TEACHING AND LEARNING

Challenges and Opportunities for Business Library Instruction during the Pandemic

GRACE LIU

West Chester University, West Chester, PA
yliu@wcupa.edu

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted our business library instruction routines. Many of us had fewer instruction sessions in the physical library, and at the same time, increased demand for online instruction sessions, library tutorials, and/or research guides. A challenge brought on by this environment was that it disrupted the momentum built over previous years, making library sessions seem less essential to some business classes. Another challenge was the increased need for online learning materials, particularly video tutorials, and the short turnaround time to complete them for the transition to online learning. However, these challenges brought about pedagogical changes that allowed me to take a fresh look at the way I previously taught in physical spaces.

One of the significant changes I made was to embed different types of video tutorials into library guides. I made a conceptual video to explain a four-step source assessment strategy. The video was based on an infographic (both available at <https://sandbox.acrl.org/library-collection/4-step-source-assessment-strategy>) that I created previously to facilitate a physical learning session for a management class on finding quality articles and assessing online sources. The strategy encouraged students to go through four steps to evaluate online sources: Step one is assessing sources by appearance; step two is assessing sources by investigation (CRAAP test); step three is assessing sources by lateral reading and critical thinking; and step four is assessing sources by reflection. The infographic guide and video included several interesting and enlightening concepts in management and organizational learning (e.g., "the ladder of inference"), information literacy (e.g., "content farms," "filter bubbles," and "peer review"), and critical thinking (e.g., "cognitive biases" and "logical fallacies"). It also integrated the concepts of metacognition and reflection from the ACRL Framework and motivated students to keep their minds open and suspend their judgment until they see the big picture. I further converted the four-step source assessment strategy video to an online learning module that incorporated more case studies and assessment activities, such as quizzes, short reflection essays, and discussions. The learning module can either be hosted in learning management systems or stay as a library guide. It opens up more opportunities for me to teach complex library research concepts that are often hard to address due to time constraints.

The online learning environment also created alternative ways to engage with students to assess their learning. I was able to use Google Docs as a collaborative tool for a library database search activity to engage students in a finance class. Even though I haven't tried it yet, I believe the online class also offers the chance to survey students' library research experiences, or do a quick, summative assessment through short, online quizzes at the end of the session via Zoom polls.