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# Supporting Student-Led Content Creation in the Distance Learning Environment with LibGuides CMS

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# Supporting Student-Led Content Creation in the Distance Learning Environment with LibGuides CMS

Jeffrey M. Mortimore & Ruth L. Baker  
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**GEORGIA SOUTHERN**  
UNIVERSITY



# INTRODUCTION

As noted in the 2017 Horizon Report,<sup>1</sup> significant technology trends in higher education since 2012 include:

- Students as creators,
- Blended (hybrid) and collaborative learning, and
- Improving digital literacy.

Ongoing development of online teaching and learning tools is exemplified by the suite of LibApps products:

- As of 2017, LibGuides and LibGuides CMS have been adopted by more than 5,700 libraries;
- LibGuides CMS brings additional functionality of granular editorial and access controls; and
- Provides an opportunity to explore new teaching and learning applications.

<sup>1</sup> Adams Becker et al., 2017



# INTRODUCTION (cont'd)

## Blended Learning Experiment at Georgia Southern University:

- Expanding on a previous pilot of LibGuides as an instructional platform,<sup>2</sup> librarians at Georgia Southern opened up LibGuides CMS to students and faculty from two blended (hybrid) undergraduate courses.
- The platform hosted collaboratively developed course content and student-created work as a supplement to the Course Management System (Desire2Learn).
- Librarians provided instruction and technical support.
- Activities were grounded in metaliteracy concepts in the ACRL *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*.

<sup>2</sup>Baker, 2014



# GEORGIA SOUTHERN & HENDERSON LIBRARY

## Georgia Southern University:

- Founded in 1906
- Comprehensive Doctoral and Research University with 119 degree programs
- 25,000+ students (after recent consolidation with Armstrong State University)

## Henderson Library:

- 50+ full time and part time faculty & staff
- 10 of 19 faculty serve as reference and instruction librarians
- Instruction, consultations, and LibGuides supporting subjects, courses and programs
- 665,000 print volumes, 775,000 government documents, 85,000 journals and 195 subscription databases
- Member of GALILEO consortium, an initiative of the USG Board of Regents



# LITERATURE REVIEW

- **Steady Stream - LibGuides as a tool for locating and accessing resources** (e.g., Bielat, Befus & Arnold, 2013; Dalton & Pan, 2014; Dobbs et al., 2013; Emanuel, 2012; McMullin & Hutton, 2010; Morris & Del Bosque, 2010; Reeb & Gibbons, 2004; Roberts & Hunter, 2011; Robinson & Kim, 2010; Staley, 2007; Strutin, 2008).
- **Increasing Discussion - LibGuides as an instructional platform** (e.g., Farkas, 2017; German, 2017; Giullian and Zitser, 2015; Jackson & Stacy-Bates, 2016).
- **Barely a Trickle - LibGuides as a platform for student-led content creation** (i.e., Scull, 2014; Adebonojo and Campbell, 2017).



# LITERATURE REVIEW

- **Scull, 2014**  
Undergraduates created a LibGuide as part of a literature review assignment.
- **Adebonojo and Campbell, 2017**  
Undergraduates populated a LibGuide with content relevant to a class research topic, then included the LibGuide as part of a QEP-aligned electronic portfolio.
- In both studies, LibGuides serve as containers for bibliographic content.
- Neither study addresses application of LibGuides in communities of learning or in the distance learning environment.



# ENGAGING THE FRAMEWORK: TWO CASE STUDIES

Spring 2017: Collaboration with Faculty in two blended (hybrid) undergraduate courses:

- First-Year Writing: 'Mystory' (ENGL 1102)
- Introduction to Digital Humanities (HUMN 3431)

Active Learning and Metaliteracy experiences:

- Students invited to create group and individual assignments using LibGuides CMS
- Grounded in the *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* (2015), especially:
  - Authority is Constructed and Contextual
  - Information Creation is a Process

Librarians served as 'guides on the side' by providing ongoing instruction and technical support.



# CASE STUDY 1: MYSTORY

What is Mystory? An alternative to standard research paper or essay writing assignments. Students created a series of reflexive, visual essays focused on four areas of their lives:

- Community
- Family
- Career (or Major)
- Entertainment

Students engaged in the practice of 'Electracy' in their essays—the type of writing that emerges with technology, relying primarily on images. According to Ulmer (2003) **electracy** "is to digital media what literacy is to print." <sup>3</sup>

Text from student research and reflections supplemented images in the visual essays. Thus, the Mystory experience constituted transformational learning through changes in the students' understanding of 'self' (Holton, 1978; Hooper & Scharf, 2016; Mezirow, 2000; Seeber, 2015; Tynes, 2017)

Lesson plans and activities were grounded in the Threshold Concepts, Knowledge Practices, and Dispositions in the *Framework* to scaffold activities throughout the semester (per Silva, 2016).

