Project Information Literacy (PIL) recently released the results of a study of high school seniors and college freshmen and the challenges they face with college-level research. The study, titled “Learning the Ropes: How Freshmen Conduct Course Research Once They Enter College,” was authored by PIL Director Alison J. Head. PIL has been conducting national studies of the information behaviors and competencies of college students since 2008.

The study's major findings were that college resources are much more numerous and complex than what students had been using in high school, that students lack basic search strategies for the academic environment as their high school methods are not adequate, that academic material is difficult to comprehend but students develop coping strategies, and that while some students upgrade their skills over the course of their first year, others stick with Google and Wikipedia.

The study describes a “staggering disparity” between the library resources available to students in high school and in college. At the same time, they found a lack of awareness of this disparity among faculty. Students are expected to use scholarly articles, yet have no experience with academic literature. While today's students may have extensive experience with Google's search engine, that experience does not translate to academic databases. Three quarters of the students surveyed had trouble with coming up with good keywords for their searches, and more than half of them had difficulties with sifting through irrelevant results and selecting worthwhile sources.

Yet while so many students reported having difficulties, few ask for help. “Asking for help,” in fact, was rated as one of the most difficult tasks. The view among students was that being in college meant being self-sufficient, therefore asking for help “was unacceptable and simply not done.” That view was one of several common misconceptions that the study uncovered. Other common misconceptions included the ideas that everything is online, and that books are outdated and no longer relevant. An interesting thing about the aversion to asking for help is that it was cited in last year's PIL study as a major problem among recent graduates in the workplace, by both the graduates and their employers.

The study offers four recommendations for addressing the freshman plight:

- Make connections with high schools
- Integrate research projects broadly throughout the curriculum
- Approach research papers as apprenticeships
- Reframe expectations of freshmen

(Continued on page 3)
Cite It Right!

When using others’ work in your assignments, be sure to always give attribution to the original author by properly quoting any borrowed passages and referencing them with complete citations. Doing so will help you to avoid plagiarizing and also assist in leading the reader back to the original work.

The construction of citations varies by the format of the original work (i.e., whether it’s a journal article, book, website, etc.) and the citation style (e.g., MLA) that you are using. You should use a single citation style throughout your assignment.

Owen Library maintains manuals on the most popularly used citation styles in the Course Reserves collection. This collection is housed at the Circulation Desk and can be searched in the Course Reserves tab of PITTCat Classic under Department: UPJ Permanent Citation Style Manuals. In addition to the style manuals, there are many tools to help you correctly construct citations.

Most of the library periodical databases, such as Academic Search Premier, include a built-in citation tool that will generate citations to individual articles for you. A note of caution: it’s recommended that you still consult the style manual to ensure that the citation is constructed correctly. EndNote and Mendeley are bibliographic citation managers that assist you in constructing not only single citations, but also a full bibliography or reference list. (If you are interested in learning how to use EndNote, sign up for the Library Workshop on February 11 at Owen Library!)


Congratulations iPad winner!

Owen Library would like to congratulate Holly Gebhardt, winner of the iPad raffle drawing. The drawing was held in conjunction with this year’s SAILS (Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills) survey. The University offers the SAILS survey each year as a way of benchmarking ourselves against other universities. This year the survey was opened to all students to give the University a better picture of the year-to-year development of information skills. We appreciate everyone’s participation in the survey.

Holly Gebhardt (right) receives her new iPad from Paul Bond (left), Library Instruction Coordinator.
New scanner

Owen Library acquired a book scanner this fall. The scanner can scan books and pages of sizes up to 11x17 inches. Scanned documents can be sent by email, saved to a smartphone through a QR code, saved to a Google Drive account or saved to a flash drive. The scanner gives the Pitt-Johnstown community a free alternative to the photocopy machines. A page could be scanned as a PDF, saved to a flash drive, and then printed out from one of the library computer terminals.

The scanner is designed to accommodate books. The scanning window goes right to the front edge of the device, so a user can scan a flat image of a full page, top to bottom and outside edge to the middle fold. This solves the problem of text curving into a shadow where the two facing pages meet.

