Georgia International Conference on Information Literacy

(Fomerly known as the Georgia Conference on Information Literacy)

Sep 25th, 12:30 PM - 1:45 PM

Freshman Lost on Campus – Meeting First Year Needs in One Package

Janet Stroupe Ward
Limestone College, jward@limestone.edu

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INTRODUCTION

Student Success @ Limestone College

BACKGROUND

Dr. Randy Nichols, Chair, Assistant Professor, and Department of Communications and Interdisciplinary Studies, was asked to devise a method to enhance the freshman experience at Limestone College. At orientation, freshmen at Limestone College are required to take a first-year interdisciplinary course in their first semester. Dr. Nichols asked the Library to write a Web page that would store all the information a first-year student would need to succeed during their freshman year at Limestone College. The Freshmen ID, 100 Academic Library, and ID 200 Student Transition courses are now centered on the Student Success library guide.

We began brainstorming the summer semester of 2013, preparing to go live in the fall semester (same year). We decided to use Springshare’s LibGuides to develop the Student Success guide because of its user-friendly environment and capabilities to use HTML, embed video scripts, unlike the College Web pages that were controlled by one department on campus. We first began modeling the Student Success site after the student orientation schedule already in place. We met with each department: Registrar, Financial Aid, Library, Teaching Center, Student Services, and asked each department to list their ideas, links and resources to be added to the Student Success guide. These resources included burgeoned page titles, links, scripts, production ideas, text, facts, and graphics.

We began scheduling video filming with outside resources like the local churches, Gaffney Visitor Center, City Hall, Gaffney Battlefield, Chamber of Commerce, Mauls on W heels, Salvation Army, Historical Preservation Society, Day and Cork Cash. These videos would give our students a visual tour of the Limestone College campus.

Before the Student Success @ Limestone College site was formed, students struggled in the following areas:

- Finding information using current Web site
- How to read audit degrees
- How to contact Financial Aid
- How to register for classes
- How to forward email
- Information about their meal plans
- List of events, activities on and off campus
- Completing surveys
- Testing and instruction links
- Locating links to: Blackboard Learn, LC Portal, Email
- Locating digital copies of exam schedules
- Help with retention guides
- Locating links to important online forms, catalog, and student handbook
- Locating and understanding policies

OBJECTIVES

- Centralize information to ensure success of Freshman at Limestone College
- How to read audit degrees
- All About Financial Aid
- All About Registrar
- How to forward email
- List of events, activities on and off campus
- Interactive maps of: local churches, campus buildings
- Meal plans
- Surveys
- Testing and instruction links
- Green screen links to: Blackboard Learn, LC Portal, Email
- Exam Schedules
- Contact and study guides
- Links to online forms, catalog, and student handbook

METHODS

- LibGuide began as a basic Web page
  - Web pages had to be approved by too many chain of commands
- Developed into a Library Guide
  - The guide helped compile information together
- Departments on Campus contacted
  - Vital information for Freshmen from each department added to the guide
- Link consistency
  - Links always in the same location and links to Campus Security on each page
- Instant Access to Surveys
  - Higher percentage rate of surveys completion from links located in the Student Success guide vs. survey links sent to their emails
- Modified after the online orientation schedule
  - A paper copy totaling 18 pages of information that was unorganized and students were unable to determine links to the resources
- Virtual and Interactive Videos added
  - Visual guides and interactive maps with videos to assist visual learners

RESULTS

Student Success @ Limestone College

- Welcome
  - Video from the President of the College
- Links to Student Handbook & Academic Catalog
- Check in Resources
- Printing & Copying on campus
- Finding Resources
- FAQ's
- Useful Numbers
- Campus Safety
- Campus Nurse and Counselor

RESULTS

Student Success @ Limestone College

- Financial Aid
  - Blackboard Instructions
- Limestone College Email Instructions
- Connecting Smartphones to Limestone College Email
- FAQ’s
- Useful Numbers
- Campus Safety
- Campus Nurse and Counselor

For additional information please contact:
Janet S. Ward, MLIS
AJ Eastwood Library
jward@limestone.edu
http://my.limestone.edu/library