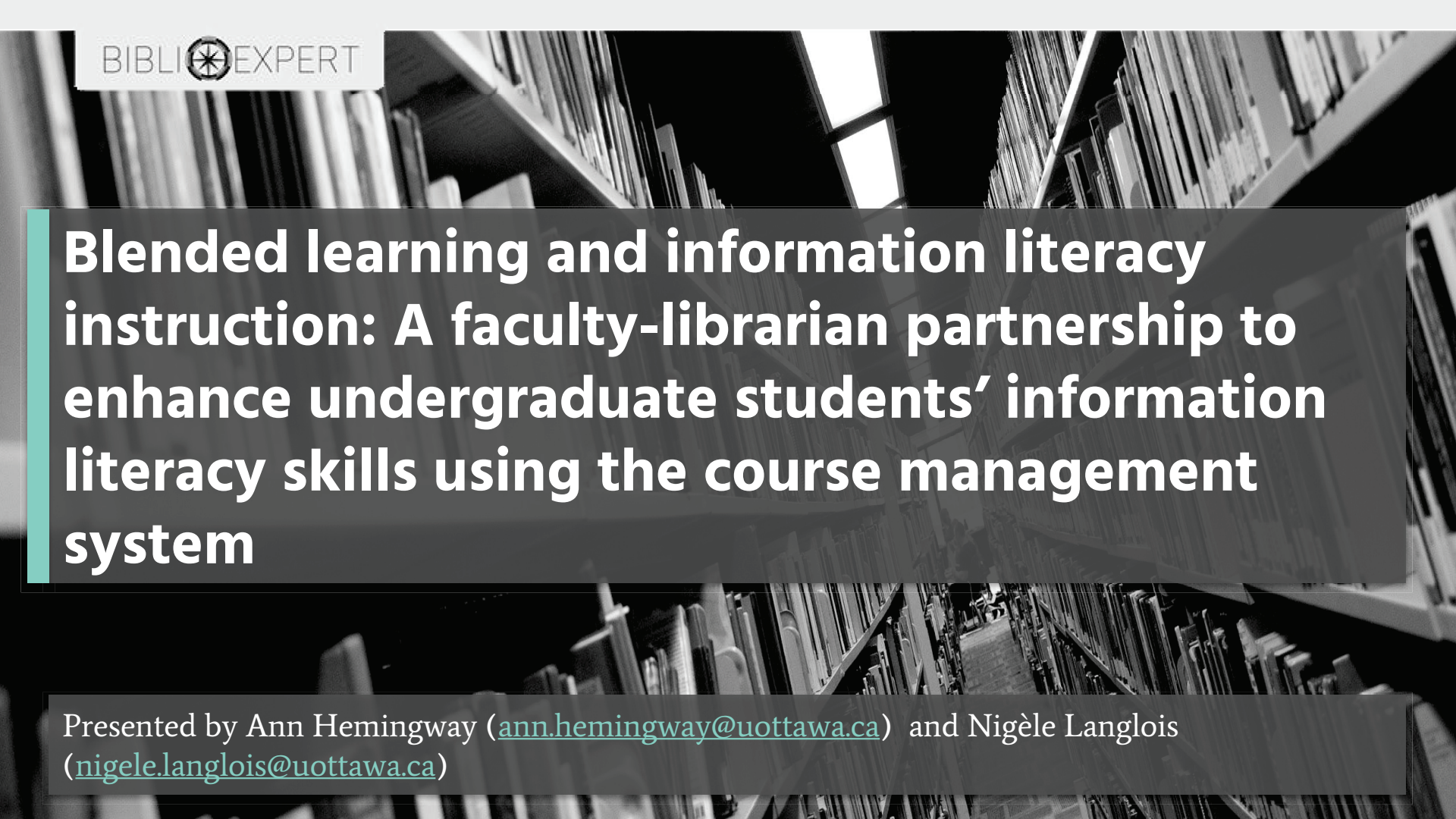

Blended learning and information literacy instruction: A faculty-librarian partnership to enhance undergraduate students' information literacy skills using the course management system

Presented by Ann Hemingway (ann.hemingway@uottawa.ca) and Nigèle Langlois (nigele.langlois@uottawa.ca)

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Agenda

- Library instruction @uOttawa and partnership with the Department of English
- Content development and assessment
- Preliminary findings
- Future directions

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LIBRARY INSTRUCTION AT uOttawa

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A new instructional approach at the Morisset Library

- Move away from tool based instruction
- Address essential core competencies
- Include content that can be adapted to various levels of proficiency
- Clearly identifies target users (first year students) with customization options for specific groups (i.e. international students)
- Requires registration.

