Session Title: Why don't my digitally capable students use better information?...Embedding information literacy to enhance student learning.

Abstract (100 word maximum)

Digital and information literacy skills are often hidden within the curriculum - a competency we expect students to develop, but one that we don't explicitly make part of our courses. It is a dangerous assumption that tertiary learners today are already digitally literate and are able to evaluate information effectively. Access to quality devices, connectivity and information is not a given - it's a privilege many are still denied. We want to ensure our students are becoming discerning, ethical users and creators of information. How do we support students to become information literate, lifelong learners?

Three Keywords - digital literacy, information literacy, competencies

Session Format: Symposia - 90 minutes

Introduction

In this symposia, we engage participants in discussion about how we can ensure our students are becoming discerning, ethical users and creators of information. Digital and information literacy skills are often hidden within the curriculum - a competency we expect students to develop, but one that we don't explicitly make part of our courses. It is a dangerous assumption that tertiary learners today are already digitally literate and are able to evaluate information effectively. Learning online during COVID-19 has also highlighted the digital divide (or digital poverty) amongst our learners. Access to quality devices, connectivity and information is not a given - it's a privilege many are still denied.

So how do we, as educators, ensure that our learners are prepared for the demands of academic learning in a world drowning in misinformation, often without the tools they need to engage? How digitally and information literate are we ourselves? How do we teach from an information literacy pedagogical perspective? How do we support students to become information literate, lifelong learners?

Theoretical Foundation/Teaching Implications

It is commonly recognised that information literacy competencies are essential in enabling university students to access and evaluate information, and engage with that information to complete assessments. Yet, many tertiary students, especially at first year, struggle to develop these competencies. Head and Eisenberg (2010) conclude that "research is one of the most difficult challenges facing students in the digital age" (p.2), and further research suggests high schools are failing to prepare students for the information literacy demands of university

study (Angier & Palmer, 2006; Emerson, Kilpin & Feekery, 2015). Secker and Coonan (2013) observe that:

> in a world awash with information and knowledge, young people appear increasingly unable to carry out independent research, reluctant to argue and to challenge big ideas and take risks to discover new knowledge. (p. xvi).

The overabundance of electronic information alongside students' ineffective search strategies (Secker, 2011) and lack of engagement with information (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Bruce, 2008), indicates that, despite strategically passing courses, many students may be struggling to deeply learn effectively at university.

The importance of explicit information literacy instruction is largely unacknowledged outside the library: librarians, who recognise the valuable relationship between information literacy and learning, struggle to make their voices heard in the wider institution, and many teachers seem unaware of the significance of information literacy for learning. Feekery (2013) argues that developing information literacy in the disciplinary context is an essential part of the research and learning process; it is also an element of learning that many teachers leave to chance. Although university libraries may be available to support students' information literacy development, teachers need to explicitly contextualise and support students' information literacy development to promote effective learning (Brabazon, 2007; Grafstein, 2002). Feekery (2013) also observed that some librarians also seem to have become entrenched in the way they deliver information-skills-focused library sessions, feeling constrained by the limited time academics allow for library introductions.Therefore, supporting teachers and librarians to collaborate to explicitly embed IL development into content courses using and information literacy pedagogy - an approach that repositions teaching to focus on information processing, knowledge building and writing-to-learn skills

(Kilpin, Emerson & Feekery, 2014) rather than content delivery - is central to achieving

change in students' information literacy.

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Symposia Overview

We will:

- Explore assumptions and challenges with digital and information literacy (access to digital learning - socioeconomic, limitations, boundaries and the digital divide

- Introduce The Feekery Information Literacy Model as a basis for understanding what we mean by information literacy, as opposed to the more familiar 'research skills' or bibliographic instruction in 50min library sessions.

- Share ways we have made information literacy development explicit in the curriculum.

- Identify ways teachers can upskill so they can actively train students to be effective information consumers and creators in online and in-person learning spaces

- Explore learning activities and/or assessments that foster digital and information literacy development within the participants teaching contexts.

Session Description

5 mins - Discussion - What do you think digital and information literacy is?

10 mins - Understanding Information Literacy (Feekery Information Literacy Model overview) - what do we think it is?

10 mins - Giving this now shared understanding, what are some of the assumptions we hold about our students' digital and information literacy capabilities?

20 mins - Resourcing explicit information literacy instruction - Presenting what we have done in our own contexts relating to this

Speaker #1

- Embedding IL into the Resource and Environmental Planning Degree - Phd
- Information Literacy Spaces Project - collaboration between teachers and librarians
- Professional IL Module - including the Rauru Whakarare Evaluation Framework

Speaker #2

- Examples from Master's level courses
- Collaboration with Business Communications Team and library for co-facilitating sessions
- Using our LMS and modules to embed into courses
- Looking to the future based on learnings from courses
- Student feedback and reflection

20 mins - Breakout discussions on what participants can do in their own context

- Opportunities that already are happening but may not be called 'information literacy development'.

- Consider existing assessments/activities that could be modified to include a more explicit focus on IL

- Consider new assessments/activities that will enhance IL

- Identify training they need to be able to support their learners' IL development

- Consider opportunities for teacher/librarian collaboration in their teaching contexts

- Think about ways to overcome the digital divide in our contexts.

20 mins - report back from each group

5 mins - Summary of lessons learned from the participants.

(90 mins)