2017–2018 CARLI Instruction Committee Annual Project:
We Can't Do It Alone: Joining Forces for Sustainable Partnerships
CARLI Webinar Series

Introduction

The committee's theme for this year was "We Can't Do It Alone: Joining Forces for Sustainable Partnerships." Through this theme the committee sought to investigate ways that academic librarians can partner with teaching faculty or with other units on campus in order to create opportunities for library instruction that are effective, scalable, and sustainable. In order to explore this theme the committee planned a series of webinars to learn about successful programs and best practices for this kind of collaboration. Both webinars are available from the CARLI website at: https://www.carli.illinois.edu/products-services/pub-serv/instruction.

Webinars

On December 6, 2017 , Stephanie Richter and Cameron Wills, both from the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center at Northern Illinois University, presented the webinar, "Leading Online Sessions: Tips for Engaging Webinars." In this webinar about webinars, Richter and Wills discussed the best practices for developing and delivering effective webinars. Drawing on their extensive experience with online learning they also related common pitfalls that should be avoided in webinars. They presented this information in a way that was not tied to a specific technology, but could be utilized by librarians teaching online through a variety of platforms.

On March 19, 2018, Marielle McNeal, a librarian and Head of Teaching and Learning Services at North Park University and a member of the Instruction Committee, presented the webinar, "Train the Trainer: Ideas & Tips to Help Faculty Teach Information Literacy." In this webinar, McNeal presented the details of several online and in-person workshops that she developed to equip teaching faculty at North Park University with the knowledge and skills to provide information literacy instruction in their own classrooms. She also suggested ways to begin conversations with teaching faculty about information literacy and how to bridge terminological divides between the two groups.

In addition to both webinars being available from the CARLI website (https://www.carli.illinois.edu/products-services/pub-serv/instruction), this document includes descriptive outlines in order to provide easily accessible information for instruction librarians who were unable to attend the events or would like to refer back to ideas shared.

Leading Online Sessions: Tips for Engaging Webinars

Introduction

In this webinar, presenters share tips for producing engaging, interactive webinars no matter what platform you are using. Attendees learn the recommended techniques to prepare participants before they attend your live session and how to communicate with and manage the interactions of your participants. Best practices for designing online presentation content and the advantages of recording the session are also discussed.

Presenters

- **Stephanie Richter** is the Assistant Director of the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois. She consults with and provides professional development for faculty on integrating technology into teaching and works closely with academic and support units at the university on their teaching and teaching with technology needs. Ms. Richter holds a Master of Science in Education in Instructional Technology from Northern Illinois University, and is currently pursuing a doctorate in Instructional Technology.

- **Cameron Wills** is a Research Associate for the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois. In his role, he investigates best practices in teaching tools and technologies, and develops and delivers professional development on emerging instructional technologies. Mr. Wills holds a Master of Science in Education in Instructional Technology from Northern Illinois University and is currently pursuing a doctorate in Instructional Technology.

The Big Question: Why Hold an Online Session?

The first step to creating any online session, webinar, or conferencing session is to establish its purpose. The purpose serves as the foundation for a successful online session. In addition to driving content, the purpose should also be used to guide other important factors like intended audience, technology requirements, and confidentiality considerations.

Online sessions can be used to serve a variety of purposes, many of which go beyond teaching and training. These sessions can be used to:

- Deliver content by teaching or training.
- Share expertise by hosting a guest speaker or colleague.
- Create collaborative or group activities for students or faculty both on and off campus.
- Build a stronger sense of community by being more visible.

Decide what your session is going to accomplish and use that as the point of reference for the planning and design process.

Web Conferencing Platforms

There are a number of different platforms available but most have very similar features. Think back to the purpose of the online session to decide what features are needed to have a successful experience. When deciding on which platform to use, consider how interactive the session is going to be and whether a more formal or informal platform is needed. Also consider what your institution uses most frequently.

- Adobe Connect, WebEx, Blackboard Collaborate, Zoom, GoToMeeting, and Blue Jeans are popular vendor supplied platforms.
- Google Hangout, appear.in, and Skype are freely available and have a number of tools that can be used to facilitate engaging online experiences. Note that these are most often used for more informal purposes.