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<sup>3</sup>Ulmer, G. L. (2003). *Internet Invention: From Literacy to Electracy*. New York: Longman.

# CASE STUDY 1: MYSTORY

Blended (hybrid) learning environment

23 students created individual, visual essays as prescribed in the guide.

F2F meetings in the library:

- One LibGuides orientation
- Two Research-related sessions

Essays were completed online in course LibGuides pages.

The screenshot shows a LibGuides page for 'Mystory' at Georgia Southern University. The page header includes the university logo and name, and the ZACH S. HENDERSON LIBRARY. The breadcrumb trail is 'Zach S. Henderson Library / Guides / Eng1192group / Mystory / Mystory'. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main content area is titled 'Mystory' and contains several sections: 'Mystory' (introduction), 'Mystory Essay #1: Community', 'Mystory Essay #2: Family', 'Mystory Essay #4: Entertainment', 'Mystory Essay 5: Wide Image', 'Mood', 'Making Pictures', 'Scene', 'Analyzing Photographs', and 'Juxtapose'. The 'Mystory Essay #1: Community' section is expanded, showing a 'Task' section with instructions to write a mystery essay about a community event, and a 'Requirements' section listing 750 words, 7 images, and 3 research sources. A 'Guidelines and Tips' section is also visible at the bottom.

# CASE STUDY 1: MYSTORY

## Library Orientation to LibGuides CMS

### Overview of LibGuides and Quick Start Guide

### Hands-on practice for inserting & editing :

- text
- images

### Supplemented by brief tutorials (screenshots) in the course guide.

(Note: student names redacted to address privacy concerns)

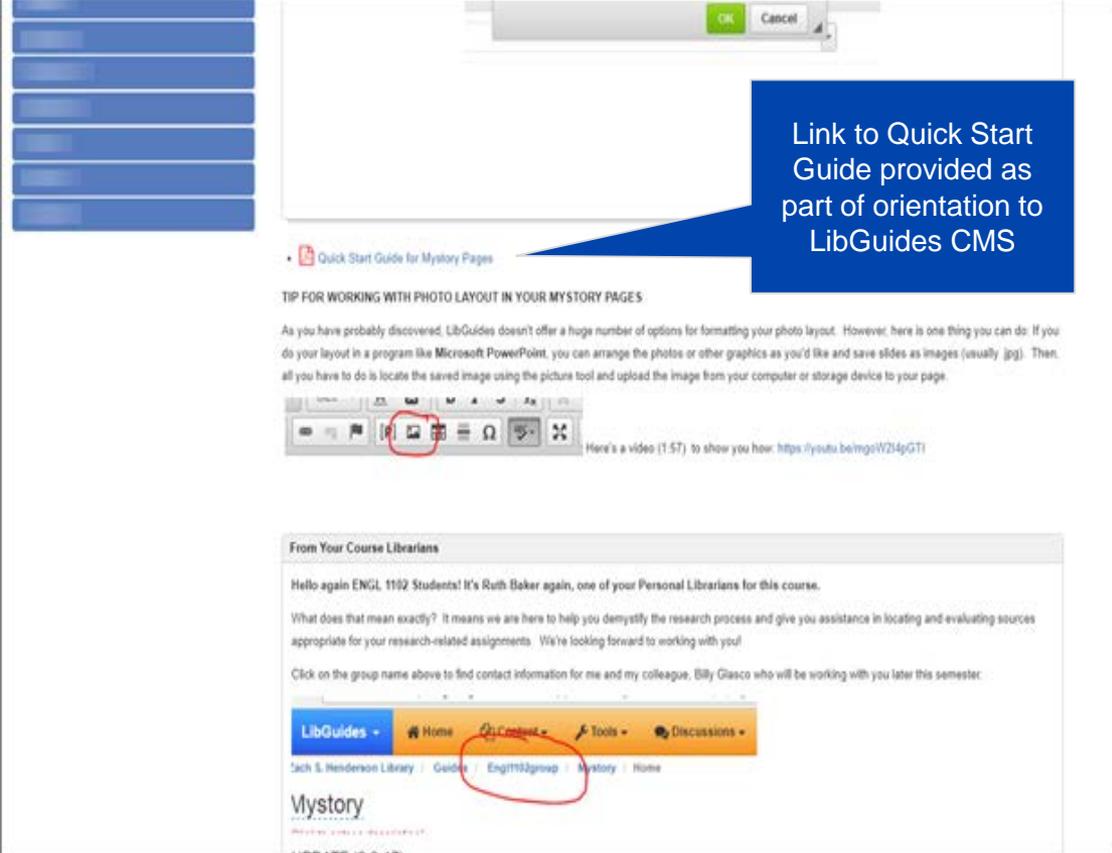
The screenshot shows the Georgia Southern University Zach S. Henderson Library LibGuides CMS page for 'Mystery'. The page header includes the university logo and name, and the library name. The main content area is titled 'Mystery' and features a navigation menu on the left with options like 'Home', 'NEW! Working with Text in Word', 'Quick Start Guide', 'From Your Course Librarians', and 'Chat with a librarian'. The main content area has a 'NEW! Working with Text in Word' section with a text-based tutorial and a screenshot of a Word document's Rich Text editing box. The tutorial text reads: 'Have you noticed that when you paste text from a word document into your boxes, that strange things happen to the formatting of the text? There is an easy solution! Just pass your text through the Word Filter in the upper right portion of the Rich Text editing box first.' Below this is a screenshot of a Word document's Rich Text editing box with a blue circle around the 'Word Filter' button. The tutorial continues: 'Just paste your text into the box that pops up and click OK. This will clean up a lot of the code in the background in Word documents and give you text a much cleaner appearance. Give it a whirl!'. At the bottom, there is a screenshot of a 'Paste from Word' dialog box with the following text: 'Because of your browser security settings, the editor is not able to access your clipboard data directly. You are required to paste it again in this window. Please paste inside the following box using the keyboard (Ctrl+Cmd+V) and hit OK.' The dialog box has an 'OK' button and a 'Cancel' button.

