To Badge or Not?

Towards an intersection of neoliberalism and information literacy instruction

Workshop for Instruction in Library Use
2016

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Agenda

• Badges Background
• Neoliberalism (in less than 5 minutes)
• Project Background
• Our Study
• To badge or not?
• Discussion
A badge is a **visual representation** of a skill, achievement, disposition, or knowledge gained.
Social Gerontology

Fall 2014
- In person
- 45 students
- Information literacy curriculum with badges
- In-person library instruction, 3 sessions

Winter 2015
- Online
- 53 students
- Information literacy curriculum without badges
- Online activities, feedback on all IL assignments from librarian
“I don't want to sell anything, buy anything, or process anything as a career. I don't want to sell anything bought or processed, or buy anything sold or processed, or process anything sold, bought, or processed, or repair anything sold, bought, or processed.”

-Lloyd Dobler, Say Anything
Instruments

• Pre- and post- surveys
• Information literacy skills confidence/use/perceptions
• Student approaches to learning
  • E.g. Knowing what I’m going to learn and how I will use it is essential, important, don’t care...
• Badges post-survey inquired about badge utility and use
Please rate how confident you are with the following research and information skills (the more stars the more confidence):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using Google or other search engines</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating websites/information sources</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing and defining my research topic</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinguishing between different kinds of information (e.g., scholarly vs. popular, etc.)</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing quality information sources</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing library databases to search</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
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<tr>
<td>Choosing keywords to use in a search</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating effective searches (using AND and OR)</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modifying my search to retrieve more relevant search results</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
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<tr>
<td>Choosing search results relevant to my research</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Properly citing sources/avoiding plagiarism</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding peer review</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please group the following sentence beginnings with their appropriate endings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Ending</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowing what I'm going to learn in any given class is...</td>
<td>...essential to my learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing what I'm going to learn in any given assignment is...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing why I'm going to learn something...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing how I'm going to use the things I learn after I graduate is...</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowing how I'm going to use what I learn...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to show others what I've learned is...</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...useful for my learning, but not necessary.</td>
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</table>
General Findings

• Student skills confidence higher after course
• Increased use in library resources after course
• Post-survey comparison shows higher student confidence in IL skills after the course with badges than the course without badges.
• Students’ desire for transparent learning outcomes much higher in badges/in-person courses
Frequency of Use – Without badges – Pre-survey

Using Google or other search engines

Choosing library databases to search

- (88.89%)
- (6.33%)
- (36.11%)
- (27.78%)
- (13.80%)
- (0.00%)
- (2.76%)
- (0.00%)
- (5.56%)
- (0.00%)
- (5.56%)
Frequency of Use – Without Badges – Post-survey

Using Google or other search engines

- Daily: 68.24%
- 2-3 Times a Week: 11.76%
- Once a Week: 0.00%
- 2-3 Times a Month: 0.00%
- Once a Month: 0.00%
- Less than Once a Month: 31.25%
- Never: 12.50%

Choosing library databases to search

- Daily: 31.25%
- 2-3 Times a Week: 0.00%
- Once a Week: 18.75%
- 2-3 Times a Month: 0.00%
- Once a Month: 12.50%
- Less than Once a Month: 6.25%
- Never: 0.00%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information/Research Skill</th>
<th>With Badges - Post</th>
<th>Without Badges - Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using Google or other search engines</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>4.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating websites/ information sources</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>4.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing and defining my research topic</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinguishing between different kinds of information (e.g. scholarly vs popular, etc)</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>4.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing quality information sources</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>4.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing library databases to search</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>3.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing keywords to use in a search</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>4.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating effective searches (using AND and OR)</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>4.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modifying my search to retrieve more relevant search results</td>
<td>4.60</td>
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<td>4.40</td>
<td>4.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding peer review</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>4.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With Badges - Pre-Survey

Knowing what I'm going to learn in any given class is...
Knowing what I'm going to learn in any given assignment is...
Knowing why I'm going to learn something...
Knowing how I'm going to use the things I learn after I'm done with a class...
Knowing how I'm going to use what I learn in class after I graduate is...
Being able to show others what I've learned is...

Essential to my learning
Useful... but not necessary
Unnecessary
Without Badges - Pre-Survey

- Knowing what I'm going to learn in any given class is... Essential to my learning
- Knowing what I'm going to learn in any given assignment is... Essential to my learning
- Knowing why I'm going to learn something... Useful... but not necessary
- Knowing how I'm going to use the things I learn after I'm done with a class... Essential to my learning
- Knowing how I'm going to use what I learn in class after I graduate is... Useful... but not necessary
- Being able to show others what I've learned is... Useful... but not necessary

Essential to my learning
Useful... but not necessary
Unnecessary
With Badges - post-survey

- Knowing what I'm going to learn in any given class is... Essential to my learning: 11, Useful... but not necessary: 2, Unnecessary: 0
- Knowing what I'm going to learn in any given assignment is... Essential to my learning: 12, Useful... but not necessary: 2, Unnecessary: 0
- Knowing why I'm going to learn something... Essential to my learning: 7, Useful... but not necessary: 4, Unnecessary: 1
- Knowing how I'm going to use the things I learn after I'm done with a class... Essential to my learning: 9, Useful... but not necessary: 3, Unnecessary: 0
- Knowing how I'm going to use what I learn in class after I graduate is... Essential to my learning: 10, Useful... but not necessary: 2, Unnecessary: 0
- Being able to show others what I've learned is... Essential to my learning: 8, Useful... but not necessary: 4, Unnecessary: 2
Without Badges - Post-Survey

- Knowing what I'm going to learn in any given class is...
  - Essential to my learning
- Knowing what I'm going to learn in any given assignment is...
  - Useful... but not necessary
- Knowing why I'm going to learn something...
- Knowing how I'm going to use the things I learn after I'm done with a class...
  - Essential to my learning
- Knowing how I'm going to use what I learn in class after I graduate is...
  - Useful... but not necessary
- Being able to show others what I've learned is...
  - Unnecessary
Limitations

Photo by Chris White
https://flic.kr/p/6k5ir8
Neoliberal problem?

youthkiawaaz.com/2013/04/sorry-you-cant-afford-an-education-if-you-dont-have-big-bucks
So...to badge or not?

commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AToutes_directions.JPG
Readings


Pagowsky, N. (n.d.). *Keeping Up With... Digital Badges for Instruction. ACRL Keeping Up With...*


