Taking Information Literacy to the Halls: A Pilot Program
Final Summative Report

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Background and Project Summary
This project was an instructional pilot program initiated by Catherine Riehle and Michael Witt of the Purdue Libraries and jointly sponsored by the Libraries, the Residence Hall Association, and the Faculty Fellows. To provide a relevant learning opportunity for undergraduate students who are typically confused and overwhelmed by the University's complex research environment, we coordinated, designed, and implemented information literacy instruction in five residence halls on campus. Over 100 residents attended a program. Written evaluations and verbal feedback were overwhelmingly positive.

At Purdue University, there is no general information literacy requirement. Thus, these sorts of learning opportunities and partnerships are essential in supporting undergraduate students and providing them with the information literacy skills essential for academic success and life in the information age. Library outreach programming in campus residence halls has historically been a goal of the Purdue Libraries, though this program represents the most concentrated and targeted effort thus far.

This pilot program increased the Libraries' visibility while promoting library services and resources to undergraduate students, faculty, and residence hall staff. Our success was due in part to dedication, creativity, and effective communication and coordination with our strategic partners. Success was realized not only in the positive feedback we received, but in that undergraduates took ownership of these sessions by interpreting and sharing the programs' relevance and benefit in their own terms, demonstrated in part by the creative flyers, poster, and brochures created by many of the hall Resident Assistants (RAs).

We are confident these sessions provided a valuable framework for the 100 plus students who attended, many of whom had never used or considered using the Libraries before attending. By increasing visibility and stressing the relevance of library resources and services, at the very least these, students now realize Google and Wikipedia are not the only (or necessarily best) options for finding information. They also understand the importance of evaluating sources and critically thinking about how they find and use information.

We would like to sincerely thank the Purdue Libraries and Learning Council, the Purdue Residence Hall Association, and the Purdue Faculty Fellows for their support – financial and otherwise – in this endeavor.

Timeline
October – November: Conducted five sessions:
  10.14.07 - Shreve Hall
  10.16.07 – Meredith Hall
  10.21.07 – McCutcheon Hall
  10.28.07 – Windsor Hall
  11.06.07 – Owen Hall
December: Assessment and evaluation summarized in a written report

Roles
Michael Witt, Senior Faculty Fellow and Interdisciplinary Research Librarian, coordinated, scheduled, and managed programmatic logistics, including obtaining RHA and Faculty Fellow support. He also developed the popular wrap-up game and attended all five sessions, introducing two of the five as Faculty Fellow. Michael set up signage, food, and prizes and helped with clean up afterwards. He also assisted in promoting the program by creating a Facebook event page for each session.
Catherine Fraser Riehle, Instructional Outreach Librarian, developed the content and visuals for each presentation. She was the primary instructor, led all sessions, and stayed afterwards to clean-up and consult with students one-on-one. In addition to PowerPoint slides and screen shots, Catherine designed the promotional flyer distributed to resident mailboxes, a promotional poster used at each session, and supplemental hand-outs.

**Funds breakdown**

$1075 from Purdue University Libraries to purchase giveaways, including Libraries’ branded USB flash drives.

$570 from RHA for food and consumables.

$1645 total

**Partnerships & Promotion**

*Partners and Sponsors:*

- **Libraries’ Learning Council**: Chaired by the Libraries’ Associate Dean for Learning, the Learning Council is responsible for coordination of reference and information literacy programs and administrative issues associated with system libraries.

- **Resident Hall Association**: The RHA includes representatives from each of the residence hall student clubs and coordinates activities and governance across all campus residence halls.

- **Purdue Faculty Fellows**: The goal of the Faculty Fellow program is to develop meaningful relationships between faculty and students outside of the classroom, to advise residents and promote student leadership, and to ease students’ integration into campus life.

Catherine and Michael were also in contact with several individuals affiliated with each residence hall, including residence life managers (RLM), residence assistants (RAs), faculty fellows, and sometime staff residents. These contacts and partners proved invaluable in coordinating, scheduling, planning, promoting, and supporting the programs. RAs and staff residents distributed flyers, created additional promotional materials, recruited residents to attend the programs, and helped with setting up and cleaning up before and after the sessions. Faculty fellows provided similar support and also introduced the program with a brief anecdote about the importance of information literacy and research skills.

**Attendance**

Average attendance at each session was 22 participants, ranging from about 10 participants to over 40 participants, depending on the evening and level of support and promotion from the residence hall staff and RAs. Generally, Tuesday nights were not as well attended as Sunday nights, most likely because dining halls do not serve dinner on Sunday evenings and free food proved to be a successful draw.

