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### **Identify a teaching/learning problem**

A common problem with my information literacy classes for MSU students who are taking one of the first year writing classes is that I only have one meeting with the students to do a detailed and complete information literacy lesson. I basically have a little less than two hours to give the students a short tour of the MSU Main Library and teach a complete information literacy lesson, which is difficult to do, especially when I am determined to have an engaging and learner-centered classroom. It is a problem libraries, and librarians, around the country, and world, find because we are often treated as an add-on to the students' regular class. Instructors bring their classes to the library with the best of intentions, but it is often a very daunting task to try to cram everything in that the instructor wants covered in the time period allowed. This problem is central to the mission of the library, and my unit in particular, because in order to reach my student learning outcome for these classes:

*as a result of this class, students will be able to locate and evaluate different types of information in order to stimulate inquiry and use the information effectively in their assignment*

I need to make a change. A major goal in Tier I Writing library sessions is to provide ways for students to become engaged with the information that they find - part of stimulating inquiry or questioning. Most of them know how to use Google; we begin there to provide avenues for engagement with the information that they already find. In class, the students discover for themselves that what they already know might not be adequate for their assignment. At this point, we provide avenues (i.e. search strategies, resources) for exploring more relevant

information. Taking this interactive approach frees up the librarian instructor from having to "cover everything" and from having to provide detailed, database-specific how-tos or laundry lists of resources. Any specific resource not touched on in class can be included in the course Libguide, which the students use later at their point of need. It's also important to make sure that everything included in class is as directly relevant as possible to the students' immediate

**Develop a stakeholder survey.**

1. Identify the stakeholders in our library instruction classes for WRA classes?
2. What do you feel like you don't have time to cover in a typical library instruction session for a WRA class?
3. Describe your class. What do you cover? What does your typical class "look" like?
4. What do you think is most essential to cover in every WRA class we work with?
5. Do you cover things you think do not need to be covered?
6. How much flexibility and individuality should be allowed in each instructor's approach to working with a WRA class?
7. If you could change one thing about your class, what would that be?
8. What activities/parts of class do you think could be done before students come to the library for our class?
9. What do you think of the flipped approach to instruction?
10. Would you be interested in working on a team tasked with designing a flipped approach to a library instruction session for a WRA class?

**Describe a current cost-effective technology that can help address the problem.**

In order to tackle the problem of having too much to cover in class, I want to propose doing a modified flipped classroom approach to the teaching of information literacy for first

year writing classes. I would like to set up a web page for students to go to, where they could access two short videos, a worksheet, and help. The first videos would be done by me at the Reference Desk and would introduce me to the students and give a short overview of what we are going to do with this new approach to library instruction. The video will be made by me using Camtasia, which I already have on my computer via the MSU Libraries license, and a hand held video camera which I will borrow from the library, free of charge. The second video will cover the activity that students will complete with the worksheet. This video will be made using the same equipment and computer program that I use for the other video and will not cost anything other than my time and salary. The worksheet will be an activity that requires students to do some searching on Google about their topic, whatever that might be. They will search the web a bit to find some ways to focus their topic a bit; for instance, if their overall topic is Global Warming, they might search around a bit and see how they could break this into more specific and smaller parts like animals, environment, water/oceans, arctic, ozone, greenhouse gases, etc. There are numerous ways someone could break a large topic like Global Warming into smaller parts. Once they come up with four areas to focus their topic, they will come up with some important keywords for each of the four topics; for example, if they were looking at global warming and animals they might come up with keywords like polar bears, arctic, ice caps, sea level. The final section of the worksheet will have students come up with a research question that they would like to answer for their topic. This will hopefully be easier to come up with now that they've done some Google searches and come up with some ways to focus and narrow their topics and also have some possible keywords to use when searching.

Having students complete these activities before coming to class will help in many ways. Students will be more prepared for class, as will their teachers because they will have to have given the students the assignment and gotten started on it in order for the students to complete the activities I am asking them to do before class. Therefore, we can spend more time talking about the students' topics and finding relevant keywords, as well as giving students more time to actually do some searching for their own topics, which is unfortunately something that we are unable to do now because of time restraints. I really want to give students some time in class, with me and their teacher there as a resource, to find some possible useful resources and information for their papers. I think this would be an extremely useful and beneficial addition for the students, and their teachers who would hopefully have less confused students to try and help later on in the research process.

Flipping the information literacy classroom would require buy-in from the library and specifically the librarians involved in teaching these classes, but also the writing instructors who would have to give up a bit of their class time to explain what they're going to do (or allow me to come to the class to talk to the students about it) and also possibly incentivize the students to complete the pre-class assignment, and bring it to the library class, by awarding the students with some points or bonus for completing everything. I don't think this new approach will "steal" a lot of class time from the instructors, but there will be a little bit. Thankfully, my unit has a very close relationship with the writing department and I have already identified, and talked with, several instructors who would be willing to participate in the pilot program. I will help make the change within my organization, and specifically within my unit, by trying to do what real leaders do, "prepare organizations for change and help them cope as they struggle

through it (Kotter, p.85). While this change won't affect a lot of people or units in my organization, it will be a new approach to working with WRA classes and other librarians who work with these classes will be affected; as will the technical support staff who will have to help us with any technical issues we encounter thus adding to their workload. And even though "adaptive change is distressing for the people going through it (Heifetz, p.132)," I'm confident that with the proper leadership and support we will all come out the other side unscathed.