Pages can be scanned in color, grayscale, or black and white, and they can be saved as images, PDFs or Word documents. The scanner can also save pages as searchable PDFs, which preserve the look of the page while interpreting the text on it. Scanner users should be aware that the quality of the image-to-text translation is dependent on the clarity of the original page. If a page has stray marks on it, or if text from the other side of the page is visible, typographic errors may occur when saving as a Word document.

The four recommendations fall into two broad categories: understanding incoming students and working closely with them on research throughout the curriculum. Budget pressures at the K-12 school level over the past several years have had an outsized impact on school libraries, and the regulatory changes of over a decade ago shifted educational priorities away from writing and research. This means that some students have their initial encounter with a library and librarians when they come to college. Others only have experiences with libraries that were understaffed, underfunded and outdated. The many misconceptions about academic libraries are hardly surprising in that light. While we may not be able to solve the problems of K-12 education, we do need to be aware of them. What we can do is recognize that while today’s students may be called the “Google generation,” they are not necessarily skilled at using Google, and may have no search strategy beyond googling.

That leads to the other two recommendations. Freshmen frequently credited their English Composition classes with helping them develop their research skills. The author of the study suggests expanding that kind of close guidance beyond Composition courses, and integrating it in all the disciplines. The other recommendation is to integrate librarians more into the research process. The one shot library instruction sessions are helpful, but the embedded librarian approach, where the librarian has a more long-term connection to a course, allows for the students to get more help at more points of need. It also helps to increase students' comfort with the library and their awareness of its resources.

At Pitt-Johnstown, we are taking many steps in the right direction. Many faculty members have made connections with the librarians at Owen Library, bringing librarians into their classes and sending their students to library workshops. We have a strong tradition of undergraduate research, giving students the opportunity to work closely with faculty and to present work at SPACE and other conferences. Let’s build on our successes and take our students further. Faculty members who are interested in collaborating with Owen librarians should contact Paul Bond, Library Instruction Coordinator, at paulbond@pitt.edu or x7287.
Spring Workshops
@ Owen Library

A Quick Look at Photoshop
This workshop will be an introduction to using the image editing program Photoshop. Find out how to get the program, practice some simple image editing, and find out how to learn more.
Thursday January 16 3:30 p.m.
Wednesday January 29 3:00 p.m.

Excel Basics
Not just for accounting majors - Keep track of where your money goes. Prepare budget reports for grant proposals, campus organizations, clubs, and other groups.
Thursday January 23 3:30 p.m.
Thursday February 13 3:30 p.m.

MS Publisher Basics
A quick look at the basics of Publisher. This workshop will cover using and modifying templates, working with text and text boxes, and working with pictures and shapes.
Wednesday January 22 3:00 p.m.
Thursday January 30 4:00 p.m.

All About E-Books
Curious about electronic books? Want to read a book but don’t have room on your bookshelf for one more? Consider using some of our electronic books. E-books are never overdue and never go missing.
Wednesday February 5 3:00 p.m.
Tuesday March 4 3:30 p.m.

Databases 101
Need to find articles for a paper? Never used or can’t remember how to use periodical databases? This workshop will showcase some of the library’s multidisciplinary databases and provide searching strategies to help you better use them.
Tuesday January 21 3:30 p.m.
Thursday February 6 4:00 p.m.
Wednesday February 19 5:00 p.m.

Saving Citations and Building Bibliographies with EndNote Web
Learn to manage your research, citations and references with EndNote Web. See how it can automatically extract citation information from library databases and generate a references page!
Tuesday February 11 4:00 p.m.

Eye on the Environment
An overview of ULS Resources for environmental research in both the social and natural sciences.
Wednesday February 12 3:00 p.m.
Thursday February 20 3:30 p.m.
Tuesday February 25 3:30 p.m.

