An Eye-Opening Role: Helping Students Develop Professional Skills through Digital Media Projects
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An Opportunity
• As digital media tools become widely available to students, library professionals can take a leadership role in helping students use these tools to learn more actively and to become scholars and leaders in their fields.
• This role addresses the need for instruction on media literacy1 and information transfer.

Program Plan
• The Pitch: Course integrated digital media design and presentation skills classes & support services offered by Health Sciences Library (HSL) staff.
• Objective: Help students learn to use digital media tools to create posters, websites, audio, video, blogs to develop media literacy and professional communication skills.
• Participants: Graduate/Professional students in Occupational Science, Physical Therapy, Rehabilitation Counseling & Psychology, & Speech and Hearing Science programs.

Program Steps
1 Library instruction sessions
Lecture, discussion, in-class hands on practice.

2 Students continue work outside of class, using online materials created by library staff and...

3 Students present digital media projects that:
• Document clinical, service, research experiences for reflection and sharing.
• Showcase work to colleagues, professionals, parents at Student Research Days and become formal presentations to colleagues at conferences.

4 Finally, students are encouraged to make use of HSL expertise & resources for future projects.

Outcomes
• Following library instruction and presentations at a division, “Student Research Day,” other divisions requested similar classes.
• HSL focus shifted from consults on basic poster production skills to follow-up review, project planning, software selection, extension to multimedia & Web 2.0.
• Department Chair/Associate Dean urged adoption of model to give all students real experience prior to graduation.
• At request of faculty, instruction extended to medical students.

Conclusions
• Digital media projects give students the confidence to embrace and use multimedia tools & skills throughout their training, and to look for novel ways to employ them.
• Library staff and resources play an integral role in the success of the digital media design and presentation skills classes.
• Success encouraged faculty to work with HSL liaison to integrate library instruction throughout their curricula.
• Library staff will continue to offer digital media design and presentation skills classes and support.

Course lesson plans were developed with faculty input

References

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