Feb 22nd, 10:15 AM - 11:30 AM

**Seeking Symbiosis: Designing LibGuides that Bring User-Centered Design and Learner-Centered Practice into Harmony**

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SEEKING SYMBIOSIS:
Bringing User-Centered Design & Learner-Centered Practice Into Harmony

Vanessa Garofalo, Adrienne Button, Anne Le-Huu Pineault, Paige Crowl
About Oxford College Library

- Oxford College of Emory University
- First and Second-Year Students
  - Small Liberal Arts College
  - R1 Research University
- Library = Academic Hub on Campus
How We Got Started

- Upgraded to LibGuides CMS in 2019
- User-Centered Focus vs. Learner-Centered Design
- LibGuides Task Force Formation
- Subject Guides vs. Course Guides
- Implemented a Rough Template
Starting Point: Subject Guide

- Based on Original Harvard LibGuides Best Practices
- Starting Point – Built on this Design

https://guides.library.harvard.edu/libguides_best_practices
Prototype: Course Guide

- Rough Prototype
- Incorporating Learner-Centered Elements
- Teaching Students How to Use Resources
Moving **Forward**

- **Iterative** Design
- Don’t Rush (*like we did*)
- Put **Students** in the **Center** (*always!*)
- **Assess**!
Key Things to Consider

- Are Students Learning? **Learner-Centered Design**
- Is it Accessible? **Accessibility**
- Is it Usable? **Usability**
- How Do You Know? **Assessment**
Learner-Centered Design

- **Understanding** is the goal
- **Motivation** is the basis
- **Diversity** of learners is the norm
- **Growth** of learners is the challenge

Authentic

Real-World

Problem-Based

Transferrable

Situated
Key Things to Consider

1. Context
2. Tasks
3. Construction
4. Collaboration

Learner-Centered Design Principles

Let learners **construct** their own plans

**Coach** learners to expert performance

Encourage **multiple perspectives**

Situate learning in **real-life activities**

Prompt learners to **think about their thinking**

Guide learners to **think like an expert**

Evaluate learners' thinking **processes**
Planning Questions

- What is the overall objective of the LibGuide?
- Why is the LibGuide being developed?
- Who are the users and what are their needs?
  - What are their prior knowledge and experiences, preferred learning styles, metacognitive skills, emotional responses, and motivations to learn?
- Who are the librarians, what are their general characteristics, expertise, experience?
- What are the technical and environmental constraints?
- Task analysis: What will the users be asked to do in terms of actions and cognitive processes in order to successfully use the LibGuide?
Accessibility: What is It?
Accessibility

Building accessibility into everything we do, as early into the process as possible, is the best way to make sure we're serving the most people.
Accessibility Tips

- No need to reinvent the wheel:
  - Look online for good lists of best practices
  - Plugins like the WAVE Evaluation Tool can help you identify problems on the fly
- Make use of “plus-one” to gradually make your existing LibGuides accessible
Illinois Library’s **Best Practices**

- Use **easy-to-read** fonts (sans serif)
- Use **real text** when possible, not text within graphics  
  - Always provide an **alt-text** version if you want to include a graphics-based object, like an infographic

- Write in **plain language**
- Headings on tables
- Avoid **click here** and "mystery links"
- **Caption** and include transcripts for other media

Turner’s Five Laws of Document Design

1. Design is for use.
2. Every document its design.
3. Every design its purpose.
4. Save the time of the user.
5. Documents are changeable organisms.

User-Centered Design, User Experience, Usability: Are They the Same?
Defining Usability

- Learnability
- Efficiency
- Memorability
- Errors
- Satisfaction

Usability Testing

Before the product has been designed or implemented:

- Focus groups, interviews or surveys
- Card sorting

Once the product has been implemented:

- Task-based usability testing
- First-click testing
- Feedback forms or satisfaction surveys
Creating a Usable and Accessible Product

Remembering that accessible products are more usable for all users.

• Ongoing conversation with team about diverse user needs
• Involving a diverse user group in testing phase

Assessment

Is the guide meeting user needs? Is it facilitating learning?

- Assessment is key to the iterative process
- Learner outcomes, accessibility, and usability can be assessed in tandem
Assessment: **Next Steps**

1. Task-based usability testing
2. WAVE Evaluation Tool
3. Informal feedback from student employees
4. Focused feedback from Faculty at library-sponsored lunch
5. Feedback from students at First-Year Council
Assessment: Future Plans

We will use storyboarding and prototyping to engage users in focus groups and interviews. Ask questions related to:

- **Relevance** of the content to the learners' needs - tasks and goals
- Difficulty level of the **content**
- Difficulty level of **navigation**
- Level of **interactivity**
- Clarity of the **learning objectives**
- **General impressions** (what they liked / didn't like)
Just a **Reminder**...

- **Iterative** Design
- Don’t Rush (*like we did*)
- Put **Students** in the **Center** (*always!*)
- **Assess**!
Breakout Discussions

- Divide into Groups
- Evaluate a LibGuide
- Use the Handout to Discuss
- Designate a Group Speaker
- Share Your Group’s Ideas!
What Did You All Learn?