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Research among the best on information literacy

By **Dawn Pauli**, contributing writer

The American Library Association's Library Instruction Round Table selected an article by two OU professors as one of the "Top 20" publications on information literacy for 2003.

"Caught in the Web: The Impact of Library Instruction on Business Students' Perceptions and Use of Print and Online Resources" was researched and written by Shawn Lombardo, assistant professor and business librarian for Kresge Library, and Cynthia Miree, assistant professor of management.

Through her work in the library, Lombardo saw a troubling trend with OU undergraduate students. As their reliance on the Internet grew, students were bypassing traditional print resources as well as the library's subscription-based periodical databases.

This concerned Lombardo, because while the Internet is a quick and convenient alternative, it's doesn't always provide the best or most accurate information.

"In many cases, business information isn't available for free on the Internet, but may be available to OU students for free through the library's online databases and print resources," Lombardo said. "And, some journals and magazines are only available through subscriptions."

Lombardo provides subject-based library instruction to various OU undergraduate and graduate courses, including Miree's strategic management course.

The two collaborated on a research project to determine whether library instruction could impact students' preferences and attitudes toward online and print business reference materials. They gave a pre-test to determine attitude, preferences and usage of materials prior to getting library instruction. Following the library instruction by Lombardo, they conducted a post-test.

"We learned that students like to do things online, but after instruction, they had more favorable attitudes toward print resources," Lombardo said. "The study confirmed that library instruction could change students' attitudes about, and use of, information sources and really highlighted the importance of information literacy instruction. Students don't have this knowledge coming in. We wanted to open their eyes to the libraries own resources."

Lombardo is collaborating with other OU business faculty to introduce students to the breadth of business research materials available to them, both online and in print.

As a result of using additional references, the quality of the students' reports increased.

"This was probably based on the fact that they were using more than two or three references," Miree said. "In addition, I think library training sends a strong signal to the students that substance is as, if not more, important than form. I take the assignments very seriously and expect the students to do the same."

SUMMARY

The American Library Association's Library Instruction Round Table selected an article by two OU professors as one of the "Top 20" publications on information literacy for 2003. "Caught in the Web: The Impact of Library Instruction on Business Students' Perceptions and Use of Print and Online Resources" was researched and written by Shawn Lombardo, assistant professor and business librarian for Kresge Library, and Cynthia Miree, assistant professor of management.

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