Creating Connections in Digital Spaces: Teaching information literacy skills to online students

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How many of you work at an institution that offers online classes?

How many of you have taught an online class or created material that was used by another professor in an online class?

How many of you have taken an online class?

When you were an online student, did you find it engaging? What were some of the things you found to be particularly engaging?
5.5 million

students in the U.S. taking at least one distance education class as of Fall 2012

Common themes

• Students given ability to make choices and incorporate own interests (autonomy)
• Students as creators of information (empowers, builds confidence)
• Practical, tied to community/real world (scholarship in action)
• Collaboration and joint creation
• Benefiting from seeing work from and feedback of peers
• Personalization: being your authentic self as an instructor
ACRL Information Literacy Framework, Threshold concepts

- Authority Is Constructed and Contextual
- Information Creation as a Process
- Information Has Value
- Research as Inquiry
- Scholarship as Conversation
- Searching as Strategic Exploration

Experience of doing things (knowledge practices) and the development of habits of mind (dispositions)
One effective way to combat the pedantic stance is to arrange for weekly confrontations of groups of students over their own papers. **We have done far too little experimenting with arrangements for providing a genuine audience in this way.** Short of such developments, it remains true that a good teacher can convince his students that he is a true audience, if his comments on the papers show that some sort of dialogue is taking place.

- Wayne C. Booth, 1963
MGMT 600: Practical Research Methods for Managers

• Online role evolved out of in-person “one shots”
• Librarian invited to participate in curriculum revision
• Two modules address secondary research and information literacy
  o Librarians serve as “guest instructors”
  o Librarians participate in discussions
DF 3 Charting Library Research Methodology

Review the example formats for recording library searches provided by Desilets and by Johnson (Mod 3 Readings). The information recorded on such forms can be helpful during a search process and when writing a research report.

Information about where the searching occurred, combinations of search terms, search parameters, and results allows the searcher to refine promising . . .

DF3 Charting Library Research Methods
Not only did the collaboration add librarian expertise to the course, but it added a fresh "voice" to the instruction and...reduced barriers that might exist between students and librarians. You became more accessible to more students.

-Larry Selin, MGMT 600 Instructor
INFS 338: Books and Publishing

- Students create questions in a Reddit guest AMA style
- “Real world” expert guest introduces a new type of “authority” than professor/librarian
- Multiple perspectives/diversity of opinion
- Questions and responses reflect where learners are at
Margret Aldrich is a writer and book editor who has worked with authors from American Indian activist Winona LaDuke to punk-rock guitar legend Cheetah Chrome. She spent a decade at the nonfiction publisher Voyageur Press and three in the intellectual property office at Princeton University Press. She is also a former editor, blogger, and librarian at Utne Reader, a magazine celebrating the best of the alternative press. Based in Minneapolis, Margret is a producer at BringMeTheNews as well as a devoted Little Free Library owner. Her book about Little Free Libraries—and how they spark community, literacy, and creativity around the world—was published by Coffee House Press in April 2015.
The online course allowed me to visit the classroom without any disruption to my schedule—it's unlikely I could have visited the class in person. I liked that the online format gave everyone an opportunity to contribute to the discussion and gave them time to be thoughtful and meaningful with their comments.

-Margret Aldrich, guest expert
1. I’d say that the internet is the best AND the worst change to the industry!

For editors, the internet has made things so, so much easier—we’re able to contact writers virtually and research topics online. I remember going to the Central Library downtown to hunt down little details when fact-checking a manuscript or calling the library “hotline” with factual questions.

However, a little of the romance of publishing and print books has been lost with email and e-books. Five years ago, there was a huge scare that ebooks and self-publishing would make traditional publishing obsolete. That has now turned around—it looks as though print books are starting to be coveted more than ever now.

2. There are Little Free Libraries all over the world that include books in many different languages.

What I see in my own LFL and others I’ve visited in the United States is that people contribute books in other languages. A community garden LFL in New York is especially good at this. I regularly include kids’ books that feature both English and Spanish text in mine.

Some people also have “themed” LFLs on a specific topic—gardening books, kids’ books, or a specific language, like Spanish. I’d love to see an Anishinaabe or Hmong LFL in the Twin Cities.
Instead of seeking discrete answers to complex problems, experts understand that a given issue may be characterized by several competing perspectives as part of an ongoing conversation in which information users and creators come together and negotiate meaning.

-ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, 2015
INFS 315: Searching for Information - Editing Wikipedia

- Students choose to individually or collaboratively edit one or more Wikipedia pages
- Edits range from fixing minor grammatical errors to adding information and/or citations to creating an entry
- Students share their experience via a discussion forum
- Information creation as iterative process
Farewell Continental

Farewell Continental is an American rock band from Minneapolis, Minnesota, formed in 2008. The group is the side project of Motion City Soundtrack frontman, Justin Pierre. The group also features keyboardist and vocalist Kari Gray, guitarist Thomas Rehbein, bassist Jim Adolphson and Josh McKay. They have released two EPs and a full-length LP through Paper + Plastick Records.

Contents

* History
* Tours
* Members

History [edit]

The group began as in 2007 consisting of Justin Pierre and Thomas Rehbein. Pierre was in the middle of recording the album, Even If It Kills Me with his other band, Motion City Soundtrack and decided to make something considerably less poppy. In early 2008, they added three additional members, Kari Gray, Jim Adolphson and Josh McKay to round out the lineup.

