed in a courtroom with the students acting as attorneys for either the plaintiff or the defendant. The librarian created dossiers beforehand with an explanation of the case, possible starting points for research, and suggestions for search terms. The majority of class time was used as a discovery period with the trial as the last 20 minutes. The students presented opening arguments, evidence, rebuttal and discussion. The librarian was pleased with the outcome and felt that she was better able to engage ESL students in a way that would “stick.”

The final two examples were from librarians who used Problem-Based Learning. One of the presenters, from Utah State University, was not physically present but sent along a video explaining the background of PBL, and its application to a first-year English composition class. The librarian from Neumann University expanded on the efficacy of PBL (with statement that resonated with me), “the canned stuff belongs in the garbage can.” Her point being, that using examples and topics from the students are far more beneficial – and engaging – than using pre-planned examples. She emphasized the importance of allowing for hands-on experience and paired brainstorming for keywords as additional methods of engagement as well.

Building Bridges: Restructuring Online Library Tutorials to Span the Generation Gap and Meet the Needs of Millennial Students

Dianna E. Sachs, Kathleen Langan, and Carrie Leatherman (Western Michigan University)

Librarians at Western Michigan University undertook a major revision of their online library tutorial to better reach Millennial students. For several years, WMU had been using a customized version of SearchPath, from the University of Texas’ TILT tutorial. This tutorial, while award winning in its time, is less inviting to the current generation of college students, the Millennials. After examining the learning styles of this generation of students, they worked for several years to put the technical infrastructure in place to create the updated tutorials, and then worked for several months creating the content, recording the audio, and evaluating the final product – ResearchPath. They have assessed the new tutorial in comparison to the previous version through a variety of evaluation tools, including: student surveys, focus groups, comparative quiz results, and research projects. Their assessment efforts revealed that students not only liked the new version of the tutorial better, but that they also performed better on the quizzes. Students that completed either tutorial performed research projects of higher quality than those in the control group who received no instruction and did not complete the tutorial. The data collected for the assessment reflects a small number of students, but evaluation efforts are ongoing.

Universal Design for Information Literacy

Elizabeth Dolinger (Landmark College) and Ted Chodock (College of Southern Nevada)

Presentation: <http://prezi.com/tiidhr2f5nfu/universal-design-for-information-literacy/>

The content of this session was an excellent reminder that students with a variety of learning styles – and challenges – attend our sessions every day. Universal design for instruction suggests that, “products and environments are to be useable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or special design.” (Ron Mace) While the focus of this session was to address the needs of students with learning disabilities, like dyslexia, and psychological disorders, like ADHD, the take away was that teaching in a way that applies to these learners actually benefits all learners. As Dolinger said in the presentation, “The average student is fictional. Your teaching should be inclusive enough of all learning styles of reach everyone. If it benefits one, it may benefit many others.” According to the presenters,

Universal Design demands the use of active learning. They outlined nine principles for Universal Design in Library Instruction:

1. Equitable use
2. Flexibility in use
3. Simple and intuitive
4. Perceptible information
5. Tolerance of error
6. Low physical effort
7. Size and space for approach and use
8. A community of learners
9. Instructional climate

(Scott, S., Shaw S., & McGuire, J. (2002) Principles of UDI.

http://www.facultyware.uconn.edu/UDI_principles.htm)

A Librarian and a Hashtag: Embedded Virtually in a Classroom via Twitter

Ellen Hampton Filgo (Baylor University)

A fascinating example of embedding a librarian into a classroom in real-time via Twitter. Fligo worked with a professor of a New Media Studies Seminar for first-year students. While not physically present in the classroom, Fligo followed the Twitter backchannel discussion in real-time while making suggestions for articles, books, websites, youtube videos, and other sources to enhance the classroom discussion and student research. Fligo described the process as “library jazz” – interpreting the direction of the discussion as it played out via tweets. She also blogged along with the students, and helped them gather resources for a final project. While this example was well-suited to this class and this instance, Fligo suggested several possible options for scalability and emphasized the transformative affect her virtual presence had on the students in the class.