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WAC Goes Green: The Unique Information Literacy Tasks of a Sustainability-Related Compositon Course

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The Unique Information Literacy Tasks of a Sustainability-Related Composition Course

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WAC at AUM

• Spring 2009: AUM pilots WAC program in English Composition
• Three areas of second semester composition
  • Science
  • Popular Culture
  • International Studies
WAC at AUM

• ENGL 1020 pilot course focused on sustainability (science area)
• Research-based composition
  • Evaluation of one source
  • Comparison of two sources
  • Synthesis of three sources
  • Persuasion involving four+ sources
WAC-Specific Tasks

- Using science-focused databases
- Evaluating speakers on sustainability
- Researching local “green” issues
WAC Tasks: Science Databases

• Greenfile
  • http://www.greeninfoonline.com
  • “[F]ocus[es] on the relationship between human beings and the environment”
• Familiar EBSCO interface
• Free access
WAC Tasks: Science Databases

• Science Direct
  • http://www.sciencedirect.com/
  • “[F]ull-text scientific database offering articles/chapters from more than 2,500 peer-reviewed journals and more than 10,000 books”
• Unique interface
• Limited guest access
WAC Tasks: Green Speakers

• Montgomery Humane Society
  • Mary Hughes, Humane Education
• AUM Green Alliance
  • Karlen McCree, President
• Student task: identify elements of argument in presentations
• iTunes U
WAC Tasks: Local Green Issues

- Locating sources
  - Newspaper Source by EBSCO
  - Local newspapers’ archives
  - State/local government information
  - Primary source research
  - Personal experience
WAC Tasks: Local Green Issues

• Sampling of student topics and sources
• Eating locally grown food – university newspaper
• Preserving Cahaba River Valley – the Cahaba River Society
• Sustainable products for Homebuilders – Southern Living, personal experience
Pilot Program Results

• Sustainability-based 1020 taught again summer 2009
• Materials to be used in future courses
• WAC composition program integrated at AUM starting Fall 2009