Preparing for the session

There are essentially five things you need to prepare for your online session.

1. Your slides

No one wants to look at a blank screen for an hour. On the flip side, overly busy slides can distract the audience from your content or make them feel like they could have read the content rather than attending the session. Neither are ideal. Here are some tips to strike a balance with your presentation.

Incorporate visuals that will keep your interactive session on track. PowerPoint is a great place to start preparing your presentation. For example, if you have an interactive element, like a poll or discussion question, create a slide as a reminder to yourself and as a focal point for your participants. Slides can also be used to guide discussion. Even if your session is meant to be a more flexible discussion, which does not necessarily warrant a rigid structure, still try to incorporate at least one slide or visual. However, it is important to note that an exception to using a visual could be if your session will mimic a face-to-face environment through the use of multiple webcams.

The simpler, the better when it comes to the message and appearance of your slides.

- Use plain backgrounds that contrast with the text.
- Use large Sans Serif fonts that are easy to read, like Calibri, Arial, Tahoma, or Verdana.
- Plan ahead and limit yourself to 4-6 bullets per slide. Each bullet should also only have 4-6 words. Avoid information overload but use an additional slide if you need it.
- Pace yourself. Each slide should take about a minute of your presentation time. Remember that the point is not to rush or cram information into your presentation, but to engage with your audience.

Think about the amount of bandwidth you will be using. Using audio, video, and visuals in your online presentation means using a lot of bandwidth, which can degrade the visual quality of your presentation. That means complex images or busier slides will be more difficult to view. Along those lines, it is a best practice to avoid the use of transitions or animations. Depending on the platform, animations may not render well. That means everything could appear on your slides all at once, which can be problematic depending on the content and the presenter's level of experience.

2. Your computer

Test your computer before the session! Check that you can access the platform, check your slides in the session (yes, click through them all), and make sure to turn off anything with notifications. If it dings, buzzes, or can distract you in any way then turn it off. That includes email, Skype, and instant messengers. In addition to being a potential distraction to you, it can be distracting to your audience if things keep popping up on the screen.

3. Your environment

Think about the area where you are presenting as a television studio. Lighting should probably be your first consideration. Avoid being back-lit. Any light facing a webcam will overwhelm the sensor, making everything appear either overly bright or dark. To fix this, turn off any lights that are behind you when you present. If possible, *add* lighting above you or behind your camera that illuminates your face. Also make sure you are in a quiet space. Post "Do Not Disturb" notices on your door or around your cubicle.

Turn off your cell phone, office phone, and other distractions. If you have multiple monitors, turn off the extra monitor. Take a look at what is behind you. It would be best to have a blank wall or backdrop but that is not always realistic. If presenting in your office, remove clutter or distracting décor out of the frame of your video. That might mean moving that mountain of papers slightly to the left, but it makes a huge difference to your audience.

4. Yourself

Think about yourself as a news anchor. Dress in darker or muted colors and stick to solid colors or simple patterns. Avoid white or pastel colors as they do not read well on camera. Do a camera test with your presentation outfit to see if the camera does anything funky.

Experiment with camera placement. See if there are areas where there is less monitor glare. This is especially true if you wear glasses. Try to keep the camera at about eye-level or higher. You want to feel comfortable making eye contact with the camera and thus your audience. And, let's be honest, you will also want to find your most flattering angle.

Not planning on stepping (or sitting) in front of the camera? Feel free to wear your bathrobe and bunny slippers if you are not going to appear on screen, but keep in mind that dressing professionally (even when your audience cannot see you) can make you feel more prepared and ready to present.

Practice your presentation in the web conferencing platform before your webinar. You will feel more confident during your presentation if you take the time familiarize yourself with all the features and tools in advance. This is especially helpful if you need to switch between presenting slides to an application share. Practice those steps in advance and make sure everything works the way you expect. Ideally you will be focusing on your content rather than on the presentation logistics.

Finally, keep water nearby. If your throat gets dry or you have difficulty speaking, take a moment to grab a drink. Don't be shy, your attendees will understand and they might even silently thank you.

