RESEARCH LIBRARY VIRTUAL RESOURCES & INSTRUCTIONAL INITIATIVES

SUBTOPIC: BLOGS & WIKIS

The Virtual Resources and Instructional Initiatives survey produced 230 instances of special or noteworthy projects being supported in ARL libraries. A comprehensive PDF file of these projects can be found at http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/vriicompletesurvey.pdf, arranged alphabetically by institution.

In order to assist readers with focused interests, 18 "subtopics" have been assigned that group only those survey responses that relate in whole or in part to that topic. This report contains survey responses that touch on the subtopic that is identified above.

For readers who would extract information not covered by the subtopics, key word searching can be applied to the comprehensive list. For instance, there is no subtopic specifically for "Camtasia," instances of which appear across several pre-set searches. A search of the word will reveal all occurrences.

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http://www.arl.org/rtl/roles/vrii/

UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO, SUNY, LIBRARIES

Library blog with student interaction capability.

The University at Buffalo Libraries are actively engaged in developing new methods to reach out to today's students using the technologies they prefer for communication. The "Services for Students" page (http://libweb.lib.buffalo.edu/blog/students/) was recently redesigned into a blog format, with weekly posts to websites and resources relevant to student research and learning. A wiki of student FAQs is also planned, as are other opportunities for students to add and create content for the site, including reviewing books and media productions. Marketing plans are underway for this new page, which appeared to the public at the beginning of the Spring 2008 semester.
http://libweb.lib.buffalo.edu/blog/students/

Goals:

- Increase awareness and use of library resources.
- Reaching students using the communication methods they use.
- Integrating librarians more closely and naturally with students.

Assessment:

NA

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY, LIBRARY

Faculty uses Wiki to support undergraduate research project.

In Victoria Robinson's Ethnic Studies 21AC course this semester, she is using the wiki tool in bSpace (the campus learning management system) to support the course's Research Discovery Project (RDP). This research project was the result of Dr. Robinson's participation in the Mellon Library/Faculty Fellowship for Undergraduate Research in which the Library partnered with faculty to design and implement research-based learning assignments in large-enrollment undergraduate courses. Faculty were encouraged to use online collaborative tools supported by campus to support their goals of engaging students with library collections, information literacy, and critical thinking. In this course, students are required to compile primary source material on a variety of themes, upload the material to the resources tool, and then use the wiki tool as a place to work in groups to list, describe, and discuss their findings. The goal is to end up with a thorough and well-organized space for each theme and its primary sources. An increasing number of instructors are using their course sites to deliver rich media such as video clips, audio, and images.

Goals:

See above

Assessment:

NA

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

History majors critically appraise primary and secondary sources in special collections. (Butler Library)

History Lab is a for-credit class (worth two units) aimed at Columbia junior and senior history majors. History Lab develops student skills in accessing and critically appraising primary and secondary sources used in historical research and argumentation. There are six formal sessions, and one week for individual conferences with the faculty instructor or graduate-student preceptor. Four of the six weekly classes take place at Butler Library, with specialized librarians demonstrating the access and use of resources and providing advice during student hands-on exercises. The four library sessions cover: Secondary Sources; Published Primary Sources; Unpublished Primary Sources—Archival and Manuscript Collections; and Oral History. The introductory and closing session are taught by a History Department faculty member and a graduate student preceptor, each of whom attends all sessions and contributes briefly to the library sessions. Students post their assignments to discussion lists in CourseWorks. In their assignments, the students: propose a research topic; identify secondary and primary sources they would use in exploring it; and describe their experience of the research process. The discussion list postings are monitored by all instructors. The final product is simply a refined research proposal including a bibliographic listing of sources identified as useful, with annotations as needed. This proposal can be formulated in conjunction with an actual history paper that is being done or will be done for another class. History Lab is a for-credit class aimed at junior and senior history majors; and it is worth two units. In the academic year 2007/08 three sections per semester have been taught, with a rough average of 15 students per section.

Goals:

- Students understand how to propose and refine a meaningful topic for historical research.
- Students understand basic processes for identifying, accessing, and assessing the likely relevance of primary and secondary sources.
- Students understand some basic aspects of working with published sources in a special collections environment.

