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Debbie Anderson's MIL Report

The Investigation of Teaching Information Literacy and Digital Literacy in the Digital Age

The overall purpose of the fellowship project was to explore, research and identify new theories and techniques for teaching information and digital literacy. I was investigating some new teaching tools include Web-based instruction, online tutorials, and collaborative methods to infuse information and digital literacy within a specific course. The focus of this first half of this fellowship was to investigate new teaching methods and strategies, dialog with other librarians around the country concerning these methods to teach information literacy effectively in the digital environment and explore how these methods may be applied to students at Estrella Mountain Community College.

The secondary goal of this project was to develop a module that targets a specific subject discipline using these new techniques to teach information literacy.

My personal goal associated with this project was to have the gift of time that the MIL project allows you to look deeply into my area of instruction "information literacy" and see the current trends and adapt these trends to new ways of teach information literacy. A surprise to me was the personal growth that occurred through the work with the other MIL members during the year.

Project Implementation, Evaluation, and Documentation

The first semester was spent investigating teaching techniques used at other colleges via the Web and reading any information not only on teaching information literacy but on other teaching methods such as problem-based learning. The second half of my project was spent creating modules that would use some of the theories that I had seen and learned.

Although I had planned to develop one or two modules, the project seemed to grow with a life of its own. I developed 23 modules around the core competencies for Information Literacy set into place by the American Library Association. Each module had 3 parts which included an instructional lesson, a review and a practical or hands-on portion. Although all components were not completed by the end of the project, I was able to 'practice' these modules with Sian Proctor's geology classes over a period of a week. This was an extremely valuable experience for me. I was able to see what worked and what needed more work.

The modules are now located on the library page at Estrella Mountain Community College to be used by our instructors or any of the other libraries in the District. My experience was journaled online and is available at the Maricopa Community College MCLI homepage in the MIL section under my name.

Project Dissemination

I have presented the project to the District librarians and offered to make them available to anyone to use. Some of the librarians have given me valuable suggestions to improve the modules and the librarians at Estrella use them for instruction on a regular basis. I will be using what I have learned during this fellowship to move my campus towards an assessment tool for information literacy that will be used across disciplines.

Personal/Professional Reflection

My experience with my MIL project far exceeded my personal and professional expectations. The time to spend on this project was truly a gift. The experience working with colleagues from different disciplines and different campuses created a bond that I will always cherish. This group grew together with respect for each other as people and as master teachers. It enriched my life and made me appreciate the possibilities of what can go on in the classroom and in the minds of our students and teachers. It was one of the best professional experiences that I have had in the thirty years I have spent as a librarian.