Mapping the Way to Success: Collaborating with Academic Faculty on Library Services and Information Literacy for International Students

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Mapping the Way to Success: Collaborating with Academic Faculty on Library Services and Information Literacy for International Students

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Vermont Library Association
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International Students in the U.S.

- Number of international students in the U.S. in 2014/15 increased 10% to a record high of almost 975,000.

- Students from China top this list with over 30% attending college in the U.S. in 2014/15, a 10% increase from the previous year.

Benefits of a U.S. Education

- International students want a U.S. college degree
- U.S. institutions want and need the revenue
- Undergraduate student population is steadily increasing
- Many institutions have started international student pathway programs
‘the open learning environment and the creative learning styles...are completely different from the traditional education methods in China..’

Duan, 2016
Challenges in Teaching International Students

- Differing academic expectations
- Different academic library system
- English proficiency & communication norms

Fitzgibbons & Bartlett, 2014
Important Skills for Teaching

- Acknowledge different academic expectations (again)
- Adjusting speaking style
- Observe carefully students’ reactions to your explanations
- Active listening
- Follow up to check students’ understanding
Global Gateway Program @ UVM

**Background:**

- Launched January 2014

- University vision to diversify undergraduate population, manage enrollment

- Contract with Study Group, a recruitment organization
GLOBAL GATEWAY PROGRAM: UNDERGRADUATE YEAR 1

Designed to help international students make an easy transition into American university life, this program is ideal for students wanting a bachelor's degree from the University of Vermont. Special features of this program include:

- 1-term, 2-term or 3-term international student pathway
- Choice of 100 undergraduate degrees at University of Vermont
- No TOEFL or IELTS required (take the Password Test instead)
- No SAT score required
- Progression to Year 2 degree entry on completion
Undergraduate International Students

- China: 68%
- Canada: 10%
- Europe: 6%
- Asia: 9%
- Latin America and Caribbean: 4%
- Sub-Saharan Africa: 1%
- Oceania: 1%
- Middle East and North Africa: 1%

Source: UVM Enrollment Management, 2016
Library Role

- Collaborate with teaching faculty
- Develop teaching plan to support class assignment, syllabus
- Classroom presentations, library tutorials
- Follow-up via reference desk, appointments, emails
Case Report

Lesson plan for academic reading skills class:

• Session 1 - Dictionaries, encyclopedias, assignment

• Session 2 - Reviewed assignment, magazines & newspapers, database searching, keyword selection
Pre-class survey
Narrative Survey Responses

How do you know if the information is true?
- Search the internet
- Ask a professional
- Compare answers from internet searches

How do you want to use the library at UVM?
- Homework, quiet place
- Do research
Connecting with Students
### Mapping learning outcomes to GGP terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
<th>INTL. STUDENT TOUR</th>
<th>3 TERM STUDENTS (ESOL 095)</th>
<th>2 TERM STUDENTS</th>
<th>1 TERM STUDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Students will be introduced to the unique aspects of a US academic library in order to effectively use the library and its resources (I)</td>
<td>Students will know who their liaison librarian is and how to contact them and make an appointment with them (R)</td>
<td>Students will know how to make an appointment with their liaison librarian (R)</td>
<td>Students will know how to make an appointment with their liaison librarian (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Students will identify and use different types of tertiary resources (dictionaries, encyclopedias, reference sources, CQ Researcher) in order to develop keywords (I)</td>
<td>Students will identify synonyms and related keywords for their topics in order to develop search terms and focus their topic (R &amp; E)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Students will use simple search strategies (AND, quotation marks for phrases) to focus their search effectively (I)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Outcome  | Students will understand the structure of a database (Academic Search Premier) in order to search effectively (I) | Students will use facets and limiters in order to search a discovery tool effectively (R & E) |  | I = Introduce  
R = Reinforce  
E = Enhance |
Pre-Master’s @ UVM

- Civil & Environmental Engineering
- Electrical Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering
- Computer Science
- Mathematics
- Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Semester 1</th>
<th>Semester 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-term</td>
<td>Presenting Academic Research (3 credits)</td>
<td>Presenting Academic Research (3 credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technical Writing (3 credits)</td>
<td>Technical Writing (3 credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subject Area Course (3-4 credits)</td>
<td>Subject Area Course (3-4 credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subject Area Course (3-4 credits)</td>
<td>Subject Area Course (3-4 credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-term</td>
<td>Academic Writing for Graduate Students (3 credits)</td>
<td>Presenting Academic Research (3 credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advanced Academic Communication Skills for Graduate Students (3 credits)</td>
<td>Technical Writing (3 credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subject Area Course (3-4 credits)</td>
<td>Subject Area Course (3-4 credits)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Subject area courses will vary depending on the chosen degree program. Options include: STAT 231 (Probability Theory), MATH 237 (Introduction to Numerical Analysis), CEE/ME 219 (Numerical Methods for Engineering), ME 249 (Computational Fluids Engineering), CS 243 (Theory of Computation).
International STEM education

What we know:

- STEM education
- Scholarly communication
- Learning styles
- Information literacy
  (general)

What we don’t know:

- Information literacy competencies in a STEM context

Paper output in 2013: Total and Engineering (National Science Board, 2016)
Class scope

Session 1:
- Library services
- STEM literature
- Primary vs secondary
- Peer review

Session 2:
- Citation practices
- Citation management (Zotero)
What we learned: survey

• Appreciation of environment
• High use of open web for academic research (Google, Baidu)
• Limited familiarity with library services ...
• ... or library resources

“I love quiet and green places”
What we learned: observation

• Language:
  – translation
  – wayfinding
  – cognitive load

• Inhibition:
  – question of respect for authority?
  – or responsibility?

“Nobody is there. And it’s quiet. I felt terrified and went away”
Positive Outcomes

• Librarians are involved right from the start, supporting university initiative

• New faculty are open to collaboration, experimentation, new energy

• New program offers opportunity cement relations with teaching faculty
Challenges

• New faculty, courses in development, classes evolve

• Applying information literacy concepts in non-native English speaker

• Students have different levels of knowledge at their arrival, based on language skills & test scores.
Summary Points

Next steps:

• Continue to map skills to the GGP curriculum, reach out to GGP faculty regularly

• Adapt and update existing library tutorials for use by ESL students

• Assess, reflect, extend
Cited Works


Further Reading

