2002 Fall Conference Report

Creating Information Literacy Programs

Conference summary by Board Member Sherry Young.

The Oklahoma ACRL Chapter held its fifth annual fall conference on October 25, 2002 at the Oklahoma City Community College campus.

Transforming TILT: Adapting an Information Literacy Tutorial
Elaine Jayne, Instructional Services Librarian at Western Michigan University

The conference's first presenter described how she directed a project that modified Texas Information Literacy Tutorial, or TILT, into Searchpath, a tutorial designed to improve upon TILT. Some goals of the TILT-to-Searchpath project were to shorten the page lengths, provide a direct and informal tone, and avoid the use of slang and library jargon. Ms. Jayne tried to make the product visually interesting through pleasing color schemes, color-coded modules, and by balancing the use of graphics and content.

Interactivity was important in order to help users learn by doing. Ms. Jayne incorporated into Searchpath interactive library online catalog searches. Although she hoped to incorporate interactive periodical abstract searches into the tutorial, she was unable to obtain permission to do so. Ms. Jayne would like to make additional use of interactive games, despite the fact that the software needed to do so can present problems for developers and users. Searchpath incorporates interactive quizzes designed to reinforce tutorial subject matter and provide proof of tutorial completion.

One major Searchpath change was to make some of the information accessible without use of Flash Player software. The problems with using this software are that not all users are able to access this product and some computers will be able to run it only very slowly.

The library purchased a product named "Survey Solutions," and the librarians have made this available to tutorial users in order to obtain feedback about the tutorial. The survey has not been available long enough to generate a sufficient amount of data to analyze.

Ms. Jayne was very complimentary of TILT's designers for creating an excellent product and for paving the way for the development of Searchpath.

Additional information is available at:
http://www.wmich.edu/library/searchpath
http://www.lib.vt.edu/istm/WebTutorialsTips.html

Information Literacy as Educational Transformation
Craig Gibson, Associate University Librarian for Public Services at George Mason University

Mr. Gibson presented a mini-workshop focused on the topic of shifting from traditional bibliographic instruction within a library setting to information literacy that connects all the players on campus in a learning culture. He organized his workshop around three considerations:

- student development,
- curriculum/program redesign, and
- the fact that successful information literacy programs require collaboration among members of the campus community.

Student Development
Mr. Gibson suggested that librarians should take characteristics of today's students and what is known about learning into consideration when thinking about library instruction goals and the need for programs that encourage information literacy skill development. He reviewed characteristics of today's students, learning theory, and discussed learning theory as applied to ACRL information literacy standards, accessible at
http://www.ala.org/acrl/il/toolkit/standards.html.

Curriculum/Program Redesign
The presenter discussed moving toward a learning culture in terms of pedagogy of engagement, emphasis on student learning outcomes, and use of problem-based, inquiry-focused, student-centered approaches. Mr. Gibson discussed restructuring programs and changing assignments and syllabi in terms of adding meaning to learning and encouraging learning skill development.

Campus Collaboration
One key to making collaboration between the library and others on campus a success, according to the presenter, is to frame issues in terms of the goal of improving student learning. The conference participants discussed librarian-faculty collaboration impediments and ways to improve library instruction through campus collaboration between librarians and non-librarian faculty members.

Conclusion
The conference was enjoyable and informative and well worth attending. Ms. Jayne demonstrated the value of bibliographic instruction tutorials and provided insight into design issues. Mr. Gibson did an excellent job of describing information literacy as a campus-wide, student learning issue. He provided convincing arguments for fostering the collaboration needed to make an information literacy program or individual information literacy activities a success.