### **How will you fund your solution?**

My solution to the teaching/learning problem I've identified will not cost very much, but the expenses that will be incurred will be covered by my employer, the MSU Libraries. My solution will utilize the resources (our license to Camtasia, video cameras, and server space, etc.) and expertise (librarians who teach these classes and the Systems Department that assists with technical computer problems/issues we encounter) that surrounds me here at the library. It will not cost the Libraries or anyone individually anything extra to make the videos and web page where I will host the videos and worksheet. I will use my library server space to host the resources which is something that already exists and is supported by our Systems Department. The main cost of implementing this change will be the time and energy of the librarians involved, mostly me, and also the technical assistance we require from time to time. So my project will take some time away from people and that will "cost" money for their salaries, but this is a project that directly affects, and is related to, the MSU Libraries mission and purpose to support the educational mission of the students, faculty and staff at MSU.

**What does your implementation path look like? Specifically, discuss the vision (why is the problem a problem? Why is the solution a good solution?), skills needed to implement the solution, incentives (why would fellow teachers want to implement the solution), resources**

**(what's needed to implement the solution), and then action plan (how will you ensure that the right actions are taken by the right people?).**

Step 1: Research and develop plan for flipped classroom approach to library instruction class

Step 2: Present plan for new approach to unit, specifically my supervisor (Head of Information Literacy) and the two other librarians who also work with the writing classes

Step 3: If approved, identify and approach one to three writing instructors to work with on a pilot program for this new approach. Explain approach to instructors and discuss ways to collaborate and undertake this plan.

Step 4: Further develop plan. Create videos and worksheet. Send drafts to other involved librarians and also the writing faculty I will be working with

Step 5: Refine plan with feedback and prepare final editions

Step 6: Meet with instructors and go through plan. What they will have to do in class before the students come to the library, what I will do with the students in class, what will happen afterwards, and how I will assess everything.

I believe this new approach will help students get more out of the class, and also help give the librarians who teach these classes more time to accomplish things in class, by requiring students to do some of the time-consuming work that is usually done in class, before class. They will come to class more prepared to work on their specific topic and will actually leave class with some ideas for keywords and resources for their own topics. Our current approach does not have the time necessary for them to do so, so instead students work as one on a sample topic during class that is reflective of the kind of topic one of them might do for their assignment. This approach would get some of the work we typically do in the class done before class, so students would come much more prepared and we would therefore be able to spend more time on things like evaluating the information students find to decide whether it is “good enough” to use for their assignments, which is one of the core things we are trying to address

with our instruction, but which we don't always have as much time to address as we would like to.

The skills necessary to make this change happen are both technical and leadership related. The person who implements this change will need to make sure they can communicate well with a variety of people. That person will also have to explain things thoroughly and well to other librarians, writing faculty members, interested administrators, and the technical staff who will be assisting as necessary. This requires the skills necessary to talk to a lot of different people and to make sure they understand what you are trying to do, what it is necessary and important, and why they should support your efforts. The person implementing this change will also need to have some technical skills like creating the videos and worksheet and making them available online for students and faculty to access. These are skills I already possess so I do not anticipate much education or training needed here. Some expertise is necessary to create the resources and lesson plan for the change, but also to help usher in the change and make it a smooth transition from the way things have been done up to now. To make this happen I will need an effective leaders' expertise in "continuous improvement, efficiency, and perfection" (Rooke, p.70), a strategists' ability at "handling people's instinctive resistance to change" (Rooke, p.71), and an alchemist's "capacity to deal simultaneously with many situations at multiple levels (Rooke, p.72).

The incentives necessary for the people to make this change will be different for different constituencies. I have the upmost confidence that the librarians I work with will be totally in support of this approach. Many, or all, of them have the same time constraint

concerns and would be thrilled to have more time in the classroom to get things done, and for the students to actually have time to get some searching done on their own topics. The Systems Department's mission is to support the libraries technical needs and this would definitely fall within that. It would add a bit to their already full workload, but they are a very capable group and would find a way to help when needed. Fortunately, my colleagues and I are not technically unskilled so I would anticipate that we would require minimal help from Systems; especially since my proposal does not require much that we cannot do ourselves. The only group that will be a bit more difficult to incentivize will be the Writing faculty. My plan would require them to:

- use some of their precious class time to talk about what we are going to do
- show them how to access the videos and documents online (or allowing me to come in and show them)
- answer any questions students might have (although I will give them my contact information to use when they need help)
- give students some kind of credit or points for completing this assignment to help ensure they actually complete it before coming to class

Thankfully, the library and my unit in particular have a very close relationship with many of the writing faculty. We've worked closely together over the past few years, even presenting at multiple conferences together, and I know that there are several instructors we could get on board easily. The difficulty would come if we ever wanted to expand this beyond a small pilot. That would require involving the Head of Information Literacy (my unit) and the Head of the Tier One Writing Program who would have to work together to implement such a major change, but for now this is not necessary to address since it will only become pertinent if the initial pilot, and subsequent instruction sessions as well, are successful and deemed something my unit, the libraries, and the writing department want to pursue.



I will ensure that the right things are done by the right people by making myself vocal and active in working with the people who would need to be involved in making this change. Thankfully, I will be the essential core member of this group, and the person who will have to do almost all of the planning, designing, and creating of the redesigned lesson plan and the actual materials for this program. I will need to involve other librarians, WRA instructors and faculty, but a large percentage of the “work” for this program will fall directly on my shoulders so I will be able to monitor myself to see how everything is going. I have already talked with my supervisor, and other librarians in my unit, who are all on board, and I have also identified at least one WRA instructor who is interested in working in having me flip his three sections of WRA 150 this fall. Any work or tasks I ask others to do will be monitored by my emails, phone calls, or drop-ins to check-in to see how things are progressing, but since most of the actual work will fall on my shoulders, I don’t anticipate many problems here.

#### Works Cited

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