



Review

Teaching Information Literacy Online

Thomas P. Mackey and Trudi E. Jacobson (Eds.). New York, NY: Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc., 2011. 200 pp. ISBN: 978-1-55570-735-4. \$75.00.

Reviewed by Thomas Orrange
Adult and Graduate Library Services Coordinator
Medaille College Libraries
Amherst, New York

Online learning has become a large part of the education system and will only continue to grow. How libraries fit into this new paradigm is still being worked out. Information literacy needs to continue to evolve as new technologies require new literacies, and librarians need to remain flexible and creative to address the changing needs of our students and users. Mackey and Jacobsen edit a work that addresses a growing need for academic librarians – how to remain involved in the teaching of information literacy in the online environment. *Teaching Information Literacy Online* is an attempt to showcase a few of the ways that librarians are collaborating with teaching faculty to provide information literacy instruction in the virtual environment.

The book is a collection of eight chapters presented in two parts, one with a focus on Blended and Hybrid Learning and the second on Open and Online Learning. Each chapter is written by either a pair or a group of educators and discusses collaboration between a librarian and a member of the teaching faculty utilizing a particular format for online learning. The chapters each contain a statement of the challenge, a brief literature review, a project overview, a brief description of how the project was implemented, ideas for assessment and a conclusion. The chapters are relatively brief for the subject matter at hand but offer a very good look at the projects being presented.

A few of the highlights in the selected forms of online instruction include using an open wiki for a humanities course on Shakespeare, using reusable learning objects for information literacy instruction, using Second Life to explore resource-based learning and integrating information literacy into online asynchronous courses.

The ever changing environment of the web and the educational opportunities presented by new technologies allows the use of novel and innovative ways to increase and enhance student learning. The authors continue to collaborate with course designers and teaching faculty to find out what works and strengthen those areas. The chapter on Second Life speaks to an initial failure of students to learn how to research in the course, but after the collaborative effort of the instructor with a librarian to integrate research skills, the learning outcomes were enhanced. The course continues to evolve based on the feedback and assessment. "More than ever, faculty-librarian collaboration is essential to developing and delivering effective information literacy instruction online" (p.27).

The book would be highly recommended to all academic librarians. It would be a must read for any librarian involved in online learning or working on developing an information literacy component for an online course. For those not directly involved, it would be worth reading to see what the future holds in the way education is being delivered. I would also recommend the book to academic and public librarians interested in developing online tools for lifelong learners who may only be accessing the library online. Less face to face contact is becoming the norm, but we still need to offer assistance to users we may never see.

As stated by Terry Anderson in the forward of the book, there are no universal best practices for teaching information literacy online. This book offers examples of what others are trying, but the development of instructional methods is still ongoing. We, as librarians, need to be open and creative in designing new ways to integrate information literacy into online courses, need to be willing to take chances, build on success and learn from failure, and continue to be a part of the educational landscape.

©2011, T. Oorange. *Journal of Library Innovation* is an open access journal. Authors retain the copyright to their work under the terms of the following Creative Commons license: Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 (United States)
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/us/>