**The Program**

The program, entitled “Research Project Survival,” was a 30-40 minute presentation on the “top five tips for better research.” Though most of the 30-40 minutes consisted of lecture format, students were presented with problem-based scenarios and had the opportunity to answer questions and participate in discussion. Research advice was presented in the context of information literacy skills essential for college and for everyday life in the digital information age. After a brief introduction by each evening’s designated Faculty Fellow, Catherine gave a lively presentation highlighting the following research tips:

1. Have a game plan.
   - Steps in the research process
   - How to choose/narrow/define a topic
   - Avoiding procrastination

2. Be SMART about the web.
   - Wikipedia: pros and cons
   - Wiki Scanner
   - Google Advanced Search
   - Evaluating sources
3. Look for quality and currency.
   - Purdue Library basics, including the “top 3 places for finding information sources”
   - Library locations overview
   - Quick demos/screen shots: Catalog, Databases, and MegaSearch

4. Don’t plagiarize.
   - Plagiarism basics: the issue, definitions
   - Tips for avoiding plagiarism
   - Useful resources: OWL, Citation Machine, etc.

5. Ask for help if you need it.
   - What librarians do, conquering librarian stereotypes
   - Ask-a-Librarian services and points of service.

Each program concluded with evaluations and a game. Students were asked to complete a short evaluation. Upon handing in completed evaluations, they were invited to play an interactive wrap-up game. The game, which incorporated the five research tips, successfully offered students a fun way to earn giveaways, including USB flash drives. Nearly all attendees participated in and enjoyed the wrap-up game.

Assessment & Feedback
Participants completed 67 evaluations. 99% of respondents noted at least one useful thing learned during the presentation. Additionally, over 50% of respondents shared general positive feedback about the program. Overall, feedback - both written and verbal - was consistently positive. Suggestions from early sessions were incorporated in later sessions, including a request for more information about library locations and overviews on how to use the Libraries’ primary systems. A handout was also provided at later sessions in response to suggestions. *See Appendix D for detailed evaluation feedback.*

Excerpt from NACURH Spotlight Award nomination document, awarded to Michael Witt in November. The nomination document was confidentially written by students at Shreve Hall:

- "...an excellent program that was beneficial for all students at Purdue. The program was centered on how to find relevant sources for a research paper which included the use of the internet, the library website, and also books in the library. [They] gave reasons for why sources like Wikipedia are not reliable sources. [They] also gave us ways to refine our searches when we use a website like Google to find adequate sources. The program included a creative game called research pong, invented by Michael, which combined the knowledge that was gained from the program with a game. There were prizes that included candy, a pen, or a usb storage device. [They] went the extra mile to accomplish this program and to make it fun and entertaining while still relaying high quality information to students. [They] went to RHA to receive funding for this program also so that prizes and food could be provided for the event. This program started off here at Shreve, but [they] thought that this program would be beneficial to students in other halls too. The program is going around to five different Residence Halls to improve the quality of research knowledge in the student body."

Suggestions for future programming
While partnerships with faculty fellows, RAs, and RHA staff proved invaluable, even more strategic partnerships and collaborations would likely improve the effectiveness and attendance of these programs. During this pilot program, session attendance very much depended on the evening (Sundays are better) and especially the commitment level of the individual faculty fellow and RA we worked with in each hall. Collaborations between faculty fellows, RAs, and staff on several different floors and even in several residence halls simultaneously could be beneficial in ensuring buy-in, adequate support, and attendance for theses session.

While these sorts of scheduled presentations may become redundant if regularly offered, offering them at key times of the year (for example, early/mid-fall semester, near finals and midterms) may be effective and worthwhile. Other possibilities for outreach in the residence halls may include librarian office hours, “resident librarians” or librarians as faculty fellows
assigned to each residence hall, and other collaborations between RHA staff, RAs, and librarians. Further assessment may prove useful in determining resident needs and wants from the Libraries.

We believe that the focus of this program and its general content should be marketed towards freshmen students and freshmen residence halls.

**Appendices**
A. Project proposal
B. Program flyer sample
C. Photo collage
D. Contacts, data, and evaluation feedback for each event
“Research Project Survival”

A proposal for a jointly sponsored instructional pilot program by the Purdue Libraries, Resident Hall Association, and the Faculty Fellows

Catherine Riehle & Michael Witt
August 22, 2007 – revised September 2007

“To be information literate, a person must be able to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information.”