# CASE STUDY 1: MYSTORY

This screenshot shows more detail on photo editing and layout options.

In subsequent sessions, students were provided with a F2F tutorial on using PowerPoint to create more complex image/text layouts.

This tutorial was added to the guide in the Spring 2018 iteration of the course.



The screenshot displays the LibGuides CMS interface. On the left, there is a vertical navigation menu with several blue rectangular buttons. The main content area shows a white background with a green 'OK' button and a grey 'Cancel' button at the top right. Below this, there is a red icon and the text 'Quick Start Guide for Mystery Pages'. A blue callout box on the right contains the text: 'Link to Quick Start Guide provided as part of orientation to LibGuides CMS'. Below this, there is a section titled 'TIP FOR WORKING WITH PHOTO LAYOUT IN YOUR MYSTORY PAGES' with a paragraph of text and a small video player. The video player's toolbar has a red circle around the 'Image' icon. Below the video player, there is a section titled 'From Your Course Librarians' with a paragraph of text and a navigation menu. The navigation menu has a red circle around the 'Create' button. Below the navigation menu, there is a section titled 'Mystery' with a paragraph of text.

Link to Quick Start Guide provided as part of orientation to LibGuides CMS

Quick Start Guide for Mystery Pages

TIP FOR WORKING WITH PHOTO LAYOUT IN YOUR MYSTORY PAGES

As you have probably discovered, LibGuides doesn't offer a huge number of options for formatting your photo layout. However, here is one thing you can do: If you do your layout in a program like Microsoft PowerPoint, you can arrange the photos or other graphics as you'd like and save slides as images (usually .jpg). Then, all you have to do is locate the saved image using the picture tool and upload the image from your computer or storage device to your page.

Here's a video (1:57) to show you how: <https://youtu.be/mg0W214pGTI>

From Your Course Librarians

Hello again ENGL 1102 Students! It's Ruth Baker again, one of your Personal Librarians for this course.

What does that mean exactly? It means we are here to help you demystify the research process and give you assistance in locating and evaluating sources appropriate for your research-related assignments. We're looking forward to working with you!

Click on the group name above to find contact information for me and my colleague, Billy Glasco who will be working with you later this semester.

LibGuides - Home - Create - Tools - Discussions -

Sach S. Henderson Library / Guides / Eng1102group / Mystery / Home

Mystery

UPDATE (2018-12-17)

# CASE STUDY 1: MYSTORY

Example of a completed visual essay

By using LibGuides CMS students were able to:

- Take the lead as content creators;
- Actively engage with course material from the beginning of the course; and
- Gain experience manipulating text and images with a shorter learning curve than other platforms.