5. Your participants

If you have any equipment requirements, let your participants know in advance. These can be computer specifications, internet connection requirements, use of specific browsers or plug-ins, or audio expectations like a headset and microphone. This can be done with a simple email. As a courtesy, provide a way for participants to test their system with the web conferencing platform in advance. This gives them time to modify their equipment, update their system, and troubleshoot any other problems that would prohibit them from participating.

Have a Plan B! If something goes wrong, be prepared to contact your participants with the details, i.e. a link to a different webinar platform or even a backup presentation time.

Send a reminder to your participants shortly before the beginning of the session. This has become a best practice. A reminder 15-30 minutes before the session is meant to be a kind gesture, so that participants do not need to dig through their email to find the link to connect. The reminder does not need to be long. The link, a brief message that says you are looking forward to seeing them, and a bit of information about when the platform will open should suffice.

Consider accessibility options. Almost every platform has a live captioning option. Or, if you have the means, you could use the webcam and a sign language interpreter. When that is not a realistic option, ask your participants in advance if they have a need for any type of accommodation.

Other Tips and Advice

- Online sessions can be useful tools to reach those who cannot be physically present.
- One presentation can serve multiple purposes: The synchronous webcast can be posted for asynchronous use at a later date on YouTube, as a podcast, and on the library website for workshops.
- If you will be giving online sessions for the foreseeable future, consider investing in a portable screen or photographer's backdrop to create a more professional and attractive filming environment.

Delivering the Session

At first, it can be difficult to get used presenting online because there are many things going on at one time. Therefore, it helps to have your notes prepared for what you'd like to say. Even a full script is okay, if you can read it naturally. Be sure to practice with someone you know.

Beginning – Before the session begins

Be in the session early (20-30 minutes). It helps to have time to get settled before everyone joins you. Create a welcoming environment by having a "welcome" slide that includes information such as the session title and session logistics. Greet participants as they enter. This can be individual greetings to participants as they enter or a periodic general announcement to welcome everyone and note that the session will begin soon. Consider including background music, if possible, which allows participants to check their audio. You might also think about having a poll question or trivia slides to keep participants interested. Encourage participants to test their microphone before the session begins

Beginning – When the session begins

Begin the session by introducing yourself. You want to let the audience know who you are and what you are going to discuss in the session. It is useful to provide a quick orientation of the web conferencing system (e.g., chat, audio settings, polling). This is particularly important since some people may be new to online sessions. Also, remember to start the recording. You may wish to start the recording after the introduction/orientation; however, it is easy to forget, so you may want to give yourself a reminder.

Middle

Remember to speak slowly and clearly. Look into the camera, not at your slides. Engagement with the webcam is important to make the session not boring. Avoid quick movement if you are using a webcam, because this doesn't read well on camera. Remember to smile! It can change the tone and cadence of your voice. Finally, if another participant is speaking, turn off your microphone to avoid feedback.

End

Remember to leave ample time for questions. It helps to have a solid exit line prepared so that participants know they can leave. For example, you can give reminders for next time, announcements, or where the recording will be available. Be sure to thank participants for joining the session.

Going Beyond Slides

A couple of other tools available in most web conferencing platforms:

Application Share.

- Use for demonstrating a software or sharing content from a file or website. This tool lets you show participants something that is on your computer.
- To prepare, launch the application to be shared and have it ready in the initial state you want to share with students. Be sure to close other programs and turn off notifications so they don't pop up while you are application sharing. Also, make sure your desktop is clean, so that participants can see shortcuts and appropriate icons.
- To implement, launch application share and be sure to describe the steps you are taking. Move slowly through the demonstration to allow time for the changes to be visible on participants' computers.

Whiteboard/Annotation

- Use for allowing participants to markup the shared content. This tool is great for interactive activities such as mind mapping or getting some consensus on a topic.
- To prepare, create a slide or document that participants can annotate. Note that you cannot use this tool with application share.
- To implement, be sure to give participants specific instructions on how you would like them to annotate the page. You may even want to save the results for later viewing, if appropriate, by taking a screenshot.