Project Summary
Most incoming undergraduates are confused and overwhelmed by the University’s complex research environment, and many do not recognize librarians as valuable aids in navigating it. As high school students, Purdue’s undergraduates may have relied heavily if not entirely on free search engines for finding information. When instructors on campus express expectations for scholarly, authoritative information sources, students often do not understand the distinction, let alone where to find these types of sources. Thus, librarians must actively seek out users where they are, and advocate and communicate the importance of library services and information skills in the digital information age.

We propose a new program to present instructional sessions on the topics of information literacy and college-level research in the lounges of University Residence halls that target an audience of undergraduate freshman students. The sessions will be fun and upbeat, including prizes and food. Because the dining halls do not serve dinner on Sundays, we may hold the sessions on Sunday nights to maximize attendance. Purdue faculty members are assigned to the halls as Faculty Fellows, and for each session, a Faculty Fellow from the hall will be invited to share a brief (10 minute) story or testimonial related to using information sources or how using library resources has contributed to the success of their students. The Faculty Fellow will also help with local promotion of the session and introduce the Instructional Outreach Librarian. The remainder of the program will follow a learning plan developed and delivered by the Libraries. The program will be designed to incorporate elements of active learning, and will cover topics useful and relevant to undergraduate students in three main areas:

1. locating information resources
2. evaluating information sources
3. using information properly (e.g., citing sources, plagiarism)

Roles
Catherine Riehle, Instructional Outreach Librarian, will be the primary instructor of the session, developing and delivering it. She will lead all sessions and stay afterwards to consult with students one-on-one to answer questions and give advice on locating information sources in their particular courses of study.

Michael Witt, Senior Faculty Fellow and Interdisciplinary Research Librarian, will coordinate, schedule, purchase, advertise, and manage logistics including arranging for faculty fellow participation. He will attend all sessions, set up the signage, food, and prizes as well as help clean up afterwards.

Timeline
August – September Develop learning plan, order materials, schedule, coordinate logistics
October – November  Conduct five sessions as a pilot project
December    Assessment and evaluation summarized in a written report

Budget
Since there will not be advanced enrollment, it is difficult to anticipate attendance. This budget is based on an estimate of 20 students attending a session:

- $215   USB keychain drives (5-10 prizes per session)
- $99    9 ft. Subway sandwich
- $15    2-liters of soda, bag of ice, cups, paper plates, napkins
- $329 per session

The total budget requested to sponsor all five sessions for the pilot project is **$1,645**.

- **$1,075** was approved by the Libraries to purchase the prizes.
- **$570** was approved by the Residence Hall Association for food and consumables.
- We are requesting involvement from the Senior Faculty Fellows of five residence halls to volunteer to host a session in their hall, provide promotion and local support for the event in their halls, and to provide an introduction and testimonial at the beginning of the session.

Logistics
For each participating hall, we will work with its senior faculty fellow to determine which faculty fellow and resident advisor will be the primary organizers for that hall.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal. If you have any questions, please contact Catherine Riehle (cfriehle@purdue.edu, 494-9941) or Michael Witt (mwitt@purdue.edu, 494-8703).

RESEARCH PROJECT SURVIVAL

WHAT – I CAN’T CITE WIKIPEDIA!?

Stumped about how to do research in college? ?

Dreading your ENG and COMM research projects??

AWESOME giveaways!
USB FLASH DRIVES and more!

Not sure where to go when you need quality sources for your projects??

FREE FOOD and RESEARCH ADVICE
Shreve Study Lounge
7:00 – 7:45 p.m.
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14TH

You will hear practical tips that will make your research easier, faster, and BETTER.

Sponsored jointly by the Purdue University Libraries, the Purdue University Residence Hall Association, and Purdue Faculty Fellows.
Appendix D1: Shreve Hall

Sunday, 10.14.07, Study Lounge, 7 p.m.
Faculty Fellow speaker: Michael Witt, Assistant Professor of Library Science
RAs: Scott McCarty and Malvina Osmani
RLM: Dave Larson
Senior Faculty Fellow: Michael Witt
Attendance: 33

Shreve Evaluation Feedback (24 responses)

No. 1 – What is something useful you learned and/or something you enjoyed about this session?
No. 2 – What is something you wish you’d learned and/or something you’d change about this session?

