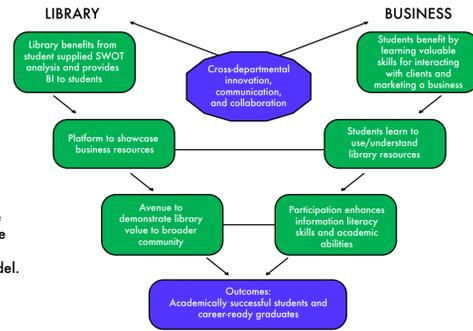# Sending in the SWOT Team:
An Experiential Learning Assignment for Capstone Business Students

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1 Purpose of Study

- to investigate whether librarian-faculty assignment creation, collaboration, and implementation of co-teaching strategies enhance the quality of the teaching and student learning experience.

- to investigate the effects of embedding a librarian into a business capstone course.

- to implement a course specific research guide and library-centric assignment that support the development of effective users of information in the context of an experiential business model.

LIBRARY — BUSINESS

Library benefits from student supplied SWOT analysis and provides BI to students · Students benefit by learning valuable skills for interacting with clients and marketing a business · Cross-departmental innovation, communication, and collaboration · Platform to showcase business resources · Students learn to use/understand library resources · Avenue to demonstrate library value to broader community · Participation enhances information literacy skills and academic abilities · Outcomes: Academically successful students and career-ready graduates

2 Research Questions

1. Does librarian as co-instructor enhance the quality of the teaching and student learning experience?

2. Do students show signs of being able to effectively identify, find, evaluate, apply and acknowledge useful and appropriate information in the context of experiential business models?

Will the use of appropriate library resources increase? Are library resources used more effectively when a librarian is part of the course?

Is research more expansive when library resources are marketed and made available?

3. How does integrating information literacy based instruction within the business curriculum support the vision of effective users of information?

General Predictions:

- Reported use of Google for business research will decrease
- Reported use of library databases for business research will increase
- Knowledge and use of library services will increase
- Students will use appropriate sources to complete SWOT assignment
- Students will view the class guide as a useful supplementary tool/resource

3 Assignment Design & Description

- Students receive in-class library instruction, are provided with a packet of library data, and schedule library interviews.

- Students are introduced to the course guide as an easy, one-click access to Business Databases and resources.

- Students receive pre- and post-instruction surveys investigating library knowledge, familiarity with business research tools, and information seeking behaviors.

- 30-minute Library interviews take place in the first four weeks of the semester. Students are expected to approach the interview with professionalism and come prepared with evidence of industry knowledge.

- Formative reviews and additional reference/instruction help is available upon student request throughout the semester.

- Assignment is worth 25% of overall grade
  - Library Interview (15 points, 25%)
  - SWOT Final (35 points, 75%)

A successful analysis will contain the following elements:
Company Overview: A summary containing the most important parts of the company describing the core values, management team, location, mission & vision and direction.
Key Company Facts: Include address, number of employees, phone, etc.
SWOT Analysis: A detailed examination of each of the four areas and how the library can utilize the provided information to improve its services.
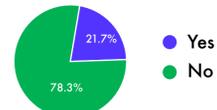
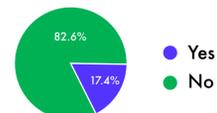Business Strategies: BUS4010

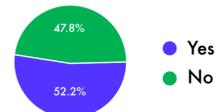## 4 Semester Data Analysis

Library Knowledge

Pre-test Results

I am aware of the different services and resources the library has to offer.

21.7% Yes · 78.3% No

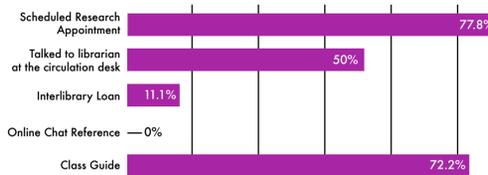I know what a Research Appointment is and how to schedule one.

17.4% Yes · 82.6% No

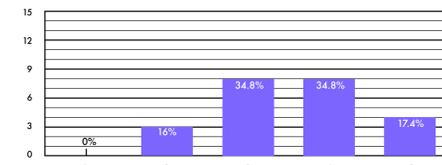I am aware of the Research Guides available on the Library's website.

47.8% Yes · 52.2% No

Post-test Results

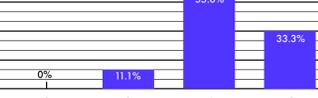What library services did you utilize to help you complete the SWOT Analysis assignment? (check all that apply)

Scheduled Research Appointment 77.8%
Talked to librarian at the circulation desk 50%
Interlibrary Loan 11.1%
Online Chat Reference 0%
Class Guide 72.2%

Pre-test Results

I am confident that I know how to use research databases at the Library.

