

Workshop Title: What you don't know might hurt you: using pre-testing to assess information literacy knowledge

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Abstract: Understanding your audience is critical to effectively engage their attention and address their learning needs. This is especially true for librarians accessing incoming university students. Information literacy knowledge can range widely, and providing targeted instruction to fill conceptual gaps is the challenge of anyone working in instruction. During their fall orientation courses, the Brooks Library of Central Washington University (CWU) set out to discover some of the common stumbling blocks for entering students in order to provide more targeted assistance for those students. In addition to discussing the results of data gathered in a university library environment, this workshop will also discuss significant factors for test construction, administration, and validity. Psychometry can inform best practices in developing standardized tests by addressing student rapport, designing questions to determine effort, gauging test instruction comprehension, and evaluating test validity. This workshop will address the following outcomes: review quantitative and qualitative strategies for gauging student comprehension and effort; explore points of entry for gathering student responses; discuss best practices for test design including validity measures; and workshop the ideas of attendees to develop actionable items to take back to their own institutions.

Keywords: Information literacy, student comprehension, first-year students, test validity, standardization, test construction.

Workshop Content Outline

Introduction—where we're from

Pre-test about their institutions and where they're from

Overview of what CWU did

—design, methods, collection

Review of results

Conclusions from results

Testing design and what you're looking for

ACTIVITY: in groups, If you could know something about your current or incoming students what would you like to know?

Discuss how we begin the creation of a test with what do we want to know and then transition into how can we figure that out.

Review methods of testing and gauging student comprehension

Where/when to test

List places where you can already find data on campuses

ACTIVITY: In a group, think about who on your campus is already

collecting data that you might be able to use, or might gauge what you want to find out.

Ideas and questions to ask yourself when analyzing data

ACTIVITY: Is a pretest right for you? What could you do at your own institution? Who would you need to talk to?

Workshop duration: 2 hours—ideal time of 1,5 hours.