These 1-hour workshops are free & everyone is welcome!
All workshops held in Owen 209
Seating is limited. RSVP at least one week in advance. Contact Tawny Vallana at tvallana@pitt.edu or stop at the Library Circulation Desk.
Collection Spotlight: Some New Resources


**Incarnadine : Poems** / Mary Szybist. 2013 National Book Award PS3619.Z93 A6 2013


**MaddAddam : A Novel** / Margaret Atwood. PR9199.3.A8m34 2013

**League of Denial : The NFL, Concussions, and the Battle for Truth** / Mark Fainaru-Wada and Steve Fainaru. RC1220.F6 F35 2013

**Five Days at Memorial : Life and Death in a Storm-ravaged Hospital** / Sheri Fink. RA975.D57 F56 2013

**Butler : A Witness to History** / Wil Haygood. E185.61.H395 2013

**Everything store : Jeff Bezos and the age of Amazon** / Brad Stone 73.A485 S76 2013

**Civil Discipline-Specific Review for the FE/EIT Exam** / Robert H. Kim et al. ON RESERVE TA 159.K48 2009

**Your Undergraduate Degree in Psychology : from College to Career** / Paul I. Hettich, BF76. H488 2014

**Getting Your MSW : How to Survive and Thrive in a Social Work Program** / Karen M. Sowers, Bruce A. Thyer. HV11.7 S68 2013

**Nurse's Reality Gap : Overcoming Barriers Between Academic Achievement and Clinical Success** / Leslie Neal-Boylan RT73. N398 2013

**How to Develop a Professional Portfolio : A Manual for Teachers** / Dorothy M. Campbell LB2838.H56 2014

**Crafting Digital Writing : Composing Texts Across Media and Genres** / Troy Hicks LB1576.7H53 2013


**Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slavery in the United States from Interviews with Former Slaves/ Prepared by the Federal Writer's Project. New edition of the historic volume set.** E444.F43 2013

**Computing for Ordinary Mortals** / Robert St. Amant QA76.57375 2013

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**Your Pitt ID - don’t leave home (or your room) without it!**

Always carry your student ID with you. It functions as both your library card and your payment card for photocopiers. It also works in vending machines around campus. You need to present your student ID to borrow library materials or to use course reserve materials in the library. Other forms of identification cannot be accepted.
The University Library System offers many helpful research guides, called LibGuides, to help the University community with using library resources, and to help connect appropriate library resources to specific courses. Some of these guides can be very helpful to graduating students about to enter the job market.

Librarians at Owen developed the Career Resources - Pitt-Johnstown guide (http://pitt.libguides.com/realworldcareerservices) in conjunction with RealWorld Career Services department at Pitt-Johnstown last year. This guide organizes links to web and library resources on topics related to careers and job hunting. Students who are unsure or undecided about what they want to do after college could consult resources on career development. Students who are soon to graduate might be interested in the books and e-books on resumes, job hunting and interviewing. The guide links to new books in the collection and to key titles and e-books on each topic. Career Resources - Pitt-Johnstown also links back to RealWorld Career Services resources, like the Symplicity job search portal and their collections of resources.

The Hillman Library on the Oakland campus in Pittsburgh developed the Career Resources @ Pitt guide (http://pitt.libguides.com/careers), which covers some of the same ground as the Pitt-Johnstown guide. It has links to many sources of information specific to the Pittsburgh area for students who may be seeking employment in that area. Job seekers looking to relocate elsewhere will find helpful information under the Salary and Relocating tabs on the guide.

A third guide that graduating seniors should consult is Company Research @ Pitt (http://pitt.libguides.com/company). This is a guide intended to support Business students in their research, but it should also be useful to any job seeker. Those facing the current job market ought to do research on potential employers. Demonstrating knowledge of employers, their markets, and their competition can make a positive or beneficial difference in cover letters and interviews. Having that knowledge can help job seekers ask good questions of their interviewers. The Company Research @ Pitt guide has sections on researching both public and private companies, and it also has a section devoted solely to Pittsburgh companies.

While all job seekers may not need to know about SWOTs and financial statements, they should know how to find basic information about potential employers, and this guide is a great place to find out how.

Naturally, students should take advantage of RealWorld Career Services and its resources. The University Library System and the librarians at Owen work to complement those resources.

"To ask why we need libraries at all, when there is so much information available elsewhere, is about as sensible as asking if roadmaps are necessary now that there are so very many roads."

~ Jon Bing