Reaching all students: teaching information seeking skills online (Poster)

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Description:
A proposed interactive online engineering information retrieval tutorial developed in collaboration with selected Drexel University Faculty, Students and Engineering Librarians, and Elsevier Engineering Information and Elsevier Advanced Technology Group, to address engineering information needs of distance learners, faculty and other students for possible applications in institutions worldwide.

Abstract:
A management issue of increasing importance is the need to provide distance learners the same library services as students who take courses on-site. Remote access to library-provided electronic resources has gone a long way to equalizing access for these students and for others who, because of work or family commitments, find coming to the library difficult. However, we have found that just making the resources available is insufficient; we must also teach the students how to use them effectively. The Drexel Libraries have assumed responsibility for information literacy instruction and have an extensive on-campus instruction program. The logical way to extend the critical component of library service off-campus is through online tutorials. Drexel’s Engineering Librarian is currently working with Elsevier Engineering Information and Elsevier Advanced Technology Group, University Faculty and Students to develop an online interactive tutorial to support engineering information retrieval needs of Drexel community. We have collected a sample of research questions that students had over a period of two years. Analysis of these questions and the results from several pilot studies to develop better understanding of their information needs, will be used to create FAQ based online interactive modules. We expect to use other professionals such as instructional designer, graphic designer, programmer, and others to develop the content for the Web in ways that are attractive, functional, pedagogically sound, and appropriate to the audience. Once developed, it will be tested and reviewed by selected universities with engineering programs for their feedback and further refinement. We also expect that the tutorial can be effectively integrated into learning management systems such as WebCT and Blackboard. Library’s visionary management perspectives coupled with dynamic collaboration with the Faculty, Students, Engineering Librarians, and Elsevier Engineering Information and Elsevier Advanced Technology Group will help evolve the anticipated engineering information retrieval tutorial. We envision that it will provide enhanced instructional tools to many technical institutions worldwide and in the process provide much needed help to faculty, students and distance learners in their effective use of seemingly ever-increasing library subscribed electronic resources and other information services.