

NEWS FROM

OWEN LIBRARY

Vol. 2, No. 1

Fall 2009

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Assessing Student Learning Outcomes with Project SAILS

The University of Pittsburgh is committed to the assessment of student learning outcomes. The University Library System (ULS) has developed several initiatives to aid faculty in this mandate. One way the ULS is supporting this endeavor is through the administration of the Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS) test. SAILS is an online instrument designed to assess the critical thinking, or information literacy, skills of students and provide standardized data on student learning outcomes to university and library administrators. Information literacy, which is defined by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) as the set of skills needed by an individual to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information, is the basis for lifelong learning. The ACRL skills are reflected in the Middle States Commission on Higher Education's standards and are the basis of Owen Library's instruction program.

Currently, the ULS is administering the SAILS test to benchmark freshmen and seniors. This allows librarians to target their information literacy instructional efforts, ensuring that Pitt students graduate with the skills they need to understand and use information effectively and ethically in life and in their careers. Additionally, the results provide insight into how critical thinking and research skills of Pitt students measure up with peer institutions.

Faculty can also benefit from SAILS data. While individual student data is not currently available, the SAILS test can be customized to include demographic questions that the students must answer, such as class standing, major, or subdivision. These results can be useful for accreditation data and for identifying which student research skills need to be reinforced. Librarians are available to work with faculty to target specific concepts through library instruction or customized research assignments.

(Continued on page 3)

Are you a book batterer?



Do you eat or drink while reading and don't care if crumbs drop or coffee spills on to the page?

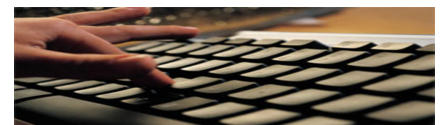
Do you remove books from the shelf by pulling on the top of the spine?

Do you underline and annotate books that you have borrowed?

Do you use a rusty paper clip to mark your place in a book?

If you answered "yes" to any of these, then you may be a Book Batterer.....Please use books responsibly so others may use them in the future!

NEW ELECTRONIC RESOURCES: A SELECTED LIST



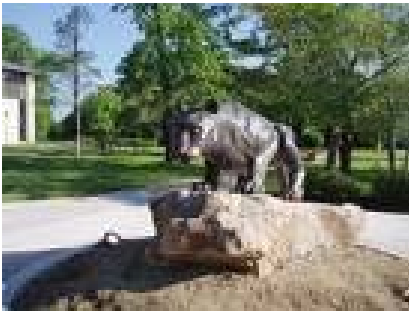
The following is a selected list of new or upgraded databases available through the ULS Digital Library. Databases are accessible through the Library's "Databases A to Z" unless otherwise noted. Upgrades to existing databases are also noted.

** *Children's Literature Comprehensive Database* -This full-text database is a comprehensive source for reviews and other materials on children's books.. Coverage is 1993 to present.

***Music Online*– Music Online is a suite of databases offering full-length recordings of music in a variety of genres, including American Song, Classical Music Library, Contemporary World Music, Jazz Music Library, Smithsonian Global Sound for Libraries and African American Song.

** *Points of View Reference Center*—Points of View is designed to assist researchers in understanding the full scope of controversial subjects. Undergraduate students can use Points of View as a guide to debating, developing arguments, writing position papers, and for development of critical thinking skills.

***The Sixties*– When complete, this collection of primary documents and personal narratives from 1960–74 will contain over 150,000 pages of fully searchable text. These materials are frequently rare and hard to find.



Mountain Cat Trivia

1. Shortly after the 1977 Johnstown flood, Pitt-Johnstown housed how many people involved with the flood?
A. 850 B. 970 C. 1,000 D. 1,500
2. The swimming pool in the Zamias Aquatic Center contains _____ gallons of water.
A. 100,000 B. 250,000 C. 150,000 D. 75,000
3. How many patrons can be accommodated in the main theatre of the Pasquerilla Performing Arts Center?
A. 850 B. 970 C. 1,000 D. 1,500
4. True or False: In the last fiscal year (2008-2009), the Owen Library Interlibrary Loan department lent 1,658 items to other libraries.