Tours [edit]

The group did a short tour in February of 2011 with The Jealous Sound, as well as a full US tour with Gold Motel in the summer of 2010.

Members [edit]

* Justin Pierre – vocals, guitar (2007–present)
* Kari Gray – vocals, keyboards (2008–present)
* Jim Adolphson – bass (2008–present)
* Josh McKay – drums (2008–present)
Thus, novice learners come to respect the expertise that authority represents while remaining skeptical of the systems that have elevated that authority and the information created by it.

Experts need to ... acknowledge biases that privilege some sources of authority over others, especially in terms of others’ worldviews, gender, sexual orientation, and cultural orientations.

-ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, 2015
I'll admit it; I started out with a bad attitude about this assignment...I humbly apologize...that was really fun. And once again, I was able to insert my interest in genealogy into an assignment to make it more relevant to my interests.

- Student response to editing Wikipedia

I think the issue of gender imbalance on Wikipedia makes me more likely to edit pages just because I don't think it'd be fair to the readers (audience) to get just the male perspective on a topic. But, I think if more female editors whether it be professors, doctors, or even college students like myself willingly participate in editing these wiki pages, it would create an even more diverse sense of community.

- Student response to editing Wikipedia
INFS 315: Book review & book talk

- Students selected a fiction or nonfiction book from a list on an information related topic
- Students reviewed the book on Goodreads (public site), and shared their reviews with each other
- Students recorded themselves giving a “book talk” using any device available to them and posted on YouTube
- Students had a sense of an authentic audience, (other students, instructor, and general public)
- Students are both consumers and creators of information
If you are looking for a book that is written in any form other than dry this is not the book for you. This book is written by Lori Andrews who is not only an author, but also a lawyer. She makes this book interesting with the various points she brings up, overall it is an easy read. I chose to read this book because I have always heard about how much of your privacy is destroyed by the things we post on Facebook and the various other websites. This book not only covers how our privacy is destroyed, but also about cyber bullying and much more.

Andrews’ main purpose of this book is to show just how our privacy is destroyed and how we don’t even realize it. She talks about a lot of scenarios where we don’t even realize we are giving away our privacy. She also uses examples of famous celebrities and how their privacy was destroyed and how they have used it to their advantage.
Experts recognize that information creations are valued differently in different contexts, such as academia or the workplace.

- ACRL Draft Info Lit Framework, 2014
I think the section that gave me the most enjoyment was the book talk and book review. The topics and book choices we were given were all very interesting and it actually got me to sit down and take some time for myself to actually read and enjoy what I was reading so I could learn from it. I’m sure most of you can relate when there is something to read that doesn’t interest you that it is harder to understand it so it makes it more difficult to want to read it.

- Student, INFS 315
INFS 315: Social Media Plan

- Three part group project:
  - Group charter
  - Investigation and literature review
  - Social media plan delivered to a “client”
- Identify a real small business or nonprofit “client”
- Initiate contact with “client”
- Research “client” and potential social media tools to utilize
- Develop social media plan and deliver it to the “client”
SOCIAL MEDIA PLAN

Proposed Social Media plan for the Southdale YMCA Before & After Program at Cedar Ridge Elementary School

Presented by:

Why Social Media?

In the past, messages and advertising were directed to customers and potential customers through television, radio, print, or, more recently,
I didn't realize all the aspects that went into making a social media plan for a business and all of the marketing tactics and etiquette that needed to be taken into account. In the future it will help me recognize techniques other companies use and hopefully help me in my profession in Public Relations. I really enjoyed the project!

-Student response to Social Media Plan assignment

I enjoyed the group assignment as well, especially since social media isn't something I use very much. Having to present the final paper to a real business is something that I've never had to do before and it really shows real world application.

-Student response to Social Media Plan assignment
I thought one of the best things about the discussions in this class was that I was able to share my thought and opinions on subjects. I think this really helped with learning and made this online class more like an in class environment.

-Student, INFS 315
I think that up until this point, despite being a long-time student and having read and written many papers, reviews, articles, etc., my research was alarmingly predictable and one-tracked. Through our examination of the many different aspects of information and many different mediums of information, my horizons have certainly been expanded. In writing and reading, I have always been more of a person who wants to get to the point, but I now see more value than ever in enjoying the journey part of research as opposed to being singularly focused on the destination.

-Student, INFS 315
The sterile classroom settings with little to no windows and artificial light do not resonate well with me. .... I am graduating and have spent many years memorizing/ attempting to retain information, reading books/blogs/articles that do not resonate with me, and feeling just generally frustrated and ready to be done. This class has reignited my passion for learning and helped me to seek out outlets that invite learning and knowledge transfer in less “traditional” settings.

-Student, INFS 315
Future directions

• Periscope?
• Other??
• Willingness to try
• Modeling behavior
Closing discussion

• General questions?
• What have you done that works?
• What are you going to try after this session?
Contact us

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Assignments and supporting material available at:
http://tinyurl.com/infolitonline

Look for our forthcoming book chapter in: Distributed Learning: Incorporating Online Options into Your Information Literacy Instruction (2016)