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

ZACH S. HENDERSON LIBRARY

Zach S. Henderson Library / Guides / Eng1192group / Mystory

Mystory

Search this Guide Search

Home

Mystory

Mystory - Community

Wabi-Sabi Project

Mystory - Family

Career Metaphor

Mystory - Career

Mystory - Entertainment

Class Assignment

Lab 7 - Hero's Journey

Lab 6 - Finding Links

Mystory - Community

WELCOME TO CAIRO  
GEORGIA'S Hospitality City

In southwest Georgia lies a town called Cairo, or if you'd rather, the Syrup City as the locals call it. The town has a rich history dating back to the early 1820's when Baptist preacher, William Hawthorne, first settled the land, which at the time was called Miller Station, nothing more than a dusty passageway along a wagon trail. He later convinced people from North Carolina to traverse the flatlands of Georgia's coastal plains with their families to come settle as well as cultivate the land. Not only did North Carolinians call this town home but so did Floridians who fled their homes seeking refuge from the bloody Seminole Wars. Later on, around 1866, two men, H. H. Tooke and James H. Hayes, sold all of their land in the area so that the unassertive town of Cairo could be founded.

The main stay of the area during this time was its fertile farm lands where many diverse crops such as corn, cotton, and tobacco, could be farmed, but this did not make Cairo stand out. It was not until a doctor by the name of Seaborn Anderson Roddenbery began his traveling apothecary that the town would be cemented in history. That year, Roddenbery started selling sugarcane syrup from a horse-drawn buggy and, within a few years, had his own practice that doubled as a general store where he sold the soon-to-be famous syrup by the barrel. Around 1889, Roddenbery began marketing the pure Georgia Syrup, with that garnered the town's nickname of the 'Syrup City'.

THE SOUTHERN PLAINSTATION  
PURE GEORGIA CAKE STRIP  
BOTTLED AND GUARANTEED BY  
CAIRO GROWERS CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION  
CAIRO, GEORGIA

# CASE STUDY 2: DIGITAL HUMANITIES

- Newly-established undergraduate interdisciplinary minor in the Department of History.
- Students develop public-facing online portfolio to display skills to potential employers.
- Portfolios may include audio and video projects, website development, digital mapping, data visualization, 3D design and printing, virtual reality, and video games.
- HUMN 3431 – First course in the 15-hour minor; in addition to introducing disciplinary principles and theories, allows students to learn techniques, conduct projects, and start building their portfolios.
- During Spring 2017 semester, HUMN 3431 included regular F2F meetings, including one session with a librarian addressing online content development.



The screenshot shows the website for the Digital Humanities Program at Georgia Southern University. The header includes the university logo and the program name. A navigation menu lists 'Bark & Woodson Library', 'Guides', 'Digital Humanities', 'Digital Humanities at Georgia Southern', and 'Home'. The main content area features a search bar, a sidebar with links to 'Home', 'Digital Humanities Toolkit', 'Projects', 'Spring 2017 Student Portfolios', and 'CLASS Homepage', and a central section titled 'Discover the Digital Humanities' with a logo and introductory text. The footer contains update information, a URL, and a print page link.

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

Digital Humanities Program

Bark & Woodson Library | Guides | Digital Humanities | Digital Humanities at Georgia Southern | Home

Digital Humanities at Georgia Southern

Search this Guide Search

Home

Digital Humanities Toolkit

Projects

Spring 2017 Student Portfolios

CLASS Homepage

Discover the Digital Humanities

The Digital Humanities Minor at Georgia Southern offers you a chance to hone skills and create projects in the humanities, liberal arts and social sciences that have an explicitly digital component. Video and audio projects, website development, digital mapping, visualizing information, 3D design and printing, virtual reality, big data analysis, board games and video games are all aspects of the burgeoning field of digital humanities. Even if you already work in one of these fields in your major, the CLASS Digital Humanities Minor gives you a chance to build a portfolio, find an internship or produce your capstone masterpiece by rounding out skills and giving you tools to make your work public.

