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Engineering a Collaborative Information Literacy Partnership

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Engineering a Collaborative Information Literacy Partnership

Jill Dixon & Angelique Jenks-Brown
Binghamton University Libraries
Engineering Program

- **Thomas J. Watson School of Engineering & Applied Sciences**
  - Relatively young school (founded 1983)
  - 2,500 students and 82 faculty
  - Programs in 8 engineering fields

- **Engineering Design Division**
  - Common first-year experience for students
  - Introduction to the engineering disciplines and tools
  - Core competencies: problem solving, decision making, team work, and communications skill
ABET Outcomes Similar to ACRL Information Literacy Outcomes

- An ability to identify, formulate and solve engineering problems.
- Recognition of the need for, and ability to engage in life-long learning.
- Knowledge of contemporary issues.
- An ability to use the techniques, skills and modern engineering tools necessary for engineering practice.
Library & Engineering Faculty Collaboration

- **2005-08**: Adjunct Training Sessions
- **2006-07**: Critical Research Practices Committee
- **2007-09**: Course-specific Research Guides
- **2009-10**: Course Building & Teaching Partnership
Course Building Partnership

- Engineering Communication II
  - Technical writing, communication skills, and documentation
  - Team-based conceptual engineering design project

- Librarian involvement
  - Course packet development
  - Instructional session planning meetings
Teaching Tools: Class Instruction

- **Library instruction session in the classroom**
  - Librarians review team project topics
  - Demonstrate database searching with similar topics and a handout
  - Reiterate instructor advice about research
Teaching Tools: Citations

- Citation help webpage
  http://library.binghamton.edu/research/guides/citationhelp.html
  - BU’s citation tip sheets
  - Purdue University OWL site

- Bibliographic management tool: RefWorks
Teaching Tools: Research Guide

LibGuide course research guide

http://libraryguides.binghamton.edu/engineering_design

- Tailored guide to class, not just library instruction session
- Show databases related to engineering
- Links to library resources
• Assigned readings
• Resources for Country Brief assignment
• Engineering databases
• Databases related to engineering project
Research Guide: Page 2

- Library resources
- Subject Librarian contact information
- University-related links
LibGuide Student Assessment

- **Assessment goal**: assess the guide resources and improve for next year’s students

- **Guide usage statistics** (February-May 2010)

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<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
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- **Online survey**
  - 8 questions about the resources
  - 81 respondents
Assessment Results

Did you use the Engineering Design subject guide?
Assessment Results

Did you find the Engineering Design subject guide useful?
Assessment Results

Which engineering database(s) did you use for your assignment?

![Bar chart showing the distribution of database usage for assignments.](chart.png)
Assessment Results

Which of the related databases did you use?
Assessment Results

Did you use other resources or search engines to find articles for your assignment?
Assessment Results

Did you use any of the following online library resources?
Assessment Results

Did you find the following Engineering Design subject guide resources useful?
Assessment Results

Did you find the following Engineering Design subject guide resources useful?

- “I felt that the web page put up on the library website was very useful. It gave us access to sites that contained the information we needed for our project.”

- “Overall the site was very useful in finding information for researching technologies. It was a little harder to find information for the country brief but it just took a little more searching.”

- “Engineering databases made it much easier to find relevant information.”

- “I used it mostly to find information for research papers related to engineering because those articles are hard to find elsewhere.”
Assessment Results

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions for the subject guide?

- “You’re website is very helpful and user-friendly.”
- “It would be better if there were more links to additional databases.”
- “It was a lot of busy work but I guess it needed to be done in order to finish our final report.”
Future Improvements

- More sources for country information
- More full-text databases
- More online resources
- Revise some survey questions
- Add links to library tutorials
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- Binghamton University. (October 2010). “Mechanical Engineering” http://www2.binghamton.edu/me/about/


Thank you!