Reference Librarian
Online Course Involvement

Purpose

The purpose of embedding a reference librarian into selected RN to BSN courses is to give students literature search assistance at the time and point of need when they are most likely to absorb the information.

Providing virtual library instruction

- The course professor and reference librarian connect prior to the beginning of a course as well as during a course regarding expected student research needs and then customize library instruction accordingly.
- The reference librarian meets students face-to-face during an interactive presentation in the library that is held during the orientation to one of the first courses in the curriculum, Dimensions of Baccalaureate Nursing Practice. Students receive instruction on logging in to the college library and locating several resources selected from the plethora of databases and other resources available to them.
- Accessing the reference librarian is built into a specific assignment in the beginning of the course as students are more likely to use the service if an assignment either requires or reminds them to do so (Matthew & Schroeder, 2006).
- Powerpoint presentations are available in the online course and are used to communicate various instructions to students who may want a review of the information that was covered during the course orientation. Additional information may also be presented by the reference librarian as the online course progresses.
- A Question and Answer discussion thread is provided through selected online courses. Students posting questions for the librarian reap the benefit of the librarian’s answers as well as students who may not need to ask that particular question, as yet.
- Students may phone, drop by the library, or e-mail the reference librarian in order to have specific and detailed questions answered. Because other students in the class cannot benefit from this personalized service, the reference librarian asks these students to post the question and the response to the online Question and Answer thread so other students can gain insight from the exchange.
- The reference librarian posts a Research Tip of the Week during the online course. The tips serve to provide relevant information to students regarding upcoming assignments. Tips include information about finding and narrowing topics, choosing and using library databases and resources, and incorporating research using the American Psychological Association (APA) style of writing.

Summary

The strength of the embedded librarian service is that a student’s perceived obstacles are identified quickly and overcome prior to becoming a highly frustrating matter. It is hoped this will result in a lower attrition rate within the program. Online instruction continues to expand and to be enhanced by suggestions and ideas from students, professors, and librarians.

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Excerpt from Student Syllabus: NUR 3080 Dimensions of Baccalaureate Nursing Practice

**Librarian Support – Available in the online course**

A reference librarian from the NWF State College Learning Resource Center (LRC) is present in this online course. Students are encouraged to ask for help from the librarian in the online format. All students may benefit from general questions posed to the librarian, so please feel free to post your questions for everyone to see! Remember, if you have a question, one or more of your classmates may have the *same* question. You may also call the reference librarian at (850) 729-5312 or e-mail the librarian through the online course.