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Development of an Online Plagiarism Tutorial

By Kenetha J. Stanton and Sally Neal

Cutting and pasting, falsifying a bibliography, purchasing a paper mill paper, or turning in another's work are all forms of plagiarism that fall within the academic plagiarism spectrum. An ongoing survey produced by Don McCabe, a leading academic integrity researcher, profiles student behaviors related to plagiarism. In surveying, over a three-year period, the undergraduate populations across 83 US and Canadian colleges and universities, McCabe reports that "unauthorized collaboration, paraphrasing or copying a few phrases or sentences from either a written or web source ('cut and paste' plagiarism) and fabricating or falsifying a bibliography occur frequently, being reported by one quarter to one half of undergraduates" (McCabe, 2005, para. 15).

Butler faculty feedback also highlights students' perceptions of plagiarism. In conversations with faculty teaching first-year students, faculty noted that, in particular, new students need to be reminded about the academic integrity and intellectual importance of citing. Students also require coaching concerning when to cite and how to paraphrase correctly and need an introduction to the college disciplinary ramifications of plagiarism. As a result of this gap in students' behaviors and higher education's academic integrity expectations and our local, Butler-specific feedback, the Library began looking at resurrecting a Butler Libraries online plagiarism tutorial created at the beginning of the decade. The original tutorial had excellent content, including critical thinking plagiarism examples that students answered, but, as is often the case with the speed of technological change, the technology used in the tutorial was dated. The tutorial was a series of flat web pages that students clicked through. Thus, began our journey to bring our plagiarism tutorial technologically up-to-date, or, in non-technical terms, create a "slicker" feel and to expand the

tutorial's content to address our local faculty's concerns. Our first goal for the tutorial was to increase student engagement with the content. We wanted to keep the original interactive questions of the tutorial but update the user interface, integrating more audio and video to make it livelier. As a result, we open the tutorial with faculty across the University's colleges reflecting on why citing is important in their disciplines. We wanted to brand the video as a Butler product so students would know that the information provided, such as student handbook policies, are Butler-specific. Finally, to provide some fun in relation to this serious subject, we invited our University mascot, Blue II, to participate in the tutorial. Blue leads students to helpful information concerning how plagiarism is defined and disciplined at Butler.

A significant drawback to the original tutorial was the technical difficulties around the integration of the tutorial and the associated assessment into Blackboard. The assessment was not attached to the tutorial, and, while students took the assessment within Blackboard, student scores were deposited within a specified librarian's account. The librarian then redistributed the scores back to the faculty member. This was time consuming for all parties involved: the librarian who culled the scores for a particular class, the faculty member who had to request the scores and re-enter them into their course site, and the students who had to navigate outside their course site to where the assessment lived within the Blackboard community area. Therefore, a second goal for the tutorial and assessment was to integrate the two parts into Blackboard as one piece, making it easier for faculty to deploy and students to access. This integration would include the automatic uploading of the students' assessment points into the Blackboard grade book for the course.

A third goal was to expand the content of

the tutorial to increase its use by faculty. Through conversations with the various stakeholders – faculty, Student Affairs staff, the Writing Center, and librarians, we added additional content to complete the plagiarism picture here at Butler. As mentioned earlier, we included an interview vignette of faculty discussing the importance of citing sources as part of the scholarly communication process; the possible consequences of plagiarism at Butler University; how to paraphrase correctly; and more information about the places and people that students can seek out to find help with citation styles. While this added content increased the length of the tutorial, something that we originally wanted to avoid, we sacrificed slightly more time to be more inclusive with our information covered.

Another way we strategized to increase the tutorial's use was to automatically embed the tutorial into Blackboard course sites for specific first year courses: the University's first-year seminar course (a core curriculum course required for all students) and the MG 101 Freshman Business Experience course, for a total of 53 individual classes. By automatically embedding the tutorial into these courses, faculty did not have to contact the campus Blackboard Administrator and request that this product be added to their course site. While all faculty are welcome to use the tutorial, it does require contacting the campus Blackboard administrator to upload the tutorial and assessment to a course site. The faculty coordinators of these first-year courses were instrumental in supporting this automatic embedding and then promoting its use with their respective faculty.