Assessment:

- Students completed detailed evaluations that asked the same set of questions for each week of instruction. Thus we were able to ascertain their response to the specific content offered each week. The evaluations from Fall '07 were used in rethinking the class for the Spring.
- The History Dept. faculty member and graduate preceptor also evaluated the overall progress of the students based on their final assignment, class participation, and their weekly postings on the CourseWorks discussion lists. Faculty member and graduate preceptor discussed their assessments with the librarian coordinating History Lab.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Business / Applied Economics WIKI. (Mann Library)

At Mann Library, our Management and Public Policy Librarian has created a library wiki for the Applied Economics and Management department (see link below) that houses useful information and resources, tutorials and workshop information and exercises which allow class participants to comment and complete exercises in and out of class. This tool allows her to create a subject-specific portal for her audience and allows her audience of undergraduate business students, faculty and staff to comment and complete exercises during workshops and classes. Linked from this site and available in our blog pilot installation is her business blog which not only keeps her audience up to date on the latest news and resources available to business students but also serves as an information literacy tools connecting issues in current business news to the library's tools and resources.
http://wiki.library.cornell.edu/display/applebp/LIBRARY+WIKI+FOR+AEM

Goals / Assessment:

NA

CORNELL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Digital image instruction assistant. (Fine Arts Library)

Over the past 5 or 6 years many libraries have assumed responsibility for the funding of digital image databases, i.e. ArtStor, CAMIO, Scholar's Resource, and more. With ownership comes a sense of responsibility to support an appropriate level of use of these collections. In 2006 an experimental and temporary position was created titled Digital Image Instruction Assistant. This position is collaboratively supported and managed by the Fine Arts Library and a departmental image repository, traditionally known as the "slide library." The main focus of the position is to support faculty users as they make the transition from analog to digital images, for use in the classroom. These resources require sophisticated searching, downloading and manipulation skills in order to create high resolution and high impact classroom presentations. These are not skill sets that can be conveyed during a typical reference transaction at the library, at a reference desk. Therefore, the individual in this position is considered a mobile unit, often meeting with a faculty member in his or her office. During the first 18 months of this trial position, more than 150 one-on-one faculty consultations, averaging 70 minutes each, have occured. It's a pleasure to note that this new service has been very well received by the faculty. When not conducting digital image coaching sessions, this new staff member adds content to an image instruction blog (see below).
http://imageinstruct.library.cornell.edu/

Goals:

- Increase use of digital image resources.
- Enable faculty to use digital resources in the classroom.
- Create a blog to enhance awareness of digital image resources, either freely available or provided by the library through subscriptions.

Assessment:

We have been so busy providing this new service we have not yet officially measured its success. We do have anecdotal evidence that it is working in the form of a thick folder full of thank you notes from a number of faculty members. As well, ArtStor tracks use statistics. Cornell's use of ArtStor is double that of its peer institutions. We contribute this rate to the success of this outreach and instruction effort.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Large-scale blog project to support university. (Mann Library)

Cornell University Library (CUL) and Cornell Information Technologies (CIT) co-sponsored a blog pilot as a first step in developing a centrally-supported blog service. The pilot enabled CUL and CIT to evaluate the feasibility of supporting blogs for teaching, research, and communication. The audience was all faculty and staff (and students using blogs for academic purposes) at Cornell University using blogs for teaching, research, learning and communication. We tested a pilot implementation of WordPress Mu. The pilot ran through the spring (2008) and was then evaluated. We've done several successful joint projects with CIT, so when we were both looking for solutions to the proliferation of standalone blog software installations (chiefly Wordpress), it made sense to join together. CIT handled the project management and technical and policy infrastructure and support, and the library helped provide support, technical help and documentation. The pilot evaluation results were positive from both academic and staff users, though we're finding they are still exploring how best to use blogs for various purposes. The blogs were used for reflection and sharing of resources outside of class, outreach and communication (both internal and external), and personalizing student programs and staff services. Currently, the blog service is open only to faculty, staff, and graduate students for academic, communication, and group collaboration blogs; undergraduates can be enrolled via a course, but it's not open to the entire university in general. We may do so in the future, but free alternatives are widely available. We have around 60 blogs in the installation so far, some new but most migrated from the pilot. We are still working out details of the production service but will certainly continue to offer it.
http://edublogs.org/campus/

Goals / Assessment:

See above

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Librarian supports undergraduate journal staff.

The Science and Engineering Liaison serves as an advisor to undergraduate research journals. Following an instruction session for editors and writers for Triple Helix on choosing scholarly reference sources and writing with more style, she was asked for similar assistance from the editors of Epidemic Proportions. She continues to provide instruction sessions and to copy-edit the articles. She also created a web page with links to style guides and other resources.

Goals:

NA

Assessment:

We have not conducted a formal assessment, but consider the librarian's involvement a success as she is sought out by the members of these groups.