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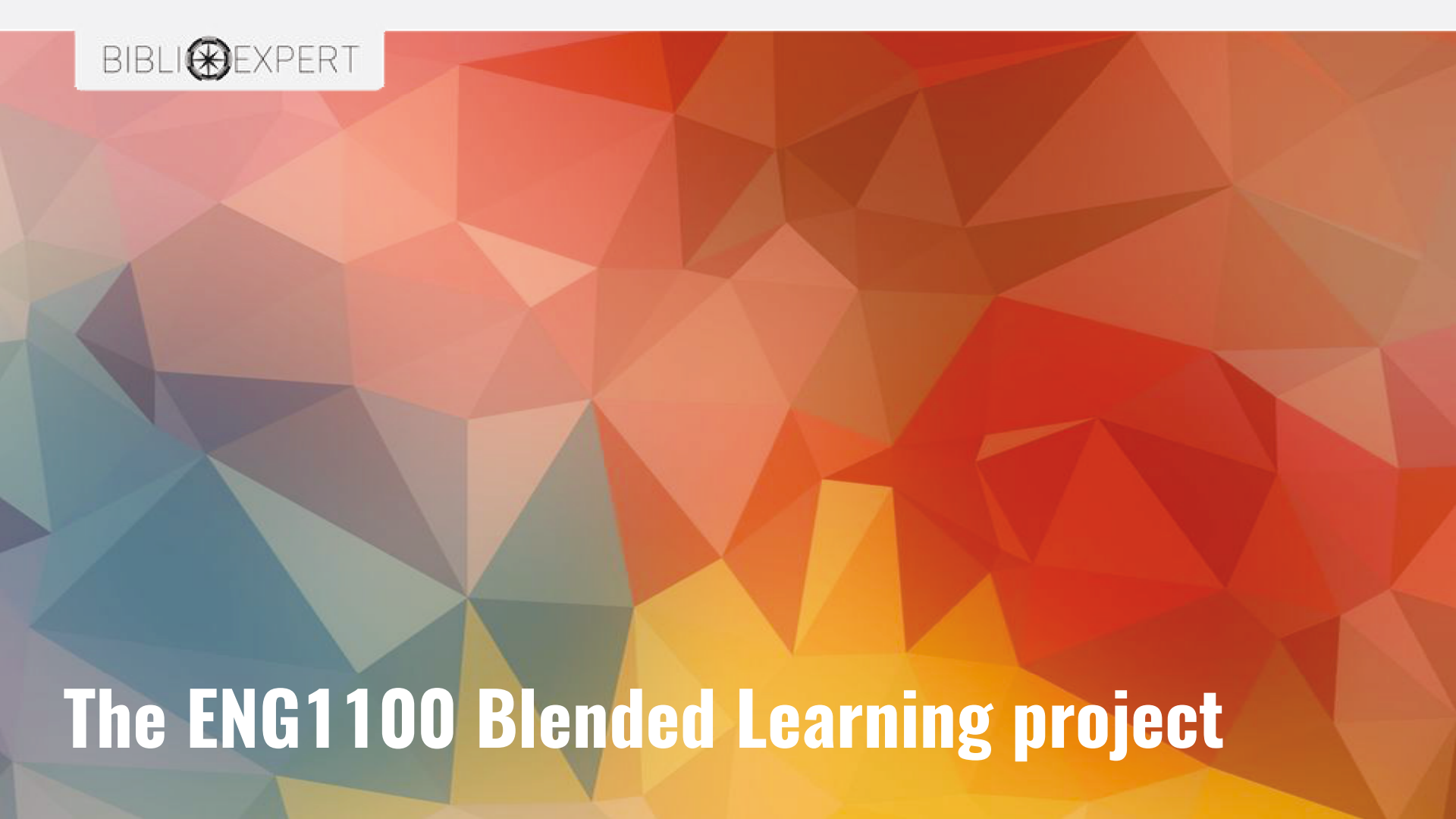
Core Content: Trying on the new ACRL Framework for Information Literacy

“Understanding your information needs for better searching” : Content mapped to the IL frame “Searching as Strategic Exploration”.

