Looking back to move forward: Using student performance to assess instructional effectiveness

Elizabeth Moreton and Jamie Conklin
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Background

About the Course:
NURS 230: Terminology, Inquiry, Writing in Nursing
~ 120 sophomores

Challenge:
new librarian, Associate Dean, and librarian on maternity leave

Research Question:
How can we instruct more effectively?
Question 7
Perform a CINAHL search using your search terms from Question 3 using truncating. Limit your search to articles written in English and published in nursing journals from the past five years. Remember to use any truncating or Boolean operators that are appropriate. Paste the Permalink for your search below. (6 points: use of search terms with correct truncating and/or Boolean—2 points, use of limits—3 points, correct Permalink—1 point)
Methods

- Listed all possible errors
- Assigned codes to each
- Sampled 10
- Used tally sheet to record frequency and determine distribution of errors
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Results

111 students

629 total errors

5 big problems
5 Big Problems

= 80% of errors

5. Limits (7%)
4. Phrase searching (11%)
3. Truncation (13%)
2. Did not respond (24%)
1. Definitions (25%)
Problem #1: Definitions

Defining limits, keywords, and subjects
Testing memory or application?

Solutions
• PowerPoint
• Glossary
Problem #2: Incomplete answers

CINAHL headings, journal holdings

Solutions:
- Change visual layout of assignment
- Reduce # of tasks per question
Problem #3: Truncation
Problem #4: Phrase Searching

Includes brainstorming and applying

Solutions:
• Provide more examples in class and on assignment
• Reformat question
• Active learning practice exercise in class
Revised truncation and phrase searching question

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<tr>
<th>Word from topic</th>
<th>Synonyms</th>
<th>Truncation</th>
<th>Phrase Searching</th>
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<td>pregnan*</td>
<td>None- pregnancy</td>
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Word from topic |
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Problem #5: Limits

Publication date, language, nursing journals

Challenges:
• Forgot or don’t know how?
• Limits results too much

Solution:
• Instruct on article and database structure
Additional Points to Address

Search strategy
• Refining searches
• Redundancy in keywords
• Google Scholar search not useful

Solution:
• Active learning exercise to practice strategy
• Switch Google Scholar question to PubMed
Conclusion

Use assignments to assess librarian practices (and student performance)

- identify common errors
- determine root causes
  - instruction methods
  - search tools/resources
- redesign and re-evaluate
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