Lifelong Learning: What students do after they graduate

The preliminary results of an ongoing study of the lifelong learning practices of recent graduates were recently released by Project Information Literacy (PIL). The first phase of the study consisted of interviews with recent graduates of colleges and universities across the country concerning their lifelong learning needs and activities.

This study is significant because colleges and universities want their graduates to walk away with the aptitudes and abilities to continue to learn and grow in their chosen fields, and in life in general. The key to lifelong learning is information literacy. It includes asking good questions, looking for answers, evaluating sources of information, synthesizing ideas, and communicating information. Information literacy is a core value that Owen Library seeks to promote and instill.

The report identified five key trends through PIL’s interviews. These trends concern lifelong learning needs, use of information sources, use of social media, best practices, and the application of practices developed in college. These trends are summarized below.

The lifelong learning needs of recent graduates are predominantly job-related, but also include personal interests and community involvement. There is overlap among these areas. Spreadsheet skills developed for the workplace can also be applied to household budgets, for example. Interviewees recognized the importance of continual learning, although many reported difficulty in finding enough time for it.

The Web is the primary tool for lifelong learning. The report found that people value practicality and cost and time efficiency. Most people looks for patterns and consensus among multiple resources. There is a social aspect to information seeking as well. Some recent graduates look to other people for advice and opinions to complement published sources.

Social media becomes a more significant source of information after graduation. While undergraduates

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The University Library System upgraded the engine underlying the PittCat+ catalog interface at the beginning of last semester. The new engine, Summon 2.0, strives to be more intuitive and web-like. Users will notice some visual changes in the interface, but all the familiar functionalities remain. The catalog can be searched through the search box on the library’s home page, http://www.library.pitt.edu.

All of the familiar refinement functions are still available in the left-hand column. The search result list can be refined by content type, discipline, publication date, subject terms, language, and library location. Refinements for full-text online and peer-review are also available. PittCat Classic (http://pittcat.pitt.edu) remains accessible for users who prefer the more traditional database interface.

We hope members of the Pitt-Johnstown community will find the upgrade beneficial. Anyone who has questions about using the catalog is welcome to contact any of the librarians at Owen Library by calling x7300. We’re happy to help.
**Spring Workshops**

**@ Owen Library**

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**Be the Google Ninja**

Find out how to use advanced search techniques to unlock the real power of Google, and take a look at some of the other parts - Google Scholar, Google Translate, Google Books and more.

Wednesday, January 28 – 3:00 p.m.
Tuesday, February 3 – 3:30 p.m.

**Crap Detection 101**

Don’t be misled by unreliable information! Learn how to use the CRAAP Test to critically evaluate the information you find.

Thursday, February 5 – 4:00 p.m.
Wednesday, February 11 – 3:00 p.m.
Monday, February 16 – 11:00 a.m.
Tuesday, February 24 – 4:00 p.m.

**Picturing American History**

Look beyond the books - find out about all the primary and secondary sources for historical information in images and multimedia.

Monday, February 9 – 3:00 p.m.
Thursday, February 12 – 1:00 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.

Tuesday, February 10 – 4:00 p.m.
Wednesday, February 18 – 3:00 p.m.

**There’s an App for That! Using Apps for Research**

There are numerous iPhone, iPad and Android apps out there for learning on the go. Apps for notetaking, reference, research and more! This session offers an overview of some of the more popular tools that are available.

Thursday, February 19 – 3:30 p.m.
Wednesday, February 25 – 3:00 p.m.

**Government Sources for Science**

Come find out about all the public sources of information and data for the sciences available from the federal government.

Tuesday, March 3 – 2:00 p.m.
Wednesday, March 4 – 3:00 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.

Thursday, March 5 – 2:00 p.m.
Tuesday, March 17 – 3:30 p.m.