Finally, embarking on this project was a way to play with others on campus, a continuing goal for the Library in seeking out collaborative projects across academic units. To design a more technologically engaging product, the Library contacted Butler's Instructional Technology department to enlist their help; faculty input was garnered concerning the content of the tutorial; and Student Affairs, our campus academic integrity department, was brought into the video content conversations as well. Not only did this collaboration with the content and design create a richer learning experience for the students, it also helped in marketing the use of the tool (the more people

involved in the creation, the more word-of-mouth marketing that naturally ensues).

Technology Selection

One of our first steps was to meet with the Instructional Technology department to determine the best technology solution to use for this project. The Instructional Technology Specialist assigned to our project worked with us to help clarify our goals for the project and our learning objectives for the students in order to evaluate the tools available to meet our needs. The final recommendation was to create the tutorial with the necessary embedded audio and video in Microsoft PowerPoint which was then imported into Camtasia Studio. Camtasia Studio added the desired interactive capability for the critical thinking examples the students practiced on during the tutorial. By exporting the final product as an xml file, it could be posted on the Library web site and added to the Blackboard courses to be viewed prior to taking the Blackboard assessment.

Content Development

Once PowerPoint was chosen as our primary vehicle for the display of the tutorial, we had a platform for beginning to develop our content. The content from the old web-based tutorial was entered into PowerPoint by a resident from IUPUI's School of Library Science who functioned as the project manager for this project. This initial content was then merged with new material, and we began deciding on the appropriate places for audio and video content to be added to keep the level of student engagement high throughout the tutorial. As locations for multi-media content were chosen, scripts were developed for the each segment to ensure that the appropriate information was being included. Feedback from various librarians was obtained on the presentation and scripts throughout this content development process to ensure that we did not miss any key points.

When we reached a place where we thought our content was complete, we worked with Instructional Technology to prepare a prototype with limited audio and video content included to show the general feel of what we were proposing. This prototype, along with copies of the full PowerPoint presentation for the evaluation of the content, was shown to a

campus focus group that included the Writing Across the Curriculum Director, the Director of Butler's Writers' Studio, a faculty member from the College of Education who is involved in the First Year Seminar program, and the Dean of Student Services. This focus group raised a number of concerns that we had not considered and provided feedback that greatly improved our final product. For example, the focus group helped us come up with the idea of using vignettes of interviews with faculty members from our different colleges to set the discussion of plagiarism in a wider context of scholarly communication and norms. After revising our PowerPoint presentation and accompanying scripts, we were prepared to begin recruiting volunteers for our audio and video segments of the tutorial.

At the same time, as our content was finalized, we realized that the associated Blackboard assessment would also need to be updated to ensure that it adequately assessed the updated content. Blackboard was able to provide useful statistics on response rates to the questions in the old assessment to indicate which questions were providing a sufficient level of challenge for our assessment purposes. We retained several of the plagiarism example questions from the original assessment based on our analysis of the prior response rates and developed additional content-based questions to include the additional material that we had added to the new tutorial. The overall length of our assessment increased from ten to twelve multiple-choice questions, but this seemed reasonable based on the amount of new material added to the tutorial in this overhaul.

Tutorial Creation

Once again, the Instructional Technology department came to our rescue by providing the video shooting and editing skills needed to make this a high quality production. Using the provided scripts, Instructional Technology filmed our faculty, staff, and student volunteers reading or performing their segments. Final Cut Pro was used to edit the taped segments to meet the needs of the tutorial, and the final video clips were converted to the appropriate format and embedded into the PowerPoint presentation. In addition, our Instructional Technology contact assisted in adding automation to various blocks of text to increase

engagement throughout the presentation.

The final PowerPoint with all embedded media and automated transitions was captured using Camtasia as a movie file. Camtasia was then used to integrate the interactive critical thinking examples as questions and answers into the tutorial video. This Camtasia video was exported as an XML file and posted on a streaming media server that could be linked to the Library web site and to Blackboard. Without the in-depth technical assistance provided by the Instructional Technology department and its student staff during this phase of the project, our project would likely have floundered.