“Working with your sources: Avoid common citing and referencing pitfalls”: Content mapped to the IL frame “Information Has Value”

“Who's the expert? Determining the value of information for your research”: Content mapped to the IL frame “Authority Is Constructed and Contextual”.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The ENG1100 Blended Learning project

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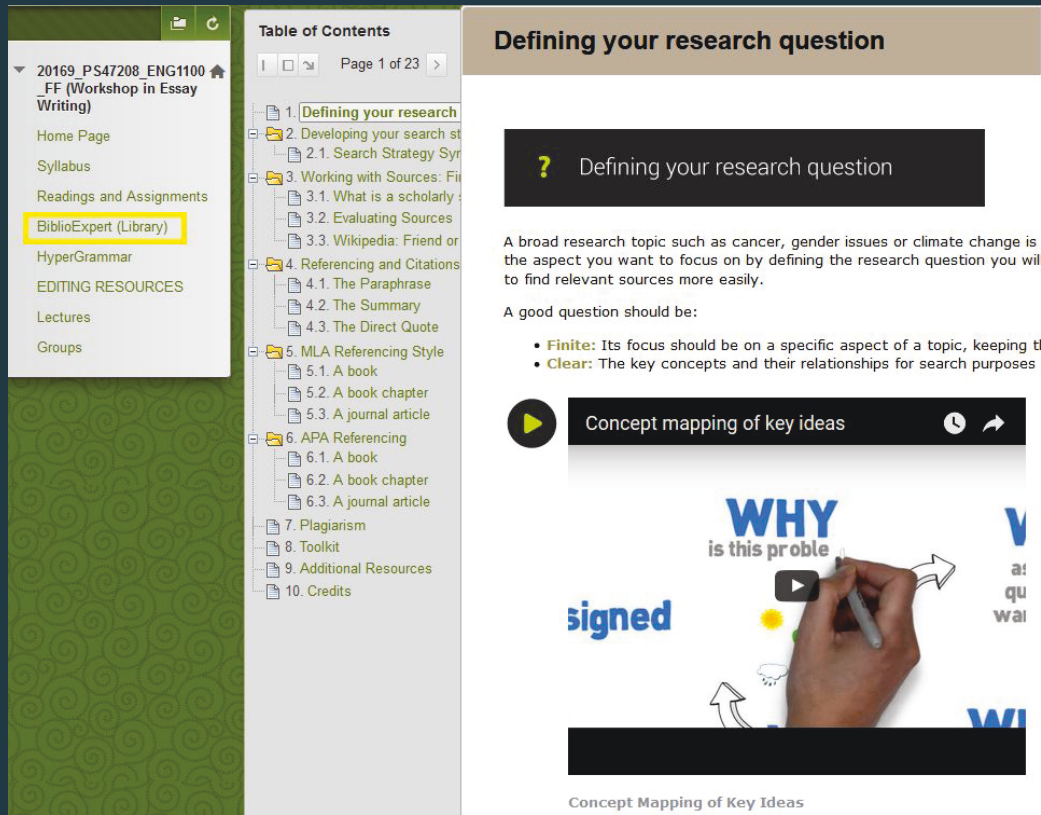
BiblioExpert in BlackBoard

- Library course pack integrated into Blackboard Learn.
- Available to all ENG1100 courses with a LMS component upon request.
- Addition of multimedia learning objects.
- Customizable
- Embed librarian in the course as a resource person for students.



