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Integrating External Resources into Health Informatics and Computing Instruction: Emerging Roles for Librarians and Information Professionals

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Integrating External Resources into Informatics and Computing Instruction: Emerging Roles for Librarians and Information Professionals

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Role: Central Educator

Inform Curriculum Design

Advise on Textbook Selection

Role: Curator of Online Resources

Accommodate differing learning styles

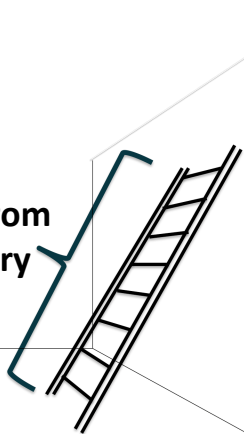
Iteratively update content to suite student needs

Role: Promote Information and Data Literacy

Help students assess resources and ask questions

Integrate basic data management instruction

Support from the Library



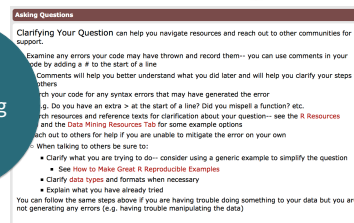
Barriers impacting student success with computational tools

Different backgrounds/
learning styles

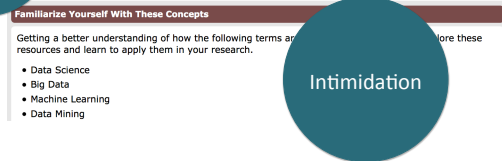


Lack of familiarity with programming concepts

Difficulty articulating questions



Unfamiliar jargon



Intimidation

Background: In informatics courses, instructors often present materials in a didactic, module-by-module fashion and may not readily integrate outside materials to facilitate learning. This may be due to a lack of time or expertise in identifying appropriate external resources. Librarians are uniquely suited to address this gap.

Purpose: The objective of the course was to promote critical thinking about various algorithmic approaches to working with bioscience data. The instructors from the library created an iteratively updated online subject guide containing summary-level information and online resources on the programming language R, data mining, and identification of bioscience datasets.

Next Steps: In order to optimize the usefulness of the guide for future course sessions, the instructors will conduct a formal assessment of how students interact with and value the materials. The organic nature of the initial development did not cater to assessment.

Setting/Participants: A librarian (D.B.) and a digital curation fellow (M.B.) taught a graduate level course on computational methods in health informatics. Students were from basic science and informatics programs and had varying levels of computational experience.

Conclusion: Information professionals are uniquely suited to curating supplemental online resources in educational settings. Providing resources tailored to students' diverse needs throughout semester long computational methods instruction is an emerging opportunity for information professionals who wish to take an active role in fostering literacy in computational environments.