LIS Pedagogy Chat is a discussion series for library and information science instructors. Our goal is to provide an informal space to ask questions and share ideas about online pedagogy, and to build a community of practice. Each session focuses on a different topic and features a short presentation on best practices followed by a facilitated discussion and a collaborative document of ideas to share. Slides and notes from each session are available in a shared folder. For more information, see https://www.lispedagogychat.org/

Supporting First Year Students

Date: December 4, 2020
Moderator: Jennifer Joe

No slides available

Presentation

As a new librarian, Jennifer was drafted to teach first year experience courses and eventually a credit-bearing class-- integrating FYE into existing credit courses.
Information literacy experience course, had to be adapted to the credit course and updated to adopt the framework.

Began with student learning outcomes for the class including:
Engaging in the intellectual and culture of college life
Navigate rules and expectations of college for success
Use personal and campus resources
Develop professional goals
Explore professional interests

Also diversity, time management, campus policies, unwritten rules and expectations for success.

After teaching a FYE class grounded in information literacy, recognized that part of what was taught in the FYE could be adapted to one-shots, like English Comps, French Culture, etc. Sense of belonging is easy to foster in other courses. Uses an active learning perspective. Even in a course that isn't structured for active learning, design appropriate activities and have them talk about their experiences. If students are honest, they learn from each other and realize they have many of the same concerns and challenges. But still have to teach the "regular" content like using the subject databases, etc.

Eventually distilled these 120 minute sessions into a Life Hack workshop to support the work they need and help them develop skills like time management, etc.

Also sees students for very brief encounters at information fairs, etc. Working on developing promotional materials that use the language of the SLOs and FYE that can be shared in these encounters.

Discussion

Question: How do you encounter FY students in your current practice?
Some meet students as a cohort, some as scattered across classes, and some have both.
A number of attendees work in schools that have a FYE course that librarians attend.

A lot of campuses have very large first year incoming classes and there are not enough librarians to interact with all of the FYE courses. In some cases they can engage with or embed into other “gateway” courses in the majors.

Does your college/university have specific FY student learning outcomes and, if so, do they address information literacy?
One campus is adding a social justice outcome-- how to address that in library instruction.

One campus explicitly includes in IL as one of 5 FY outcomes

Some faculty don’t resonate with the term “information literacy”-- find the terms critical thinking and research skills to work better.

One campus has a year-long (3 term) cohort model freshman inquiry class. Librarian meets very briefly in fall term; tries to adjust to learning goals for the course

Community colleges don’t necessarily have a cohort experience for first year students. Can be harder to provide a coherent experience.

One campus is experimenting with developing a few information literacy programs that focus on student engagement and allow faculty to integrate into the course shell. The two programs are called Speed Dating with Databases and Research Makeovers.

How many people are involved in student learning outcomes at any level?
In some cases, the library is not involved at the outset and has to work to be engaged.

In one case, the library found a hook through the accreditation process. The accrediting body requires the campus to identify a “problem area” or area to work on. Library and English department both submitted ideas that worked together for an “evidence and argument” approach. Allowed the library a foothold in the program.

If your college doesn't currently have a FYE, is there a way the library can make that opportunity?
Getting out there-- seeing what programs are happening and attending events. Building relationships.

Being part of campus tours-- and making sure the information shared is accurate. In some cases, the library can provide a script. Encourage tour guides to share specific examples of how they used the library/Center for Teaching and Learning, and I think that makes the tours more "authentic". Meeting with new batches of tour guides helps a bit

As a practical matter, what would help you support FY students more?
More time
Feeling stretched too thin.
Communication-- turnovers in leadership can make it hard to maintain relationships; also understanding the changing visions.
Helping students to develop a sense of belonging-- can be especially important for first-generation students. Helping them students see that many of them have the same questions, struggles, etc.

Addressing social justice outcomes:

- Many items in the Framework that support this, such as barriers to information--this could be about the digital divide, or language issues
- Algorithm bias
- A discussion on how to find and use underrepresented voices in their research. So, moving beyond peer review sources.
- For STEM and social sciences, to identify who was included in the study and who was excluded.
- Some faculty come into the session wanting a focus on Peer review, but I feel obligated to discuss the drawbacks of peer review because it's not perfect.

Discussion about Wikipedia as a resource. Helping students to understand that it can be reliable, that the citations are useful starting points. Using it as an accessible entry to discuss peer review. Helping students to understand that they can be editors-- one campus is starting a Wikipedia Club to train students as editors.

Some discussion of teaching students how to read a scholarly article-- it can be intimidating and unfamiliar. Explaining the structure, and which sections they should hone in on for an understanding of what the article is trying to convey has been very well received.

Coordinating with other departments, like the writing centers, athletics, tutors, etc., to be sure that the student workers and staff can convey accurate information.

Resources:

Speed Dating with Databases/ Makeovers
https://spcollege.libguides.com/speeddating
https://spcollege.libguides.com/makeovers

Teaching Algorithmic Bias in a Credit-Bearing Course
CAROLYN CAFFREY GARDNER DOI:10.1080/10572317.2019.1669937 and she has some lessons on Project Cora. While she was teaching a credit course, some of her activities could be adapted to a one shot session.

When students are unable to locate the information, they start questioning where it is, which in turn leads us to open up the conversations. Book taught:
https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520275140/fresh-fruit-broken-bodies

"anatomy of a peer review article" that points to each section
https://miriamsweeney.net/2012/06/20/readforgradschool/#:~:text=Read%20Strategically%2C%20Not%20Linearly.&text=Instead%20of%20reading%20linearly%2C%20read,stack%20of%20readings%20for%20class.

structure of a scholarly article: https://www.lib.ncsu.edu/tutorials/scholarly-article and https://www.lib.ncsu.edu/tutorials/scholarly-articles/