Polls

- Use multiple choice questions for gathering quick, informal responses. Polls can be used throughout the session to get to know your participants or check what they've understood so far. Note that in most platforms, poll data is not saved
- To prepare, write poll questions in advance and then create slides for them
- To implement, launch the poll and ask participants to answer. You can then share results with everyone, if appropriate

Breakout Sessions

- Use for collaborative discussions in small groups within a session. Participants in breakout sessions, for example, can work on answering specific questions or sharing personal experiences. A debrief can then take place in the main session.
- To prepare, create PowerPoint slides with instructions for the breakout activity. Participants will need to be a little more skilled at using the software since they will need to be able to turn on their microphones and use it to interact with one another. It helps to practice beforehand putting people into a session and coming back
- To implement, explain the task before putting participants in breakout groups. It is a good idea for you to move between groups to help, if necessary.

Q&A Tool

- Use for managing and responding to questions in a larger session. Instead of using chat, which can be unwieldy for very large sessions, this tool can be useful; however, it is more formal and restrictive. Also note that it is not available in all platforms, for example, not in Blackboard Collaborate.
- To prepare, enable the Q&A tool in the platform and include slides on how to use it
- To implement, it is best to assign someone other than the presenter to monitor the Q&A and answer questions, if possible. The person monitoring the Q&A can ask questions of the presenter at an appropriate time.

Session Takeaways

- Have a clear purpose, that is meaningful to your audience.
- Plan, plan, plan.
- Practice to improve your skills.

Train the Trainer: Ideas & Tips to Help Faculty Teach Information Literacy

Introduction:

“Train the trainer” is a model used to describe the practice of training faculty on the best ways to teach information literacy to students. Offering “train the trainer” opportunities is essential for a strong information literacy program, particularly at small to medium-sized academic libraries that rely heavily on one-shot sessions. The goal of the “train the trainer” model is to expand the reach of information literacy instruction by targeting faculty that teach courses across various disciplines. In this webinar, the presenter shared ideas and tips for equipping faculty with the skills that they need to effectively teach information literacy.

Webinar Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the webinar, attendees were able to :

1. Recognize the challenges and barriers that faculty often encounter in their approach to teaching information literacy.
2. Provide examples of teaching strategies, language choices, and conversation starters that can improve their communication with faculty.
3. Identify train-the-trainer opportunities on their campus that leverage faculty professional development to improve student learning.

Presenter:

- **Marielle McNeal** is the Head of Teaching and Learning Services at North Park University in Chicago, where she coordinates and leads the library’s efforts to integrate information literacy across the curriculum. She received a bachelor’s degree in English and Professional Writing from Eastern Illinois University and a master’s degree in Library and Information Science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She is currently working toward a master’s degree in Higher Education Administration and Leadership. Her professional interests include information literacy instruction for at-risk students, information literacy in the health sciences field, and the librarian’s role in faculty development.

Whose responsibility is it teach information literacy?

Information literacy instruction is a dual responsibility of librarians and faculty. The introductory text for the ACRL Framework emphasizes the importance of faculty collaboration and professional development. The ACRL Framework states that:

- “**Teaching faculty** have a greater responsibility in designing curricula and assignments that foster enhanced engagement with the core ideas about information and scholarship within their disciplines.”
- “**Librarians** have a greater responsibility in identifying core ideas within their own knowledge domain that can extend learning for students, in creating a new cohesive curriculum for information literacy, and in collaborating more extensively with faculty.”
  (ACRL Framework, 2015)

Teaching Information Literacy: Librarian Frustrations vs. Faculty Challenges

There are a number of common challenges and frustrations that librarians face in their work with faculty. For example, librarians may feel like their instruction efforts are unsuccessful due to miscommunication with faculty. They may also feel like poorly designed assignments make it challenging to plan one-shot sessions. Lastly, librarians often feel under or utilized because of faculty expectations.

However, in addition these common challenges and frustrations, faculty are faced with their own barriers when it comes to teaching information literacy. Faculty often:

- Have a limited understanding of the factors that affect students' information literacy.
- Are unfamiliar with information literacy concepts and knowledge practices.
- Have limited time in their course syllabus to incorporate additional topics, content, or assignments.
- Are unaware of the best practices for teaching and incorporating information literacy into their course or discipline.

What is train the trainer? The "train the trainer" model can be useful in the effort to fully integrate information literacy into the curriculum and impact student learning on a larger scale. Train the Trainer focuses on educating faculty about the challenges and barriers that students encounter when doing research. Faculty are also educated about the best practices and strategies for teaching information literacy. Lastly, librarians train faculty how to integrate and scaffold information literacy into their courses. Instead of focusing only on educating students, the "train the trainer" model equally prioritizes the importance of educating faculty.