Last Updated: Aug 16, 2017 1:18 PM | URL: <https://georgiasouthern.libguides.com/digitalhumanities> | Print Page

Subjects: Digital Humanities General

Login to LibApps

# CASE STUDY 2: DIGITAL HUMANITIES

Why LibGuides? The program needed:

- A cost-effective, scalable online content management system on which students with a wide range of technical skills could develop varied projects and portfolios, and make them publicly accessible following graduation.
- A platform that would support faculty-led projects, as well as host the program's instructional toolkit.
- A platform that would support long-term preservation of portfolio content in the University's institutional repository.
- A platform that could be adapted to online-only instruction if such offerings are developed in the future.

The screenshot shows the website for the Digital Humanities Program at Georgia Southern University. The header includes the university logo and the program name. A navigation menu lists various tools and resources. The main content area is titled 'Text Analytics Tools' and features several entries with brief descriptions of their functions, such as Voyant 2 for text analysis, Gephi for network visualization, and Wordtree for document analysis. A search bar is located in the top right corner.

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

Digital Humanities Program

Digital Humanities at Georgia Southern

Home

Digital Humanities Tools

Overview & Resources

3D & Maker

Data Visualization

Digital Storytelling

Gaming

GIS & Mapping

Website Development

Project Management

Text Analytics

Video & Oral History

Model Programs and Blogs

Projects

Spring 2017 Student Portfolios

CLASS Homepage

Text Analytics Tools

Voyant 2: Voyant 2 is a suite of tools for text analysis that can be used on either pasted text, documents from the web or uploaded files. You can also read the blog of one of its creators Stefan Sinclair here. Note that not all of the Voyant tools show up on the main interface. There is a great list of other Voyant tools here.

TAPUR 2: The Text Analysis Portal for Research (version 2), highlights Voyant as a tool but it has a set of curated sets for other resources. It is currently the best consolidation site for text analysis on the web.

Netvizz: Facebook has made it harder to do analysis than previously, but Netvizz is still useful.

Netvizz: Similarly Twitter has made it harder to do analysis than previously, but Netvizz is still useful.

Sentiment: SentiStrength analyzes Twitter for "sentiment" (positive, negative, neutral) and is useful for looking at trends. It is probably the best opinion mining tool available for Twitter.

Netlytic: Netlytic works across platforms on social media (including YouTube, RSS, Instagram) and is good for data visualization.

Overview: Overview is good for documents-analyzing lots of them.

Wordtree: Wordtree is an older text analysis project that relies on marked-up documents. Still useful for a number of things, but it requires your data to be structured in a certain way.

Topic Modeling

Model: Topic modeling analyzes clusters of words occurring together in order to refine or develop a topic for analysis. Mallet is one of the best packages for this.

Advanced Topic Modeling: David Blei's list of more advanced programs for topic modeling.

Updated 1-2017 Batchelor

Last Updated: Aug 18, 2017 1:19 PM | URL: <https://georgiasouthern.libguides.com/digitalhumanities/> | [Add Print Page](#)

Log In to LibGuides

Subjects: Digital Humanities General

# CASE STUDY 2: DIGITAL HUMANITIES

- Librarians created a Spring 2017 cohort group in LibGuides, which included group guides and individual portfolio guides for each of 10 enrolled students .
- Students developed group and individual projects on their guides, including exploratory and self-reflective blog posts, and text analytic, mapping, data visualization, gaming, 3D modelling, and digital storytelling projects.
- As they developed their portfolios, students gained experience with HTML and CSS coding, and with embedding widgets and external content into the platform.
- Further, they were encouraged to explore the platform's appearance and layout customizations.

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying a blog post from Georgia Southern University. The page title is "Digital Humanities - 2017 Student Cohort". The main heading of the post is "Using text analytics to compare speeches of complete opposites." Below the heading is a portrait of Martin Luther King Jr. and a network diagram. The diagram has four main nodes: "freedom" (top), "negro" (right), "ing" (left), and "ing" (bottom). Lines connect "freedom" to "negro", "freedom" to "ing" (left), "freedom" to "ing" (bottom), "negro" to "ing" (right), and "ing" (left) to "ing" (bottom). The text below the diagram discusses text analytics and mentions "freedom", "negro", and "ing".

# CASE STUDY 2: DIGITAL HUMANITIES

- Similar to ENGL 1102, librarians served as ‘guides on the side,’ providing one short instruction session, then ongoing support as students worked on their portfolios.
- During this session, librarians introduced students to their guides, basic content creation techniques, and tools for customizing guide appearance and layout.
- This approach allowed students to take the lead as content creators, inviting them to develop and strengthen metacognitive and metaliteracy skills necessary for effective self-representation and representation of digital content.

