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3,000 Post-its: Minute Papers as Formative Assessment in Business Writing Courses

Heidi Blackburn

University of Nebraska at Omaha, hblackbu@gmail.com

A. L. Walker

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3,000 Post-its

MINUTE PAPERS AS FORMATIVE
ASSESSMENT IN BUSINESS
WRITING COURSES

HEIDI BLACKBURN
ANGELIKA WALKER

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Omaha

3,000 POST-ITS



A QUICK

OVERVIEW

- Curriculum was re-written in summer 2015 (face-to-face and online)
- Cumulative formal report accounts for approximately 30% of a student's grade
- Business librarian presents one 75-minute class to every section
- Minute papers are used at the beginning and end of each library instruction session

WHY ASSESS?

- What are students' comfort levels with library/research?
- Have they actually reflected on the research topic before now?
- Was the content useful to students and instructors?
- Was the format/delivery method useful to students?
- What still needs clarification from the instructor or librarian?



CLASSROOM

IMPLEMENTATION

BEGINNING OF CLASS:

- What is one thing about the library and/or doing research I want to learn more about today?
- What kinds of information will I need to find for my topic?

END OF CLASS:

- What did you find useful or helpful today?
- What question(s) do you still have?

METHODOLOGY



- Post-its collected at the end of each class
- Responses entered in Excel
- Forty-six sections were evaluated over 4 semesters
- Coding was used to find themes among responses
- Coded independently by instructor and librarian
- Averages taken from coded responses

RESULTS

*Confident but
clueless :)*

PROMPT 1

I don't know what library resources and services are available to me in general as a student or where I should look for info.

PROMPT 2

I have exactly one specific fact I need to find for my topic and I probably need some statistics.

PROMPT 3

I like having time to brainstorm with partners and the librarian telling me which databases to use for my topic.

PROMPT 4

I'll need more help doing advanced database searching.

CHANGES TO CURRICULUM

RESEARCH

- Increased student buy-in and participation in class with guest lecturer (librarian)
- Increased positive student attitudes about completing research
- Increased confidence in student abilities to begin assignment
- Reduced number of questions about assignment asked of librarian (that were really for instructor)
- Refined activities to enhance active-learning over several semesters
- Refined research resources over several semesters

CHANGES TO CURRICULUM

WRITING

Observation and analysis of minute slips semester-to-semester...

- Illuminates areas of the writing assignment needing further clarification prior to library instruction
- Prompts a revision of assignment directions for students to preemptively address frequently asked questions
- Encourages a reflection on assignment timing and scaffolding of component assignments leading up to library instruction and final draft
- Helps instructor pin-point ideal dates for scheduling library instruction and introducing students to library resources

3,000 POST-ITS

INSTRUCTOR & LIBRARIAN

PARTNERSHIP

Working together semester-to-semester to observe and analyze the minute slips, the instructor and librarian were able to **refine and improve the effectiveness of instruction**, both during library instruction time and regular classroom time. For the last minute-slip prompt, "What questions do you still have?," the number of students replying "none" steadily increased semester-to-semester, from 22% to 52% to 62% and finally to 66%.

This suggests when the librarian and instructor work together using minute slips to assess student learning over time, **students have fewer questions** about library resources and assignment expectations.

IMPLEMENTATION IN YOUR OWN
CLASSROOM

- Gauge student skills at the beginning of the course or class
- Understand if student expectations for the class match those of the instructor
- Clarify course concepts at the end of the class
- Discover what topics remain unclear before exams
- Collect feedback on new classroom activities

CONCLUSIONS

The use of Post-it minute-papers greatly improved relations between students, instructors, and the librarian. This just-in-time model can assess student skills or attitudes, or new teaching methods, creating a more agile classroom experience.

3,000 POST-ITS

**THANK
YOU!**

Heidi Blackburn - hblackburn@unomaha.edu
Angelika Walker - angelikawalker@unomaha.edu

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Nebraska
Omaha