

ACRL 2011 Poster Session

Collaboration Unleashes E-Book Database Potential for Replacing Traditional Textbook Options for Undergraduate Marketing Students

There is a long documented observation that students in higher education are dissatisfied with the use of traditional textbooks in their courses, yet libraries are often unsure of their role in assuaging student and faculty frustrations with the traditional textbook model. One method of dealing with the textbook dilemma has been to purchase and provide copies of required texts on reserve; however, as books (and textbooks) begin to evolve into digital formats, course reserves may no longer be a viable option.

While there may be no *definitive* role for academic libraries in the e-textbook or open educational resource environment, this poster session demonstrates how the Shapiro Library collaborated with teaching faculty in order to better leverage quality content already available to students via electronic library resources to serve as the foundational “textbook” for an introductory business course. Not only did this connection provide students with significant financial relief as they did not have to purchase or rent traditional textbook materials, this model also benefitted students as it allowed them to experiment with learning styles in a digital environment. Moreover, the library saw increased awareness and use of its subscription e-book databases.

Our Timeline for Development

Pre Course (approximately 2 weeks)

- Identified course content: Used existing course syllabus to determine key terms and concepts vital to learner outcomes
- Identified 16 core titles in e-book database (Books 24x7) that sufficiently addressed the key terms and concepts and support the learner outcomes
- Cataloged and embedded e-book content links into appropriate course modules in LMS (BlackBoard) using persistent links and ez-proxy settings to sustain off-campus use
 - Embedded links were presented to students as leading questions (i.e. “What is Marketing?”) in order to provide context for the reading. This provided students with access to the content that answered the question vs. the traditional model of reading linearly (i.e. assigned chapters 1-3)
- Developed evaluation plan and feedback program for the semester
 - Created Start of Course and End of Course online surveys using Qualtrics software
 - Developed online surveys for distribution at the end of each course module (8 in total)
 - Established direct contact between students and teaching/library faculty to create a support system
 - Initiated BlackBoard discussion board forums to support students’ questions and comments

Start of Course – End of Semester

- Trained students on how to access e-book content and conduct course reading through embedded links and Books 24x7 via in class training sessions and instructional videos linked in BlackBoard site
 - Librarian remained embedded in the BlackBoard course site and served as liaison to the class
- Made contact with Books 24x7 (Skillsoft) sales and technology teams to discuss project and to ensure vendor support and reliability
- Collected data at the end of each course module (via Qualtrics surveys) to measure student satisfaction with embedded link accessibility and content quality
 - Student feedback was used to implement real-time changes in the course and troubleshoot any technology problems that arose

End of Semester

- Gathered student feedback on pilot via individual and small group interviews
- Revamped BlackBoard site (including module layouts and embedded links) for spring semester sections of the course based on students' feedback

Next Steps

- Monitor survey and focus group feedback from students enrolled in spring sections of the course and compare data findings
- Explore other alternatives to the traditional textbook model including open educational resources available beyond the library's subscription resources.
- Scale this model to hybrid and online course environments
- Investigate the possibility of sustaining an entire program (certificate, minor, or major) on an alternative textbook model

Lessons Learned

- Students are not fearful of using e-books *or* relying on e-books for their core course content
- Students respond to active course development and will actively provide course feedback when incentivized and seriously considered.
- Students appreciate teaching innovation and embedded library resources in their courses



For updated information and findings, please visit our website:

<https://sites.google.com/site/acrl2011/>

Brooke Ratto, Information Literacy Librarian
Shapiro Library
b.ratto@snhu.edu

Dr. Andy Lynch, Associate Professor of Marketing
a.lynch@snhu.edu

Southern New Hampshire University
2500 N. River Rd
Manchester, NH 03104