The screenshot shows a digital humanities portfolio page from Georgia Southern University. The page title is "Using text analytics to compare speeches of complete opposites." Below the title, there is a paragraph of text discussing the analysis of speeches. A portrait of Martin Luther King Jr. is featured. Below the portrait, there is a network diagram with "freedom" at the top, "negro" on the right, and "ing" on the left. The diagram shows various words connected to these central terms, illustrating the results of a text analysis tool. The page also includes a "Subscribe" button and a "Recent Posts" section.

# CASE STUDY 2: DIGITAL HUMANITIES

- Similar to ENGL 1102, students engaged in the practice of ‘Electracy’ as related to Digital Humanities content, theory, and practice.
- Furthermore, students actively engaged in Knowledge Practices relevant to each of the Framework’s six Frames, especially:
  - Authority is Constructed and Contextual
  - Information Creation as a Process
  - Information Has Value
- By hosting the program’s instructional toolkit on LibGuides CMS, transitioning instruction to the distance learning environment should be relatively straightforward.

The screenshot shows a LibGuides page from Georgia Southern University. The page title is "Using text analytics to compare speeches of complete opposites." Below the title, there is a paragraph of text discussing text analytics and a portrait of Martin Luther King Jr. At the bottom of the page, there is a network diagram with "freedom" at the center, connected to "ing", "let", and "negro".



# DISCUSSION

- LibGuides CMS proved effective for engaging students in online communities of learning and student-led content creation (Kirsh, 2005; Oakleaf, 2014; Savery & Duffy, 2001; Zhou & Brown, 2015).
- The platform required minimal training, resulting in reduced cognitive load and stress on working memory. Scaffolding assignments further supported skills development. (Head, 2013; Head & Eisenberg, 2009; Silva, 2016)
- In both cases, the librarians and faculty collaborated to provide active learning experiences that incorporated Threshold Concepts, Knowledge Practices, and Dispositions that comprise the Framework:
  - Authority Is Constructed and Contextual
  - Information Creation as a Process
  - Searching as Strategic Exploration
  - Information Has Value
- The platform also addressed technical requirements related to access and privacy, and faculty supervision of student-created content.



# DISCUSSION

ENGL 1102 – In constructing their essays, students engaged with the Frames by:

- Acknowledging that they are developing their own authoritative voice in an area, seeking credible and reliable information, and constructing a body of knowledge (including self-knowledge) and expertise through their visual, reflexive essays (Frame: ‘Authority Is Constructed and Contextual’);
- Recognizing that information creation is time consuming and iterative. Scaffolding essays throughout the course allowed students to build on and transfer their previous experiences to new information sources and improve their research and analytical skills with each iteration (Frame: ‘Information Creation as a Process’); and
- Incorporating both reflexive and analytical writing based on original research supported by library instruction (Frame: ‘Searching as Strategic Exploration’).



# DISCUSSION

HUMN 3431 – In constructing their portfolios, students engaged with the Frames by:

- Recognizing that authoritative content may be packaged formally or informally and may include sources of all media types (Frame: ‘Authority is Constructed and Contextual’);
- Articulating the capabilities and constraints of information developed through various creation processes (Frame: ‘Information Creation as a Process’); and
- Making informed choices regarding their online actions in full awareness of issues related to privacy and the commodification of personal information (Frame: ‘Information Has Value’).



# CONCLUSIONS & 2018 UPDATE

The two cases presented here constitute a pilot study of LibGuides CMS as an instructional platform:

- There is only anecdotal evidence of the effectiveness of LibGuides CMS as a teaching tool but we are encouraged by the role of LibGuide CMS in facilitating deeper learning.
- Students were engaged learners and digital content creators in the blended (hybrid) learning environments where they made substantive contributions to their online communities of learning.
- 2018 Update: the inclusion of additional tutorials on photo layout and online database searching makes LibGuides CMS-based course pages well-suited to fully online courses as well as blended (hybrid) learning environments.



# NEXT STEPS

- Continue collaborations with discipline faculty;
- Design assessment strategies to evaluate SLOs in the First-Year Writing (FYW) course (per Oakleaf, 2014); and
  - Evaluate student development of Dispositions associated with the Frames, as an outgrowth of engaging target Knowledge Practices.
- Place more emphasis on copyright and citation practice aligned with the Frame: 'Information Has Value' (this has also been added to the Spring 2018 iteration of the 'Mystory' FYW course).



# QUESTIONS?

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