MCMASTER UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Wiki supports first-year students.

The Mac Library Experience wiki is designed to help students in their First Year Experience (FYE) at McMaster
http://libfye.wetpaint.com/?t=anon

Goals / Assessment:

NA

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Library blog highlights helpful tools.

"Tools and Toys " Blog. This blog highlights tools, toys, widgets, plug-ins and toolbars that can enhance the MSU Libraries experience. These items are not officially supported by the MSU Libraries, but we still welcome feedback and suggestions or an idea for a new tool.
http://blogpublic.lib.msu.edu/index.php?blog=35

Goals / Assessment:

NA

NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Libraries implement WolfBlogs and WolfWikis.

The Libraries implemented WolfBlogs and WolfWikis to support the personal and curricular activities of the NC State community. Specifically, WolfBlogs and WolfWikis are services provided by the NCSU Libraries to support the academic and scholarly communication activities of current faculty, students, and staff of North Carolina State University. Content includes a comprehensive gathering of campus policies, regulations, governance, and rules organized into 11 categories. (From the Website) "NC State is committed to providing information related to its administration and operations in a manner that is clear, concise, organized, accessible, and current. To that end, NC State has a cataloging system for the identification and classification of its policies, regulations, and rules. This system provides ease of use to students, faculty, and staff, as well as others such as potential students and employees." This website serves as the central location for NC State's policies, regulations, and rules. As of February 2008, WolfWikis had 2350 users; 981 pages; 1807 uploads; 1265834 views.

Goals:

See above

Assessment:

NA

OHIO UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Business Wiki provides content-rich portal; Meebo link to librarian.

The Biz Wiki is a collection of business information resources available through Ohio University Libraries. It is designed to assist business OU faculty and students in finding the best resources for their business-related projects or topics. The Biz Wiki contains articles about business reference books, databases, websites, and other research guides. Nearly all of the resources are available to current members of the Ohio University community, as many of the resources are subscription databases or local reference resources. The business librarian also has a meebo widget embedded on the Biz Wiki homepage and his other contact information. The primary target audiences for the Biz Wiki are the faculty and students of Ohio University's School of Business. In actuality, it's also heavily used by librarians at OU and across the country. As of 3/24/08, the homepage of the Biz Wiki had been accessed 100,717 times.
http://www.library.ohiou.edu/subjects/bizwiki/index.php/Main_Page

Goals / Assessment:

NA

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN LIBRARIES

Wiki aids composition course instructors and students.

RHE Wiki. Created a wiki for RHE 306/309 courses, which are lower division composition courses. This wiki includes guides created for the program, handouts from library instruction sessions and links to RHE 306/309 librarians and to virtual reference services. All RHE instructors have the password for this wiki and are free to add resources/guides/research tips and comment on existing resources. We just rolled this out last semester and no RHE instructors have yet commented but we are hoping to get buy-in from the new instructors for next fall by talking to them about how their input would benefit their students during the pedagogy class required of new instructors.
http://wiki.lib.utexas.edu/rhe/

Goals / Assessment:

See above

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON LIBRARIES

Blog for clinical support and quick solutions to patient care questions. (Health Sciences Libraries)

Moveable Type, open source blog software chosen by the Health Sciences Libraries at the University of Washington, has provided the perfect forum to support patient care decisions and resident teaching by the University of Washington Medicine Residents. Resident Report occurs 4 times weekly and is attended by residents, faculty members, medical students and a clinical librarian to discuss patients who have been admitted the previous night to University of Washington Medical Center (UWMC), a 400 bed tertiary care hospital in Seattle, Washington. Sherry Dodson, Clinical Librarian, listens for patient care questions at Resident Report, quickly searches PubMed, and posts relevant citations to the blog to answer those questions. Often within minutes of posing the questions, residents can find citations to support their patient care decisions. The blog is easily searchable and the 500+ blog entries are arranged by categories such as infectious diseases, pulmonary diseases, etc. and archived by date. The Movable Type Personal Publishing software is easy to use and provides a sharing point or living searchable archive accessible to the residents at all of their rotations or in their clinics. Although the UW Health Sciences Libraries provide a huge network of electronic resources on the UW HealthLinks web site, a clinical librarian can provide a highly valued service by pinpointing the most recent, evidence-based articles to support patient care. An additional blog supports case presentations by the Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine department's fellows at their weekly Chest Conference. Nurses on one of UWMC's inpatient units are also considering the use of a new blog to support their upcoming journal club.

Goals / Assessment:

NA