Engaging in the Process: Perceived value of two IL instruction models

K. Jane Burpee
Judy Wanner

University of Guelph

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I realize just how much things have changed. And how much, as instruction librarians, our world is constantly in transition... As teachers, we place ourselves at the forefront, offering our services as guides through the constantly shifting plain of information. **We need to adapt our styles, rethink our methods, and explore the new possibilities offered by this new realm to stay fresh and relevant to our users**”

- Stephanie Michel, LIRT NEWS June 2004
What we will cover today:

- About the University of Guelph
- About the UG library and our ILP
- First Year Profile at UG
- About the 2 models of instruction:
  - BIOL 1030 and AGR 1100
- Our Study:
  - Questions we wanted to have answered
  - The study
  - Our findings and results
- Perspectives and new directions
About the University of Guelph

- Six colleges on main campus
  - Strong science programs
  - Only University in Ontario offering a degree in Agriculture
- We are growing: total enrolment on main campus is almost 17,000
- Learner-centered institution
- Research intensive campus+
- One main central library
- Culture of energy and enthusiasm for change, ideas, and innovation
UG First Year Profile, Fall 2003:

- **Incoming Students:**
  - Millennials
  - Bright, hard working
  - Competitive
  - Techno savvy,
  - Googlers
  - Goal oriented
  - Team oriented

- **Sex:**
  - Male 32%
  - Female 68%

- **Fulltime:** 99.45%
  - **Part time:** 0.55%

- **Age:**
  - 18 or younger = 15%
  - 19 = 75%
  - 20+ = 10%

- **White:** 89%

- **Average grade in High school:**
  - 80+ = 69%
  - 75-79 = 23%
  - Below 75% = 8%

- **Accessed the web in last year:**
  - Frequently 90%
  - Occasionally 10%
  - Never = 0%
The gaming generation want/expect…

- To be provided with more immediate feedback
- More multi-sensorial environments (audio, sound, video) that encourage active discovery
- To see the personal value and learning to engage them in more meaningful and rewarding activities – Will devote more effort
- To understand the broader benefits of learning concepts and procedures

Foreman, J. (July/ August 2003) NEXT-Generation: Educational Technology versus the lecture. EDUCAUSE
About the UG Library IL/Instruction Program

Goal = provide students the skills to identify, locate, evaluate and use information/library resources with a focus on independent, lifelong learning skill development and critical thinking

- Emphasis on active learning and creative approaches which address different learning styles
- Multi partnered whenever possible: TSS, Learning Commons, Writing services …
- 17 associates, 9+ liaison librarians, 1 manager
- Blend of in-house and course integrated instruction opportunities
- Team teaching, collaborative approach with faculty, librarians
The 2 DIY Models of Instruction

- **Both:**
  - Undergraduates
  - First year Experience
  - Large (2000 and 150)
  - Sciences
  - Student Centered
  - Focus on Active learning and group/team activity

- **BIOLOGY (no librarian present):**
  - Library Tours (physical)
  - Library Tutorials (on webct)
  - Library Quiz
  - Library Assignment (graded by TA’s)
  - Short Essay

- **AGRICULTURE (librarian led):**
  - Library Overview
  - Library Lab tutorials
  - Library Assignment (graded by TA’s)
  - Debates
  - Presentation and Report
This tutorial is designed to help you find library resources available at the University of Guelph which will assist you in researching your biology topic. The tutorial is broken into 3 modules:

- Module 1: Creating a Search Strategy
- Module 2: Finding Journal Articles
- Module 3: Using the Library Catalogue

You can search each module, one at a time, by using the arrow buttons at the top or bottom of this screen, or you can search individual topics or lessons of interest to you within each module by using the pull-down menus to the left. Note: each module takes about 5 minutes to complete. “Close any pop-up windows when you are finished with them.”

After completing the modules, take a quiz to test what you have learned by clicking on the biology quiz icon to the right.

If you are ready to start with Module 1, click the right arrow button now.

