DETT 611

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Assignment 5

Virtual Learning Library - Information literacy module

**Virtual Learning Library**

The University library has noticed a rise in issues with students regarding how to use library resources and information literacy issues. Librarians are unable to assist students with questions because the students are not physically present since they are taking distance education courses. The library at the University has created a plan that will provide a virtual learning library for online students to gain assistance and information literacy resources. The following plan will present the virtual learning library resource for the university. The plan consists of an overview of the library, services that it will provide and literacy courses the library will provide.

**Overview**

The platform for the virtual learning library will be Second Life. Second Life is a virtual world that allows users to “build their own characters, create their own worlds, communicate with other virtual users and explore worlds created by others” (Condic, p.337). Through the use of avatars, users can interact with others in the virtual world. Second Life also provides access to various Web 2.0 tools such as blogs and wikis that can be utilized in the library by faculty, students and teachers.

The virtual learning library will provide the following resources and services:

* Librarian assistance – Librarians will be on call to provide assistance to students with any questions they have regarding library resources or how to use information for assignments.
* Information literacy course – This course will provide resources on how to use research tools from the online library and the web to complete assignment or papers.
* Meeting rooms – Through the use of Second Life, students can have meeting rooms for group assignments, private sessions with librarians to ask questions or assistance with assignments and meet with teachers regarding assignments.
* Literary events – The library can host events where authors and public speakers can come and speak.

The resources for the virtual library can improve “staff shortages, a desire to provide more point-of-need assistance, and increase distance learning and a growing awareness of the learning styles of this so called millennial learner, who is said to prefer interactive technology based learning experience (Slebodnik & Riehle, p.33).

**Contributions to Faculty and Students**

The virtual learning library will be beneficial to students, faculty and teachers. It will allow students to gain a better understanding of how to use the resources for assignments and how to work with professors to complete assignments in a timely manner. Teachers are able to work with the students in their courses to ensure they are successful and can create a community for students and teachers to work together in the learning process. Through the use of the online resources in the virtual library, the information literacy course can provide students “generic skills in finding and evaluation information that would benefit them throughout their degree” (Johnston, p.208). Providing the resources online can “improve the information literacy competencies of students and that most students liked develop ping their computer literacy skills, especially online searching and retrieval” (Johnston, p.210).

**Conclusion**

Second Life has proven to provide various resources to students and it allows students “discover that the flying librarian is more likely to satisfy user’s information request of their point of need then the busy librarian behind the desk (Condic, p. 341). Through the use of Second Life, librarians can create “new reference tools with in second life and hold meetings there” (Condic, p.340). The virtual learning library will provide resources to students that are at a distance and allow them to have an opportunity for assistance with papers and assignments.

**Analysis of example learning modules**

**Example 1**

The goal of the Heinrich Heine University of Duesederf is to create a learning system to teach information literacy to students. The university created a learning system called Lerninformationsystem or LIS. The system allows for learning through the use of modules both through knowledge and question. The modules are also setup through precondition and post condition, where as “the precondition of the knowledge modules specifies which previous knowledge a user needs in order to understand the learning matter of the main part. The post condition defines the increase of knowledge” (Hauschke & Ullmann, p.57). Further, it “records the individual’s learning progress” (Hauschke & Ullmann, p.57). The system allows for the flexibility where students can improve skills “freely by scheduling information literacy whenever they want” (Hauschke & Ullmann, p.59). LIS also allows easy maintenance, change or textual updating, cancellation and personalized learning (Hauschke & Ullmann, p.59).

**Example 2**

Shippensburg University uses Blackboard to provide an online tutorial for their students to build information literacy skills. The objectives of the tutorial will utilize the standards from the ACRL information literacy standards. Along with that it will also be “focused on library resources” (Cook, p. 180). The tutorials will be provided through the Blackboard learning management system which “is very easy for students to use. At its most basic it allows students to access content and activities on the web. It also provides “tracking and grading functions to faculty” (Cook, p.182).

**Second Life vs. other learning modules**

Although both systems provide students and faculty with the resources they need to teach information literacy skills, the Second Life platform is very different. Second Life allows students to be more interactive with the other students, faculty and teachers while working on assignments and learning information literacy skills. Second Life is also being utilized in various public libraries throughout the United States. Through the use of Second Life libraries have been able to attract users from various locations. It also allows libraries to provide private meeting rooms “used for lectures, tutorials on using Second life and talks from visiting authors” (Stimpson, p.14). Librarians have access to various web 2.0 tools through Second Life “offering collected resources via linked virtual objects, appealing to new users by learning from popular Second Life sites and partnering with teens to develop valuable visual literacy skills” (Stimpson, p.14). Like the previous system mentioned in the paper, Second Life provides additional tools that some platforms do not provide which opens the door to additional resources to improve information literacy skills.

**References**

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