**Understanding Plagiarism: What You Need to Know**

Are you unsure as to what constitutes plagiarism? Plagiarism is an academic integrity violation that may result in expulsion from the University. Learn how to avoid it and stay in school!

Monday, March 23 – 5:00 p.m.
Thursday, March 26 – 4:00 p.m.

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These 1-hour workshops are free & everyone is welcome! All workshops held in Owen 209 RSVP at least one week in advance. Contact Mandy Waters at maw244@pitt.edu or stop at the Library Circulation Desk.
Collection Spotlight: Some New Resources

Redeployment / Phil Klay. 2014 National Book Award: Fiction

Age of ambition: chasing fortune, truth, and faith in the new China / Evan Osnos. 2014 National Book Award: Nonfiction

Faithful and virtuous night / Louise Glück. 2014 National Book Award: Poetry

Narrow road to the deep north / Richard Flanagan. 2014 Mann-Booker Prize

How universities work / John V. Lombardi.

101 careers in mathematics / edited by Andrew Sterrett.

Careers in health information technology / Brian T. Malec

Whole new engineer: the coming revolution in engineering education / David E. Goldberg

Should I go to grad school?: 41 answers to an impossible question / edited by Jessica Loudis

Future automotive fuels and energy / by Bruce Morey.

World War Z: an oral history of the zombie war / Max Brooks.

Lectures on quantum mechanics / Steven Weinberg.

Man in the monkeynut coat: William Astbury and the forgotten road to the double-helix / Kersten T. Hall

Whatever happened to the metric system?: how America kept its feet / John Bemelmans Marciano.

Women in the films of John Ford / David Meuel.

Carsick / John Waters.

James & Dolley Madison: America's first power couple / Bruce Chadwick.
Library Workshops showcase some of what Owen Library has to offer

Owen Library is offering another round of workshops this Spring. Details on the workshops can be found elsewhere in this newsletter and on postcards and flyers around campus. These workshops cover information literacy topics, tools, and resources with the aim of improving student research skills. They are also intended to showcase some of what the library has to offer in the way of instruction services. The programs that we offer in our workshop series can be brought to classes at instructor request. They can also be modified if necessary. We have done this in the past with workshops on topics such as citation management, primary and secondary resources, concept mapping, and engineering resources. Faculty members who are interested in scheduling a workshop for a specific class should contact Paul Bond, Library Instruction Coordinator, at paulbond@pitt.edu or x7287.

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rarely consult blogs for information, many graduates find them valuable. They typically seek out online voices of experts and insiders in their field of interest. The issues of efficiency and consensus apply to social media as well. Information is easy to find, and multiple sources provide a measure of credibility. Social media is also valued for providing opportunities to contribute to conversations.

A number of best practices are reported in the study. These include building personal learning networks of colleagues, insiders and experts, using professional literature and trade journals, formal continuing education, and job hopping as continuing education.

The final trend discerned in the report is “adaptable information practices from college.” Graduates appreciate the critical thinking and information literacy skills developed in their college courses, although some questioned the value of their major for career preparation. Capstones, theses, and extracurricular activities “nurtured their initiative, curiosity, independent learning, motivation and involvement” all of which constitute valuable and transferable aptitudes and skills.

More information about PIL can be found at http://projectinfolit.org, as well as their earlier studies and research. The Lifelong Learning Study is currently ongoing and the final report is expected by the end of 2015.

Staff news

The two new faces you’ve been seeing in Owen Library over the past six months are those of Library Associate, Mandy Waters and Circulation/Collection Management Assistant, Angela McMichael.

Mandy joined us back in July and has been capably filling the Administrative Assistant role in the office and at the Circulation Desk. Before coming to Pitt-Johnstown, Mandy worked as a medical secretary at Cambria Care Center.

Angela arrived at Owen in September. She comes to Pitt-Johnstown from the SUNY University at Albany, where she had been the Serials Coordinator since 2008. She also previously worked as the Periodicals Assistant at Union College in Schenectady, NY.