University of Michigan Provost's Teaching Innovation Prize

2010 WINNER

KAREN MARKEY
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Professor Markey is accepting this award on behalf of the BiblioBouts team: Christopher Leeder, Fritz Swanson, Brian Jennings, Greg Peters, Soo Young Rieh, Beth St. Jean, Victor Rosenberg, and Andrew Calvetti.

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Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT)

The University Library

BiblioBouts: A Library Research Game Professors Can Integrate Directly into Their Classes

Innovation Description

Developed under a National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, this open-source game teaches students research and information literacy skills. The game takes place online, so faculty do not have to set aside precious, in-class time for students to practice and develop these skills.

BiblioBouts is the second library skills game created under Markey's leadership. The first game showed the design team that game play cannot appear unrelated to students' coursework, lest it be seen as a waste of time. Instead, it must be integrated into and enhance workflow early in the semester. Students value the way that BiblioBouts helps them complete assigned coursework and, ideally, earns them course credit.
http://bibliobouts.si.umich.edu/instructorFAQ.html

Each mini-game or "bout" focuses on a single skill, demonstrating discrete and repeatable steps of a structured research workflow. In response to an assigned topic, players search library databases. They capture citations and full texts with Zotero (open-source bibliographic software) for "donation" to a shared database. Students tag each other's sources by subject discipline, keywords, audience level, and format type. They also score the source's credibility and relevance. Both quantity and quality matter, and students can see how their judgments compare to those of their peers.

Comments

"Most students entering college have no idea how to conduct research for a paper or project. Their research goes only as deep as a simple Google search. They take the top few hits and cite those because they are believed to be the best sources… BiblioBouts has the unique opportunity to correct this deficit of understanding."

"It made the research process more like a community of learners as opposed to an isolated experience."

"Playing BiblioBouts was helpful to me because sometimes I just look for something to support what I am saying. But with this I was able to actually see the process I should go through and be able to get more information to back up my research and make sure it was credible information instead of just grabbing something that looked like it went along with what I was trying to say. So I think it made my papers stronger."

"Another thing that it did well was making you take some time to do this. It gave you an incentive to start early and pace yourself."

"The research process skills I learned while playing BiblioBouts were strengthened, and I did approach my next research assignments in this class and others with more confidence."

Examples of Teaching Innovation

The Bouts of BiblioBouts

Students practice assessing characteristics of sources that are indicators of quality.

Instructors can view evaluation interfaces which display game data, from individual activity to overall game statistics.