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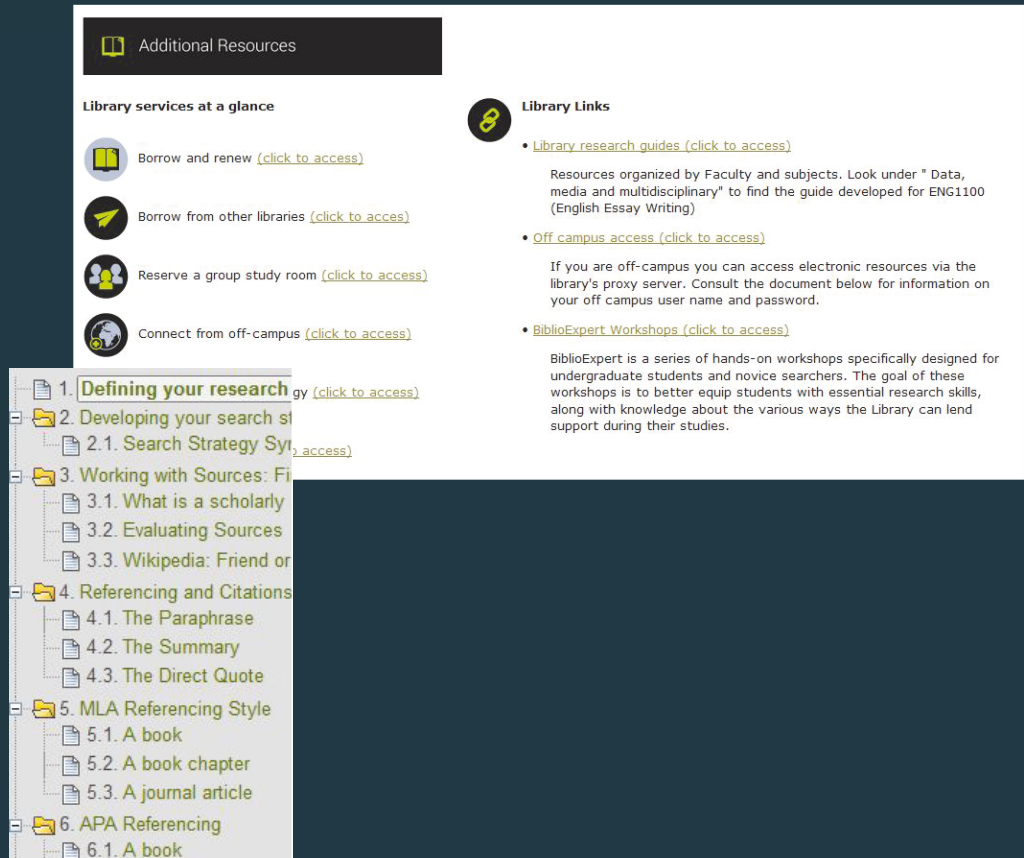
Development Timeline: Initial Phase

- Meetings with Department of English Professor (Spring and Summer 2015).
- Adaptation of BiblioExpert Content to online environment (Summer- early Fall 2015).
- Customization and visual branding of module in collaboration with TLSS (Fall 2015).
- Roll out module to two sections of ENG1100, an essay writing class, taught by co-collaborator in the Department of English (November 2015).
- Create informal optional assessment exercise (December 2015).

Structure and Branding

- Content adapted from the BiblioExpert workshop program.
- Visual branding is the same as the workshop program and website.
- Inclusion of external resources links.
- Addition of a library discussion forum to facilitate communication between students and subject librarian.



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Implementation Timeline: Phase Two (Fall 2016)

- Submission of ethics request to collect and analyse student assignments and in-class exercises for all participating sections (Summer 2016).
- Blended approach fully integrated in one section of ENG1000 with assessment.
  - Graded mandatory blog entries
  - In-class assessment following presentations (concept map, Venn diagram, evaluation of news source exercise worksheet, referencing quiz)
- Blended learning partially integrated in one section of essay writing class and one section of technical report writing class.
  - Optional graded blog entries for participation mark.

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Preliminary Findings

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Formal Assessment: In-Class Exercises

- Workshop 1: Brainstorming exercise leading to a concept map and research question related to chosen topic for final essay proposed topic.
  - ACRL Framework: Searching as Strategic Exploration
- Workshop 2: “Fact or fiction” preparation exercise.– Students were assigned a different controversial headline topic and asked to research online only (i.e. Google) the validity of the information being communicated in the media.
  - ACRL Framework: Authority is Constructed and Contextual
- Workshop 3: Pre-workshop online preparation exercise: a multiple choice quiz on MLA style based on module content with randomization of questions.
  - ACRL Framework: Information has Value

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Reflective Blog Assignment

Write a reflective blog about your experience researching sources to document your research paper.

Your blog must include:

1. a brief discussion of your research strategies, your application of library resources, and your selection of sources to document your paper;
2. an account of an obstacle you encountered during your research and how you overcame it;
3. one piece of advice you would give classmates embarking on a similar research task.

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Working with messy data

Challenges from inconsistencies in student responses to assessment:

- Blog entries missing key information from assignment requirements.
- Variations in the quality of writing (grammar, spelling, terminology).
- Inconsistency in student participation for online and in-class assessment exercises as these were not graded.
    - Only blog entry was graded for participation marks.
- Lack of student preparation prior to in-class exercises which affected the effectiveness of the in-class exercises

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Preliminary Findings

- Difficulty in narrowing down topic to create search strategies.
- Awareness of importance of evaluating sources but difficulty in applying specific criteria to assess authority.
- Anxiety related to proper referencing and fear of plagiarism.
- Difficulty navigating Library website: many did not explore past the welcome page.
- Difficulty identifying search tools and distinguishing databases.
- Vague descriptions of search strategies. “I put keywords about my topic in the library database”.
- Few mentions of online module in student blog entries.