No. 1 responses:
- How to use Google/Wikipedia.
- Free food.
- I learned how to use Purdue’s website to find sources in the libraries.
- Google Advanced Search
- Turnitin.com
- Library website
- I learned how to focus my Google searches and how to use the online library catalog.
- Good showing. Wikipedia edits.
- Free food.
- Session was really organized. I learned how people can change articles to make them be in favor of them.
- It was very helpful and made me feel more confident and not as stressed about research papers.
- I liked everything! It was very useful and I learned a lot. I liked the website space, ex. for credible websites.
- It was easy to pay attention to and wasn’t boring.
- I didn’t know all about the libraries.
- I learned the tips about Google and the library address here.
- How to use Google more effectively and how to use Purdue’s library website.
- I learned that .gov and .edu websites have more credible information. I enjoyed the presentation.
- How to use the homepage of the library efficiently. Relevant and humorous examples shown on the presentation.
- I learned not to use certain websites such as Wikipedia for primary research. Purdue has 14 libraries.
- The library online I learned and will be useful later on. I didn’t know about the advanced search on Google.
- The stuff about the Purdue Libraries – the website information and everything was something that I will definitely use.
- Stuff on the Purdue website.
- I liked how enthusiastic/caring the presenter(s) were. It seemed like they were presenting this because they actually cared about how we do in college. (smiley face)
- I learned how to obtain help when doing a research paper.
- It was interesting to learn about how anyone can edit Wikipedia. It was funny to view the comparisons of 2 sides.

No. 2 responses:
- I loved everything.
- How to cite sources.
- Nothing, perfect!
- Nothing, it was very well put together.
- Focus more on using libraries.
- Um, kinda long.
- I learned enough.
- No, I learned a lot.
- Once you’re there, how do you find the books you need?
- Some of the information I’ve already seen in other classes.
• I wish I’d learned how to narrow down book findings/find books in the libraries, but I guess I can ask sometime!
• Everything was prefect. Well, maybe it would be nice to show how to cite info.
• Learn more about citing sources.
• I wish it would be more specific though it has the limit of time given.
• More about how to write a research paper. And other sources to use.
• It would have been nice to have a hand-out with an overview of what was talked about.
• Maybe more about websites – what to use and what not to use is something that would make a lot of papers potentially better.
• N/A. Awesome! Esp. considering it’s the first time. Thanks! (smiley face)
• How to find and cite other not-so-common sources.
• Talk more about the different libraries and services offered here at Purdue.
Appendix D2: Meredith Hall

Tuesday, 10.16.07, Quiet Study Lounge. 7 p.m.
Faculty Fellow speaker: Jerry Peters, Professor of Education
SR: John Perkins
RLM: Jason Boron
Senior Faculty Fellow: Jerry Peters
Attendance: 15

Meredith Evaluation Feedback/Comments (12 responses)

No. 1 – What is something useful you learned and/or something you enjoyed about this session?
No. 2 – What is something you wish you’d learned and/or something you’d change about this session?

No. 1 Responses:
- How to utilize the library home/search page; References to Wikipedia issues/changes
- The presenter was funny/alive and very active with us.
- The library webpage, citationmachine.net
- I learned not to use Google for everything, citationmachine.net was a cool site
- The trick for using Google well, how the Library system at Purdue works.
- The fact that very strange people and organizations can make very legit looking websites. The enthusiasm of the presenter.
- You can narrow some searches on Google. Turnitin.com
- I learned how to find books in the library.
- Citationmachine.net and other things about finding and citing credible sources.
- Advanced search, .gov, .edu, etc. Citing stuff.
- There are much more specialized search options on Google.com
- Article tab on the library website, helped me remember where things were.
- I learned about how to effectively use different Purdue websites to do accurate research.

No. 2 Responses:
- In a more well/high traffic area – North Lounge
- Sweet job!
- More about locations of libraries.
- Something about Google Scholar.
- Nothing. This was awesome. Easy to listen to, right amount of time – Great!
- It was amazing! Thanks!
- Everything was very informative.
- This was very informative and covered all the essentials.
- Nothing comes to mind.
- Touch on a few other websites – for more search stuff.
- PowerPoint – put online for us to use as a walk-through as we’re actually writing the research paper.
- Maybe add handout to remember where to go after the program. We (students) are forgetful.
- Nothing.
Appendix D3: McCutcheon Hall

Sunday, 10.21.07, North Activity Room, 7 p.m.
Faculty Fellow speaker: Jonathan Neal, Associate Professor of Entomology
SR: Jamal Smith
RLM: Andy Dommer
RA: Megan Wagner
Senior Faculty Fellow: Jonathan Neal
Attendance: 39

McCutcheon Evaluation Feedback/Comments (9 responses)

No. 1 – What is something useful you learned and/or something you enjoyed about this session?
No. 2 – What is something you wish you’d learned and/or something you’d change about this session?

