Spring 3-16-2018

Examination of Student Outcomes in HSV 3650: Information Literacy

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Student Outcomes in HSV 3650: Information Literacy

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Introduction

"**Information literacy** is the set of integrated abilities encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning." (ALA, 2015)

Faculty from CHHS and University Libraries had observed that students in upper-level health science courses did not have the information literacy skills needed to succeed in these courses and graduate school curricula. Beginning in 2014, they developed and delivered a new course: HSV 3650: Information Literacy in the Health Sciences. Initially the impact of this course on students' information literacy was assessed by examining students' demonstrated information literacy in next course, HSV 4780: U.S. Health Policy. It was then determined that direct feedback from HSV 3650 faculty was needed in order to determine how best to revise the curriculum.

While there are studies in the library science and health education literature that assess the effectiveness of various teaching methods of information literacy skills (Franzen & Bannon, 2016), there is little mention in the literature about for-credit information literacy courses for health science students. In addition, while the health science education literature does discuss various literacies of health science students, such as "online literacy" (Valaitis, et al, 2005), there has been little, if any, mention of information literacy skills being fully integrated across health science curricula, even though several accrediting bodies of health science education programs require information literacy skills in programs.

Methods

- Invitations to participate sent recent and current faculty .
- HSIRB Informed Consent process followed.
- The 90 minute session was videotaped.
- Participants were seated in an informal setting. One of the researchers facilitated the discussion, documenting main ideas on a large white board.
- Videotape was transcribed and annotated (5 researchers).
- Themes were identified and analyzed (5 researchers).

Results

Four major themes identified:

- **Course Design theme** – this theme centers on how the course is designed. **Quotes** - "Developmentally, it's easy to scaffold." "It's easy to move them from one point to another…" "The master shell is not in great shape."

- **Student theme** - this theme centers on what students are being taught in the class. **Quotes** – "I feel like APA is defied." "..."it's going to be a little bit different ...once they leave college. In terms of ...what resources are they going to go to then?"

- **Course Resources theme** – This theme centers on the needed writing resources and the various faculty expectations on writing. **Quotes** – "You've got the APA manual and the guides that students buy on campus which differ. You've got Purdue OWL and the APA website which all have errors." "And so how do we get some consistency across what our colleagues are doing with APA or have an IHS guidebook on APA?"

- **Course Curriculum Issues theme**–This theme centers on recommendations for course improvements.   **Quotes** – "Students have told me it should be a three credit hour course." "For them to do well, they need to be spending that time outside of class, I would up it. Then make it more information literacy focused."

Discussion

- Course content warrants more than 2 credit hours in order to include more focus on information literacy
- HSV instructors are frustrated with the inconsistency of APA expectations through out CHHS classes.
- General guidelines for CHHS are needed to standardize the faculty's expectations of students
- We may be requiring things of the students in the class that are not available to them when they are in upper level classes or post graduation.

Conclusions and Future Steps

For HSV 3650 to evolve into a more effective course in producing information literate students, it is important that:
- Master Elearning course shell be updated
- Instructor training provided for all instructors
- Course credits be increased to three credits
- Course be placed earlier in curriculum sequence
- Develop consistent CHHS expectations for APA use

Future:
- Focus group of post-HSV 3650 students
- Quantitative analysis of students information literacy in upper-level HSV courses

References

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