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TUTORIALS

**Your Research Strategy**
- Units (select one)

**Search Techniques**
- Units (select one)

**Finding Articles**
- Units (select one)
- Begin the module
- The difference between magazines & journals [3 min]
- What is an article index [1 min]
- Find an article index [1 min]
- Choose the right index for your topic [2 min]
- Why do some article indexes look so different [1 min]
- How to interpret the article index results [5 min]
- Find articles [4 min]
- Get an article from a journal that the UG library doesn't own [2 min]

To conduct research, a student needs to be able to identify a manageable research topic, to assess the nature of information required, and then to go out to find the information. Sounds simple? For some, perhaps. But most students develop effective research skills primarily with time and experience. In the meantime, students who are new to the task may benefit by exploring the following interactive tutorials. Invest a little time in learning research techniques.
The Study: The questions

- Information delivery: what worked and what didn’t?
- How importance was the librarians presence in the learning experience?
- What were the advantages and disadvantages of subject specific and generic tutorials?
- How would students improve our instruction is given the chance?
- What was the perceived value that the instruction and assignments added to the course they were taken and beyond, other courses and lifelong learning?
The Study - the logistics

- Human study required approval from the Office of Research and sign consent from the students and TA’s
- Food provided
- $100 $ draw incentive
- Anecdotal evidence to support positive learning outcomes
  - Directed but informal conversation, focus groups and interviews with students, course coordinators, TA’s for both courses
  - Analysis of the written feedback from the courses (1900 feedback questionnaires)
Information delivery: what worked and what didn’t?
BIOL - Students

- Without it I wouldn’t have known where to start researching my term paper.
- Had useful step by step with pictures, I am a visual person and the pictures of screens helps.
- I like being able to revisit the tutorial on WebCt whenever I needed to from my dorm.
- Would have been nice if there was a reference guide we could print for future.
- It wouldn’t have been done if it hadn’t been mandatory.

- It was boring, too long, time consuming, and stressful.
- It was effective but overwhelming, the amount presented was too much to digest at once.
- Gave an idea of how to get around but I prefer to learn on my own a few times.
- The library tutorial occurs too early in the semester. By the time we need the information it has been forgotten.
BIOL TA’s

- Students are lazy they can only handle small bits at a time. The tutorial could be broken down into smaller sections.
- There was too much information presented.
- The examples given are good but not interactive enough for student participation.
AGR Students

- Doing the tutorial and the assignment in the lab was great.
- The Assignment is the buy in factor.
- Marks were a good Incentive.
- It wasn’t interactive enough. The questions should be integrated into the sections and not at the end.
- The tutorial was too general it needs to be more specific to us.
- There was too much information presented and I just skipped over stuff.
  - The classroom setting was not as effective. I wanted to return and do the tutorial on my own when it suited me.
AGR TA’s

- Delivery in the lab was important and added significance to the tutorials.
- The fact that a grade was attached made students take it more seriously.
- Students working in groups or pairs.
- The fact that the librarian was there was good.

- As a TA, I did not think it was necessary to do the tutorials in advance. The librarian was there and besides, I already knew how to use the library.
How important was the librarians presence to the learning experience?
Not many people took the tutorial seriously. I don’t think it was useful to many students. An activity with TA supervision would encourage students to take library research more seriously.

Direct instruction would have been more helpful. There was no one to talk to in person. And ask questions… A computer can only be so helpful by itself.

It was useless. When I have questions I ask somebody at the help desk. It would be more helpful to go through information as a group in a class with someone there to help us.

It might work better for students to go to the library and do a search under direct supervision so that questions could be answered and help given directly.
BIOL TA’s

- No Comment as not an issue

How important was the lack of a librarians presence in the learning experience?
AGR Students

- The lab tutorial was helpful. Without some sort of guidance it would have been difficult to complete the term paper.
- I would prefer to be able to figure it out on my own

How important was the librarians presence to the learning experience?
AGR TA’s

- It is good to have the librarians but I am confident that I could answer the questions and help the students.
- As a grad student I should be able to do this role. The Librarians job can be given to the TA’s.
What were the advantages / disadvantages of subject / generic tutorials?