Open Sessions for Fall Term

→ Looking for ways to improve your research skills?

→ Wondering how to get ahead in class or at work?

Then check out...

Owen Library Open Sessions

In each session, you'll learn tricks and tips for making the research process easier and more effective.

Finding a Needle in a Haystack: Tips for Effective Internet Research (Owen Rm. 209)

Tuesday, September 29 (5:00 pm)

Thursday, October 15 (4:00 pm)

Wednesday, October 28 (6:00 pm)

Beyond Google Web (Owen Rm. 209)

Wednesday, September 30 (6:00 pm)

Thursday, November 5 (4:00 pm)

Tuesday, November 10 (11:00 am)

Surviving Group Projects: Skills for Collaborative Research (Owen Rm. 209)

Thursday, October 8 (4:00 pm)

Wednesday, October 14 (6:00 pm)

Tuesday, October 27 (5:00 pm)

Ace Your Paper: Citing Sources & Avoiding Plagiarism (Owen Rm. 209)

Tuesday, October 6 (5:00 pm)

Wednesday, October 21 (4:00 pm)

Tuesday, November 3 (11:00 am)

Everyone is welcome, but seating is limited, so please **sign-up** at least 1 week in advance.

We'll have completion certificates available for students attending as homework or for extra credit for class. Sessions are approximately 1 hour duration.

Sign up by calling Melissa Mallon at x7287 or stopping at the Owen Library's Circulation Desk to sign up!

Assessing Student Outcomes with Project SAILS (cont.)



project
SAILS
Standardized Assessment of
Information Literacy Skills

While Pitt-Johnstown has been participating in freshman SAILS testing for several years, Fall 2008 was the first semester the ULS successfully administered the SAILS test to freshmen on all Pitt campuses. UPJ freshmen take the SAILS test as part of their University Scholarship coursework. While the test is voluntary, most University Scholarship instructors awarded a few points or extra credit for students who completed the test. Johnstown had the highest completion rate of the regional campuses, with almost 80% of students completing the assessment. The University Scholarship program will again participate in the freshmen testing this fall.

As previously mentioned, one of the goals of the ULS is to also assess the information literacy skills of graduating Pitt seniors. While a small pilot version of senior

SAILS testing occurred this past spring, Owen Library is striving to meet the goal of increased participation in 2010. Faculty teaching senior level classes (such as a capstone course) can support this effort by encouraging their students to participate in SAILS. Faculty members might offer their students extra credit or a few points for completing the test, or help by handing out postcards to their students announcing the initiative. Any student with at least 90 credits can participate regardless of their anticipated graduation date.

The SAILS test, which takes 15-30 minutes to complete, will be accessible through the Pitt Portal and can be completed outside of class. Each student that completes the assessment will receive a “thank you” page that can be printed and turned in to their instructor. Owen Library will also have a drawing for a gift certificate to the campus

bookstore; students who do not receive credit from an instructor can print off their “thank you” page and bring it to the library to register for the drawing. It is important to note that students may only take the SAILS test one time.

The dates for senior SAILS testing will be announced in a broadcast email near the end of the fall semester. If you are interested in having your senior capstone course participate this year, or if you have any questions, please contact **Melissa Mallon, Library Instruction Coordinator**, at x7287 or mmmallon@pitt.edu. Additional information regarding the SAILS test is available on the ULS Information Literacy site at <http://www.library.pitt.edu/services/classes/infoliteracy/>. Please help Owen Library in our goal to evaluate the research skills of graduating seniors at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown.

Check It Out @ Owen Library: Library Instruction and Reference Wiki

Owen Library is offering a new way for students to stay connected: the Owen Library Instruction and Reference Wiki. The Wiki developed out of a desire to provide access to library reference and instructional materials in one convenient location. Handouts, presentations, and other relevant research material will be added by librarians to a page on the Wiki corresponding with the class they are teaching. The material will stay on the Wiki until the end of the semester so that students can return later to print out handouts or contact the librarian that taught their class for further clarification or to request an individual research consultation. Course instructors will also be welcome to provide documents for the Wiki, such as assignments tied to the library instruction.