Train the Trainer Ideas:

Before developing a "train the trainer" program at your library, first think about the ways you can take advantage of the professional development opportunities that are already available on your campus. For example, is there a new faculty seminar or group that meets regularly on your campus? Is there a faculty common read program or book discussion group? The following "train the trainer" ideas were briefly highlighted during the webinar:

- Workshops: Lead a single workshop or series on information literacy teaching strategies or the best practices for designing effective research assignments. Librarians can also design a workshop series that is based on each of the ACRL's Frames.
- New Faculty Seminar: New faculty are usually eager and open to receiving help when it comes to designing a new assignment or course. Talk to your Provost or Dean about offering a "train the trainer" session during the new faculty seminar.
- Book Discussions/Common Read: Suggest a book or group of articles on the topic of information literacy, scaffolding research skills, or innovation teaching strategies.
- Online Learning: Collaborate with your online learning department to design a self-paced course, tutorials, modules, or a webinar.

Survey Your Faculty

If you uncertain about what "train the trainer" topics the faculty on your campus would benefit from the most, start by surveying a select group. Examples of survey questions include:

1. What critical thinking/research skills are the most challenging to teach? (Refining a topic, developing a good research topic, finding sources, evaluating sources, incorporating sources, plagiarism/misuse of sources, etc.)

2. What types of professional develop/training opportunities do you prefer? (Webinars, in-person workshops, self-paced courses, reading/discussion groups, online tutorials/modules, etc.)

Train the Trainer Topics

If you prefer not to send a survey, there are several "train the trainer" topics that faculty on just about every campus could benefit from learning more about:

1. Creating Effective Research Assignment: There is an abundance of assignment "checklists" that librarians have created and made available online. However, many faculty could benefit from learning how to properly scaffold information literacy skills into an assignment.
2. Assignment Ideas: The traditional 8-10 page paper is often not the most effective way to teach research skills. Faculty can benefit from learning new ways to teach students how to develop good research questions, evaluate sources, analysis sources, etc. The ACRL Framework Toolkit has some great assignment ideas.

Assignment Design Webinar

In Fall 2017, the presenter facilitated a "train the trainer" webinar for the faculty at North Park University. The webinar focused on Best Practices for Creating Effective Research Assignments. The goal of the webinar was to provide seven simple best practices for designing effective research assignments that faculty could use to create new assignments or revise existing ones.

Learning Outcomes for Faculty Attending the Webinar:

- Understand the common challenges and barriers that student encounter when doing research.
- Understand how the best practices for designing effective research assignments can positively impact student learning.
- Understand the benefits of collaborating with a librarian when creating or revising a research assignment.

The webinar focused on the following seven best practices:

1. Determining the learning goals for the assignment
2. Identifying the appropriate type of assignment
3. Knowing your students' research preparedness
4. Providing a roadmap/guide for the assignment
5. Scaffolding the assignment
6. Testing the assignment
7. Collaborating with a librarian

Planning the Webinar:

The webinar was part of the "Webinar Wednesday Series" that was started by the Center for Online Education at North Park University. The series was originally created to educate faculty about various tips for using the Canvas Learning Management System. However, the series was then expanded to include more general teaching and learning topics. The following chart provides details on the planning process for the webinar:

Logistics	Checklist
Canvas LMS Big Blue Button (integrates with Canvas)	❑ Learning Outcomes ❑ Identify 7 best practices to highlight
Webinar Wednesdays Series Email reminders sent to faculty	❑ Create Slides ❑ Outline/Notes
Webinar recording saved to Vimeo and posted to Canvas	❑ Assessment

In addition to recording of the webinar, an assignment design template was also made available to faculty. The template provided faculty with a step by step process for designing a research assignment. The template also asked faculty to reflect on the following questions:

- How does the assignment align or integrate with the learning outcomes for the course?
- What are the learning targets for the assignment?
- What are the most critical steps of the assignment? How will you break this into small parts?

