In the summer of 2013, in advance of the roll-out of a new core curriculum, Le Moyne implemented Canvas, a new LMS with outcomes assessment capability. Librarians were early adopters of Canvas, designing an assignment that would take advantage of the system’s tools to assess learning at a program level.

The Project

All First Year students at Le Moyne College took Core 100, the first course in a new core curriculum that was implemented in Fall 2014. The library played a lead role in cultivating information literacy in the new core by partnering with faculty to deliver IL instruction to all students taking the first year seminar.

This is the first time that IL skills assessment was delivered to all first year students.

This project pilots methods for assessing student learning at the program and institutional levels.

Research Question

Will instruction in the information timeline prepare students to differentiate among the types of sources they will use?

Outcomes Assessed

1. Students can identify characteristics of scholarly and popular information sources.
2. Students can identify characteristics of primary, secondary, and tertiary sources.
3. Students can cite a source accurately.
4. Students describe their search strategy used to locate information sources.
5. Students evaluate a source’s context and content to determine if it fits their research needs.

Methods

- Core 100 – 34 sections (619 students)
- One in-class instruction session per section
- Information Timeline focus
- Students located 3 sources for evaluation
- LibGuide created to assist with research
- Analytic rubric embedded in LMS
- Outcomes mapped to ACRL IL standards 1, 2, 3

Limitations

- Outcomes Reporting in LMS not fully functional
- No Institutional Learning Goals at Le Moyne
- No pre-test
- Rubric not normed

Results

- Outcomes were measured on a scale of 1-5 with a score of 3 = mastery
- Average Outcome Score: 4.15
  - Outcome 1
  - Outcome 2
  - Outcome 3
  - Outcome 4

We wondered how students’ final assignment scores would look when compared to research tool they selected, so we pulled a random sample (n=60) and mapped total assignment score to research method:

- Total Assignment Score: 86.7
  - Catalog
  - Database
  - Google
  - Google Scholar

Discussion

- 85% of the Freshman class mastered all learning outcomes
- Students struggled with differentiating between secondary and tertiary sources
- Students located sources through a variety of methods (web, database, catalog)
- Students using Google as search tool performed lowest in a random sample

Recommendations for Fall 2014

1. Re-assess in-class lesson plan: Feedback from faculty and anecdotal evidence suggest that some portions of the in-class lesson could be altered to improve student engagement.
2. Gather pre-assessment data at Orientation.
3. Improve assignment rubric and perform norming process with librarians: The current rubric is vague and inconsistent in some areas, which contributed to a wide variance in some outcome scoring between grades. Also, a statistical analysis of a random sample (n=10) of library assignments showed poor inter-rater reliability across most outcomes.
4. Continue to support creation of Institutional Learning Goals. This project can serve as a case-study for assessment during the Middle States re-accreditation process.