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Word Frequency of key terms*:

- Database(s): 141
- Google: 68
- Librarian: 65
- Scholarly: 59
- Peer-reviewed: 37
- Keywords: 25
- Wikipedia: 17
- BiblioExpert: 13

* Generated with WordStat

Future Developments

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Qualitative Data Analysis

- Develop an inclusion rubric with specific criteria to identify which blog entries will be considered in the final data analysis.
  - Criteria and procedure in development following our initial analysis.
- Initial text analysis of student blogs. (WordStat)
- Content analysis.

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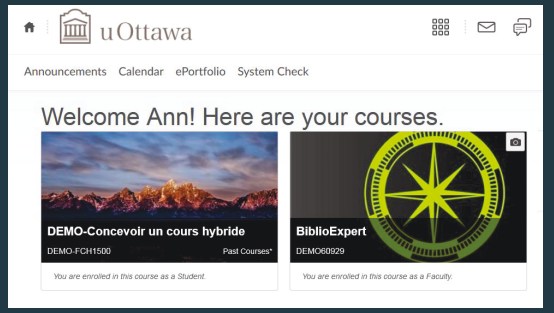
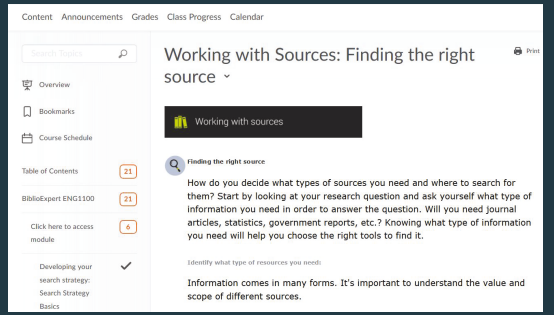
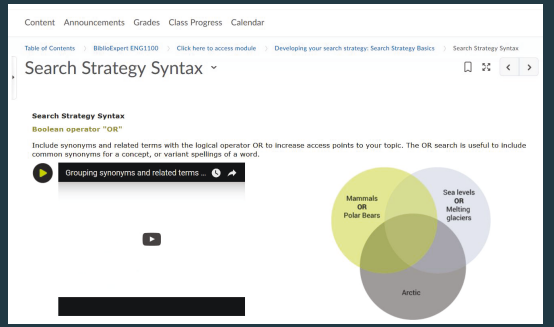
Migration to New LMS System

- New Learning Management Software launching in May 2017 with short transition period.
- Content of online module migrated from BlackBoard Learn to D2L's Brightspace.







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Module user experience evaluation

No feedback was collected for both phases up to now. This was intentional since the University had announced that a process for selection of a new LMS was underway.

- Provide users with a short questionnaire to assess the content and structure of the module.
  - Questionnaire will be developed with guidance of the Assessment Librarian.
  - Ask individuals to identify if they would like to participate in a focus group.
- Schedule two focus groups with students who expressed an interest in providing greater feedback during the questionnaire.

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Tailoring BiblioExpert to Course Content

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ENG 1120: Literary Research

- Updated workshop content:
  - Search examples focused on literary themes and course readings.
  - Specific information about researching authors, literary themes, genres, etc.
  - Introduction of specialized literature related search tools.
  - Evaluation of sources content tailored to literature, including discussion on scholarly books.
  - Referencing : Focus on MLA style

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ENG 1112: Technical Report Writing

- Module content updates to better reflect the needs of science and engineering students.
  - Scientific communication: initiation to common sources used for research and practice.
    - In-depth information on the process of peer-review.
  - Referencing styles: IEEE style added
  - Deep reading and note-taking strategies.
    - Introduction of the reading journal.
  - Minor edits of all modules to reflect topics in science and engineering
- Reflective blog assignment to be modified to include an example of a suitable blog.
- In-class activities to be reviewed and possibly modified in collaboration with instructor.

Ultimate Goal: Create a sustainable information literacy program that can be integrated within the course environment by faculty themselves, with liaison librarians providing a supporting role

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Questions?

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