Pathfinder or Pedagogical? Transforming Course Guides for Student Success

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Question

Does the design and layout of a course research guide impact student learning?

Hypothesis

Information Literacy instruction teaches complex concepts. Students will learn more effectively through a pedagogical-style research guide, which guides students through the research process, than a traditional pathfinder-style guide (e.g., books, articles, reference materials).

Methodology

Instruction

- Two sections of first-year seminar
- n=40
- Same professor
- Same librarian
- Same course content

Assessment

- Pre-Test
- Post-Test & Usability Questions
- 2 weeks after library session
- End-of-Semester Test
- Annotated Bibliographies
- Rubric

Conclusion

Students who were taught and used the pedagogical-style course guide demonstrated better learning and retention of concepts than students using the pathfinder-style guide.

For an example of a current pedagogical guide: http://iupui.campusguides.com/bridge