No. 1 Responses:
- I learned about the libraries.
- It was nice to find out about advanced search in Google, turn it in site, and about the ways I could use librarians’ help.
- Would like to see you publish this info on the web.
- The whole part about making your way around the website was helpful because I’ve never used the website for Purdue Libraries.
- I learned about the library’s website. It was very organized.
- I learned how to narrow my searches on the library website to find more information relevant to the specific topic.
- How I can use Wikipedia for background. And how to cite.
- That I just need to learn more about my topic before I start writing. (smiley face)
- Quick, concise, good info.

No. 2 Responses:
- Nothing, it was fine.
- I would make slides bigger or emphasize (make larger) those areas discussed.
- What are some good websites to use.
- It was good.
- Include OWL.
Appendix D4: Windsor Hall

Sunday, 10.28.07, Vawter Rec Room, 7 p.m.
Faculty Fellow speaker: Michael Witt, Assistant Professor of Library Science
RLM: Sara Carvell
RA: Jamie Candos
Senior Faculty Fellow: Noelle Lottes
Attendance: 11

Windsor Evaluation Feedback/Comments (11 responses)

No. 1 – What is something useful you learned and/or something you enjoyed about this session?
No. 2 – What is something you wish you’d learned and/or something you’d change about this session?

No. 1 Responses:
- There are multiple ways to get research through the Purdue libraries.
- I learned how to use advance search on Google. Also, I learned how to find sources by using the Purdue’s online catalog.
- I learned to check (take 30 extra seconds) references one has used on a website. The assisted search options were helpful because I didn’t know one could look for similar websites.
- It is important to find credible sources when doing research.
- How to check how valid a website is. How to do an advanced search.
- It was great to be able to know how to effectively use the library’s research programs and resources.
- I liked all the info I found out about the libraries because I was pretty clueless. Also, the fact that the presenter was so enthusiastic.
- I learned how useful the Google Advanced search is. I also enjoyed learning about how to see if the site is credible by checking the “About” section.
- About the libraries and how you can really find articles, journals for your topic really fast.

No. 2 Responses:
- I would personally get more RAs involved in planning events, or plan with another hall (Cary/Windsor) to get more attendance.
- I wish I could find out about how to find a research topic.
- I wish I knew where all the “secret” libraries were.
- How to narrow down my search results to be more specific.
- Citing sources (bibliographies).
- Maybe I would add more about how to do things in the library, like navigation or how to take good research notes.
- I would add something about how to find the books in the library when you want to check them out.
- Maybe could have gone into more depth on citation mistakes.
- Nothing good job (smiley face).
- I wish we had learned a little more about turnitin.com.
- I don’t know.
Appendix D5: Owen Hall

Tuesday, 11.6.07, West Activity Room, 7 p.m.
Faculty Fellow speaker: Charles Stewart, Professor of Communication
RLM: Carol Kraus
RA: Lindsay Emerson
Senior Faculty Fellow: Jery Krockover
Attendance: 11

Owen Evaluation Feedback/Comments (11 responses)

No. 1 – What is something useful you learned and/or something you enjoyed about this session?
No. 2 – What is something you wish you’d learned and/or something you’d change about this session?

No. 1 Responses:
- I liked the “Be smart about the web” part.
- The citation site for creating a citation page.
- The six steps were very helpful. Also how to use the library website and making the libraries seem like a nice place.
- MegaSearch works now. Clonaid, lol.
- About how to properly check for sources and citations.
- How to research successfully and without plagiarizing.
- How to use the Purdue Libraries site.
- How to search through the internet efficiently.
- How companies and personalities distort reality with Wikipedia.
- I learned the research process and also about the library webpage.
- Learned: online sources, mainly the ones of Purdue. Didn’t hear that much about it during the exchange program introduction.

No. 2 Responses:
- There is actually in a tab in MS Word ‘07 to make bibliographies and works cited pages.
- I thought it was really informative and wish we had got more people to come.
- Maybe put the PowerPoint online or a handout of the steps.
- Purdue Google Scholar details.
- About how you can use Purdue lib search to search for exam papers and old archives.
- Giving some more tips and how to eliminate plagiarism.
- Should you use databases or the library.
- Nothing, very informative.
- I learned a lot. It was a good program.
- Not sure. It was very informational. Good speaker.
- I know what the advanced search in Google is, maybe focus more on the resources of Purdue itself.