In addition to the course-related materials, students will find links to help guides and online information literacy tutorials. Handouts from Owen Library Open Sessions will also be available to download. No password is required to view and download materials from the Wiki, which can be accessed at: <http://owenlibraryinstruction.pbworks.com>. For questions regarding the Wiki, including requests to add material, please contact Melissa Mallon, Library Instruction Coordinator, at mmmallon@pitt.edu or x 7287.



Change to Guidelines for Submitting Course Reserves

Effective Fall Semester 2009/10, articles and book chapters submitted for course reserve will be placed on Electronic Reserve. Students have access to E-Reserves 24/7 via PITT*Cat+* from any networked computer, including their personal computers. Students may print E-Reserve material if desired and will not incur any overdue fines when they need additional time to use a resource.

Procedures for Submitting E-Reserves:

- Instructors must supply a completed copy of the Electronic Reserve List form, which is available at www.library.pitt.edu/services/requests/eres.pdf with complete citations for all material being placed on e-reserve to Owen Library Circulation Staff.

- Reserve staff in Hillman Library (Oakland campus) will scan individual articles and book chapters if the copy submitted is of good quality and printed on a standard 8.5" x 11" paper. Clean copies of articles and chapters make legible scans. Single-sided copies scan faster.
- If an article that an instructor wishes to use is available from any of our electronic resources, please provide the URL and we will link directly to the e-version. You do not need to print it out.
- Instructors are responsible for copyright compliance related to the materials they place on reserve. Please familiarize yourself with the ULS policy found at www.library.pitt.edu/guides/copyright/ and be sure that your request adheres to these basic guidelines: Items can appear on reserve

in only one format. Only one excerpt, or 10% of each source text, *whichever is less*, can be placed on any one reserve list.

- Instructors will receive separate access passwords for their lists and are responsible for distributing them to their classes.

Items are handled on a first come, first served basis. Please submit your reserve materials as soon as possible, and allow up to four weeks for processing. In the event that an item must be available immediately, a photocopy of the item may be placed temporarily on reserve at Owen Library until it becomes available electronically. Complete guidelines for submitting materials for course reserves are available at <http://www.library.pitt.edu/john/coursefaculty.html>.

Mountain Cat Trivia Answers

1. (Answer: 970 ... 250 were senior citizens flooded out of their downtown apartments; 180 were people flooded out of their homes; and 540 were volunteers and workers assisting with flood relief and recovery).
2. (Answer: C - 150,000 gallons).
3. (Answer: 1,000 patrons).
4. (Answer: False ... the ILL department actually lent 2,229 items to other libraries. The number of items borrowed for Pitt-Johnstown users totaled 1,658).

Owen Library Hours Fall Term

- Sunday**
1:00 pm - 12:00 Midnight
- Monday - Wednesday**
8:00 am - 12:00 Midnight
- Thursday**
8:00 am - 11:00 pm
- Friday**
8:00 am - 6:00 pm
- Saturday**
10:00 am - 6:00 pm

**** Computer lab closes 15 minutes prior to closing of the library.**

****Hours vary during holidays and between terms.**

Owen Library Contact Information

Patricia Balko	Collection Management Librarian	x 7290	balko@pitt.edu
William Caldwell	Library Assistant	x 7300	woc7@pitt.edu
Julie Dewey	Library Assistant	x 7289	judewey@pitt.edu
Sara Herr	Library Specialist	x 7292	herr@pitt.edu
David Kupas	Access Services Librarian	x 1983	dmk24@pitt.edu
Jim Langan	Technical Services Librarian	x 7298	jlangan@pitt.edu
Melissa Mallon	Library Instruction Coordinator	x 7287	mnmallon@pitt.edu
Regina Matthews	Library Assistant	x 7280	buterbau@pitt.edu
Johanna Pedrazzani	Night Circulation Supervisor	x 7300	ppedrazz@pitt.edu
Deborah Rinderknecht	Library Director	x 7288	drinderk@pitt.edu