How useful was the instruction you received in this class to the course and to other courses?
BIOL Students

- Related only to Biology but overall it was helpful
- Helped in all my classes. I think every first year student should have to do it.
- Made me feel comfortable using library resources for all my classes.
- Helped with my History/ Geography/ Psychology/Engineering/Math class
Students

- Helped me plan my searches. It is hard to know where to start but this got me thinking.
- Was a great place to start. Without it I wouldn’t have a clue. We can always reference back to it if we run into problems or forget what we need to do next.
- Provided me with information I will be able to use in my future
- Was and will be helpful beyond this class
- Was beneficial to all my classes but perhaps it could be presented in a more interesting manner

What were the advantages / disadvantages of subject / generic tutorials?

How useful was the instruction you received in this class to the course and to other courses?
I enjoyed the tutorial because this is my first semester here at Guelph and I was quite intimidated by the library. It was all useful.

The tutorial/quiz made me comfortable using the library I am very glad it was a part of this course.

The tutorial/quiz was a strange expectation, what does it have to do with Biology? I didn’t like that it was included in the course grade.

The library tour was terrible, our TA was boring and she didn’t show us anything. I could have done that by myself.
Conclusions

- Overall feedback is positive
- Training must be designed around the curriculum needs and not the other way around
- Customized or tailor made not generic is the way to go but examples do not have to be subject specific?
- No single approach met all our needs
- Face to face introductory is necessary and necessary to round out an effective learning experience
- Students enjoyed the “doing”
- Students enjoyed learning at their own pace
- Students want more opportunities and avenues for getting help
- Content and delivery is good but “tweaking “ is still needed
- To be effective the tutorial really needs to be better embedded and attached to overall course objectives and larger assignments
- TA’s need to be better engaged and oriented to there role if we expect them to take a more active role in the learning experience
Perspectives and New Directions

- Plans for AGR 1100
  - TA orientation to the assignments and goal setting
  - Better integration of the library assignment to the course debates and assignments
  - Aligning learning activities more clearly aligned with the course key learning objectives
- Continued support needs for both faculty ta’s and students by the librarian
- Implement assessment

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Perspectives and New Directions

- Plans for BIOL1030
  - Revamped tours
  - Rewritten Lab manuals and tutorial based on feedback
  - Improved TA orientation
  - Aligning learning activities more clearly aligned with the course key learning objectives
  - Better integration of Research Help – VR on course WebCt website
- Continued support needs for both faculty ta’s and students by the librarian
- Implement assessment
  - BNN -

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Welcome to the Biology News Network e-zine. There are three issues of BNN all of which contain feature articles and regular sections. Select an issue using the issue keys found at the top or bottom of each page. We’ve rated the content using a three star system. We do suggest you read all articles as each article incorporates key concepts.

The issue buttons found at the top and bottom of each page will bring you back to the table of contents page for each issue. There is also a navigational tool, yellow bar above the title of each article, that indicates what path you have taken. You can also use this navigational bar to return to each page you have previously viewed. The back button will also bring you back to the previous page.

Once you have read issues 1, 2 & 3 there is a mastery quiz worth 2% of your final grade that you are responsible for completing. You will have three tries at scoring 80% on a quiz. If you are successful then you will receive the full 2%; if you are not successful then you will receive a mark of 0%.

There are self-assessment activities for you to complete which accompany different articles in the e-zine. Most self-assessment quizzes will be completed on the BNN pages. If you do need to go back to WebCT there is a link on each page but you will have to login again.

We here at BNN encourage you to give us feedback on what you liked, didn’t like, and what you want to see changed. There is an ANONYMOUS Feedback section, where you can tell us what you thought of the e-zine. Feel free to add comments as often as you like.

There is also a Reader Community. In this conference with your classmates, you can post or answer a question pertaining to the tutorial material. This conferencing community will also be monitored by a course teaching assistant (TA).
Overall Directions for ILP

- Develop More active tutorials and exercises which can be adapted for other FYE courses.
- Building skills across the curriculum
  - i.e. ENGG curriculum review: plans to improve IL learning objectives into each year of study: coordinate the same type of use of online tutorials to teach IL skills to Engineer students
Questions?

1. Does your institution use course integrated online information literacy instruction components which do not use a ‘live’ librarian?

2. Does your institution use course integrated hands on instruction which includes an active use of online tutorials?