1: 0% · 2: 16% · 3: 34.8% · 4: 34.8% · 5: 17.4%

I am confident in my ability to conduct a SWOT Analysis for an organization.

1: 0% · 2: 16% · 3: 4.3% · 4: 56.5% · 5: 39.1%

I am confident that I know how to search using the Discovery Tool at the Library.

1: 13% · 2: 21.7% · 3: 39.1% · 4: 21.7% · 5: 4.3%

I am confident in my ability to locate company information, history, and background.

1: 4.3% · 2: 4.3% · 3: 26.1% · 4: 39.1% · 5: 26.1%

Post-test Results

1: 0% · 2: 0% · 3: 11.1% · 4: 55.6% · 5: 33.3%

1: 0% · 2: 0% · 3: 0% · 4: 44.4% · 5: 55.6%

1: 0% · 2: 5.6% · 3: 27.8% · 4: 38.9% · 5: 27.8%

1: 0% · 2: 0% · 3: 22.2% · 4: 44.4% · 5: 33.3%

Information Seeking Behavior

Pre-test Results

I usually start my research with (choose one)

78.3% Library databases · Print sources · 21.7% Google and/or other search engines

For future business-related research, I will start with (choose one)

Post-test Results

72.2% Library databases · Print sources · 22.2% Google and/or other search engines
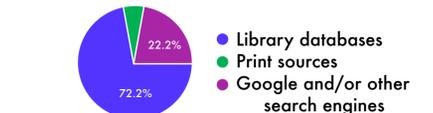
Class Guide Usage Statistics

Number of class guide views — Beginning of semester and assignment · Assignment due · End of Semester
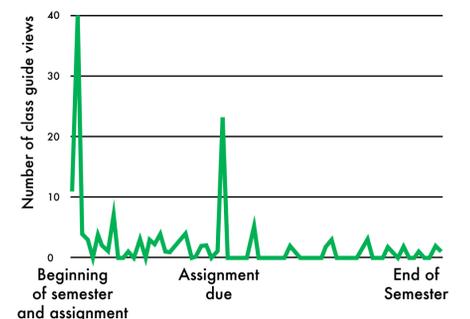
5 Student Feedback

"Doing a SWOT for an organization that does not base its success on revenue is different and a tad more challenging than a for-profit one."

"I would use the library again to get information for future assignments. Databases are extremely helpful."

"Interviewing and gathering company information can be extremely difficult, especially when [discussing] weaknesses. [I learned] to identify weaknesses to make strategic decisions."

"[It] would have been nice to have a follow-up day with a librarian in class to specify a little more on questions we come up with throughout the process."

"[We should] work within our business strategy teams to better understand our team performance early on in the semester."

"We learned that the library provides easy access to reputable sources and offers more than just books. Librarians are extremely useful/knowledgeable."

"I think the assignment was very realistic [because] I might encounter this setting in the professional world."

"The idea of the project is sound, but the amount of quantitative data isn't helpful/intuitive for the business world in the future."

6 Key Takeaways

- The course guide was reported as a useful resource. Despite only half of students reporting awareness of research guides before instruction, the course guide was the second most utilized service throughout the assignment, most heavily used at the beginning of the semester and around the assignment's due date. The course guide was viewed 151 times in total, about 7 views per student.

- Before receiving library instruction, students reported majority awareness of library services. Post-test results demonstrated a diverse use of library services while completing their assignment with the only service not utilized being the Chat Reference.

- Before receiving library instruction, students reported that Google was the preferred method of choice over library research databases. Students reported not using print sources.

- After receiving instruction, more students reported that they would use library databases first over Google. A small number of students reported print sources. After receiving library instruction, reported use of Google decreased by 56.1%, while reported use of library databases and print sources increased by 50.5% and 5.6%, respectively.

- Before receiving library instruction, 80% of students were unaware of the possibility of scheduling one-on-one appointments with librarians for research help. This exposed a need for the library to market its services through more effective channels.

- Business students are unaware of the information landscape they will encounter in a professional business/corporate setting.

- Students reported a deeper understanding of why academic journals are superior to popular culture periodicals in terms of depth, breadth and research.

- There is a gap in library knowledge between traditional four-year students and transfer students, revealing a need for transfer-specific library orientations.

7 Looking Forward

The SWOT assignment will continue to run in upcoming semesters, but changes will be made to increase business knowledge and information literacy skill impact on students.

These changes may include but are not limited to:

- incorporating assignment concepts into Freshmen level Business courses so that students are more aware of library offerings earlier in their academic careers.

- running the assignment as an Independent Study.

- incorporating into the development of a course in non-profit management for any student in any major.

- supplementing library instruction with a corporate librarian guest speaker to share practical applications of required assignment skills and information.

- holding class in the Library Instruction Room throughout the duration of the assignment.

- requiring students to work in small groups to perform SWOT analyses rather than individually.

8 Selected Bibliography

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