In-Person Workshops

In addition to the Assignment Design Webinar, the presenter also facilitated two in-person workshops at North Park University. The first workshop was tailored for faculty that teach the first-year seminar course. The second workshop was targeted for faculty interested in participating in the university's new Catalyst Semester.

Workshop 1: Critical Thinking and Information Sources in the First Year Seminar Course

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand the common challenges and barriers that first-year students encounter when navigating the information landscape.
- Understand the importance of incorporating beginner level "information literacy" related assignments in the first-year seminar course.
- Develop an information literacy assignment that helps students improve their critical thinking skills.

Workshop 2: Creating Effective Research Assignments for City-Centered Learning

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand the purpose and benefit of incorporating city-centered research assignments into a course.
- Understand the common challenges and barriers in finding, accessing, and analyzing Chicago neighborhood data/information.
- Understand the best practices for designing city-centered research assignments.
- Understand the value of collaborating with a librarian when designing city-centered research assignments.

Three tips for Educating Faculty:

1. Instructional Design: Dumping loads of information on faculty will not help to facilitate learning! Use an instructional design model to help organize content in a way that will help faculty understand and retain the information. For the in-person workshops, the presenter used Gagne's Nine Events of Instruction.

Event	What is it?	How to Use it
Gain attention	Capture learners' attention	Show a video, share an article, or the findings from a report about information literacy
Describe instructional goal	Explain why it's useful	Handout or PowerPoint with LO's
Stimulate prior knowledge	Help connect what they already know or have tried with what they will learn	Ask faculty to share what strategies/assignments they have tried in the past

Event	What is it?	How to Use it
Present material to be learned	Organize material into segments/chunks	Present content but also incorporate time for discussion
Provide guidance for learning	Provide support and resources	Handouts Libguide Examples of Activities/Assignments
Elicit performance (practice)	Allow learner to apply skills	Worksheet Assignment Design Template

2. Build Your Case: Use recent research about information literacy such as Project Information Literacy publications or Stanford University's "Evaluating Information: The Cornerstone of Civic Online Reasoning" report to communicate the importance of information literacy instruction. Presenting assessment data about the information literacy skills of first-year students on your campus is also helpful.

3. Conversation Starters: Use conversation starters to help faculty reflect on information literacy and student learning. Some examples of conversation starters include:
   - What do you wish your students better understood about research?
   - What part of the research process do your students struggle with the most?
   - What is missing from your students' research assignments/papers?
   - What part of your assignment is the most challenging for students?
   - What critical thinking skills or knowledge are needed for research in your discipline?

4. Language Choices: Avoid library jargon! Listen closely to to the words/phrases that faculty use when discussing information literacy.

Librarians	Faculty
Information Literacy	Critical Thinking Intelligent Use of Information Critical Analysis
Integrating/Scaffolding Information Literacy	Research Process Research Steps
Life-long learning	Self-motivation Active-citizenship Personal development

5. Invite Your Supporters: If you are offering a "train the trainer" workshop on your campus, invite 1-2 faculty members that you have a successfully worked with in the past. Ask them to share what they have learned about information literacy from working with you. Lastly, be transparent about the collaboration and learning process.

Resources to Share with Faculty

- Community of Online Research Assignments (CORA): https://www.projectcora.org
- Framework for Information Literacy Sandbox (ACRL): http://sandbox.acrl.org
- "Big Picture" Video Tutorials (NCSU): http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/tutorials
- Teaching and Learning Guide (ACRL): http://acrl.libguides.com/slilc/teaching
- Handouts, Worksheets, and Activities for Information Literacy (Indiana Univ): https://libraries.indiana.edu/handouts-worksheets-activities-information-literacy#handouts

Recommended Readings

- Cox, J. L., & VanderPol, D. (2004). Promoting information literacy: A strategic approach. *Research Strategies*, 20(1/2), 69-76.
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- Smith, R.L., & Mundt, K.E. (2006). Philosophical Shift: Teach the Faculty to Teach Information Literacy [White Paper]. Retrieved March 10, 2018, from Association of College and Research Libraries: http://www.ala.org/acrl/publications/whitepapers/nashville/smith.
- Veach, G. L. (2009). Teaching Information Literacy to Faculty: An Experiment. *College & Undergraduate Libraries*, 16(1), 58-70.