

Summary of "Enhancing Student Research Skills"  
Information Literacy Grant for 2009-2010

Collaboration of Bonnie Oldham and  
Dr. Peter Leininger, PT, PhD, OCS

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This document summarizes the outcomes and success of the Information Literacy Grant, "Enhancing Student Research Skills" with the collaboration of Ms. Bonnie Oldham and Dr. Peter Leininger of the Department of Physical Therapy.

fairly well when completing the project but I have found that the student's literature search and literature review is often somewhat haphazard, inefficient and somewhat incomplete. I believe the students on the whole have NOT been provided the effective and efficient search techniques to retrieve the necessary information for their projects.

With this in mind, I met with Bonnie Oldham, Associate Librarian from the Weinberg library to inquire whether she could provide our students with specific training into conducting a successful (efficient and rigorous) literature search. In addition, we discussed the need for strategies and instruction (including online instruction and access to links) to better ensure sustainability with these necessary skills for lifelong learning and critical analysis in the field of physical therapy.

Ms. Oldham was provided the topics and group assignments for the evidence based practice project. She subsequently contacted each group and scheduled a time to meet individually with each group and discuss the specifics of each of their projects. Prior to the meeting, Ms. Oldham worked diligently to compile literature search strategies and tips for each of the specific topics. She then met with each group and guided them through an effective search process to get them started and determined if there were any questions or problems with the semester project. The student groups later informed me how the process proved to be extremely helpful and got them "off on the right foot." Each group was instructed to contact Ms. Oldham or the course instructor Dr. Peter Leininger if they encountered any barriers to an effective literature search during the spring semester.

This year, as a result of the planning, organizing and implementation of the searching procedures via Bonnie Oldham, the overall quality of the student presentations were markedly improved. The improvement from past years' projects was evident from an

overall improvement in the presentation grades and a notable improvement in the thoroughness and accuracy of the literature searches.

In addition to an improvement in the performances with the written (Power Point format) presentations, the oral presentations by the students in the subsequent course, Orthopaedic Physical Therapy II (PT 714) in the spring term was also markedly improved.

One additional benefit of this Information Literacy Grant, "Enhancing Student Research Skills" is the high level of [evidence-based medicine](#) of the project. Ms. Oldham constructed a library web link to the PT 713 course. This link includes; 1. Tips and strategies for effective searching, 2. Evidence-based Medicine description and parameters, 3. Evidence-based databases, 4. How to import Pub Med citations in RefWorks, and 5. Interlibrary loan information and instruction.

In summary, the Information Literacy Grant, "Enhancing Student Research Skills" proved to be a great success through the hard work and skill of Bonnie Oldham, and the close collaboration with her via the instructor Dr. Peter Leininger throughout the process.

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