

Presenters:

Sarah Read, English

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90-minute panel presentation

Teaching sustainable online research practices across the curriculum: The Q6C Solution

Like it or not, the web is usually the first stop for students—regardless of discipline—looking for information for academic or non-academic purposes. To manage the torrent of information available, students need the skills to determine both the trustworthiness of information and whether it is useful for one's purposes. Despite students' reported confidence with using information technology, their ability to be critical of online sources remains a literacy requiring explicit instruction (Kvavik (2005)). A short-term intervention used by instructors across the curriculum has often taken the form of a check list that prompts students to identify superficial characteristics of a site, such as the author and the URL domain. Research has shown (Meola (2004), Helm-Park et. al (2006)), however, that the largely rote practice of evaluating sources by check-list does not develop sustainable information literacies or critical practices for doing research that are transferable across contexts, within and beyond academia. A different kind of instruction for evaluative methods is required to develop these new literacies (Sidler (2002)).

This session will present an ongoing collaboration between instructors from three disciplines, History, English and Computer Science, to develop an instructional tool applicable across the curriculum for teaching sustainable online research practices. The Q6C Solution (Question, Categorize, Characterize Authorship, Contextualize, Corroborate, Critique Rhetorically, Conclude) is a heuristic for designing assignments and class activities that increase student investment by maintaining authenticity, scaffold the research process, and move students to the meta-cognitive level to ensure the transfer of practices across domains. Panelists will present the Q6C Solution, report on data collected from classroom applications of the model, and seek partnerships across the university to continue deploying and refining this process in real learning environments.

References:

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