Blackboard Integration

The Blackboard Administrator in Instructional Technology guided us through the construction of the assessment using Respondus, a Blackboard assessment creation tool. The presentation of the assessment was set to only be displayed for the student to complete once the tutorial had been viewed. This turned out to be more challenging than initially anticipated because we could only check for the student clicking on the link for the tutorial before allowing the assessment to be accessible; there was no way to ensure that the tutorial was watched to completion. To deal with this issue, as well as the possible situation where a student was assigned this tutorial in more than one class, we designed it so that after the tutorial link is clicked, the student would answer a single yes/no question affirming that he or she had indeed watched the tutorial. The submission of this agreement that the tutorial had been viewed became the trigger for presenting the assessment.

The process of embedding the tutorial and assessment in each class turned out to be more labor-intensive than we hoped because attempts to automate the process were unsuccessful. However, we were able to manually place this in each First Year Seminar section, each First Year Business Experience section, and any other classes for which the instructor requested it. In each case, the tutorial and associated quiz were added in an unavailable state. If instructors desired to use this in the course, they only needed to make it available and determine whether the points from the assessment were to be added into the

grade center for the course.

Marketing and Deployment

The availability of this tutorial, and detailed instructions for turning it on in Blackboard were widely disseminated to faculty on campus. The highest levels of publicity were given to those faculty members teaching First Year Seminar courses. However, this information was also communicated at the annual New Faculty Orientation session, Faculty Development Day, via the Global and Historical studies committee (a second-year requirement for students), via librarian liaisons, via the Instructional Technology fall newsletter, and via Student Services. In addition, the fact that we had faculty members from each college involved in the creation of the tutorial gave us some extra grass-roots marketing as they told their colleagues about this new resource.

Conclusion

This project was an effective pilot project for the Library to develop a process for updating or creating other tutorials. One of the key lessons we learned was that it was good to start small with a single tutorial as we learned what would be needed for the project. The fact that this tutorial had an existing framework for the content and the assessment made this process easier for our first attempt, but we still learned a number of lessons through the course of this endeavor that should make future tutorial projects run more smoothly.

The technical demands of this project, including the video segments and the integration into Blackboard, made this a complicated project. Having the right people involved in the project to provide the needed expertise at the right times was crucial to the project's effective completion. However, as the number of people and departments involved in a project grows, it makes more difficult to keep a project on schedule. We found that having a project manager who coordinated all of the efforts and acted as a liaison between the two key departments involved—the Library and Instructional Technology—kept the project moving forward and gave a central contact for all of the details on the project. Having one person formally charged as the project manager for future interdepartmental efforts is highly recommended.

In hindsight, allowing additional time in the schedule for thorough testing of the software and the final product would have greatly reduced the stress level at the end of the project as we were preparing for implementation. In future projects, additional time for testing and feedback on the final tutorial from a wider set of faculty members and administrators should be built into the project from the beginning to ensure the highest quality of the final product.

In obtaining feedback from faculty and administrators, we discovered that the use of a tangible prototype gave them more to work with and provided a higher level of engagement on their part. This all worked to give us more and better feedback from our focus group than if we had just asked for generic feedback or ideas up front. Future focus groups should also be done with a similar tangible prototype for the focus group members to respond to.

The incorporation of multiple voices into the final product really strengthened the presentation of the material and increased the chance that each student viewing the tutorial would have the concepts placed into context by someone in their field of study that they would recognize as an authority. This increase in perceived credibility will help students to take the information more seriously than perhaps they otherwise would have. A similar effort to incorporate a wide variety of voices and perspectives should be made on future projects.

Overall, this project was a success. We met our objectives for the tutorial and its associated assessment, and the anecdotal feedback we are getting is that this updated version of the tutorial and the ease of use within Blackboard are a hit with faculty and students. Unfortunately, our current method of integrating it within Blackboard eliminated our ability to easily keep track of the statistics across campus on tutorial use in courses and assessment data, but we decided that this was a small sacrifice to pay in order to increase its utility and appeal. Continued marketing will be needed each year to ensure that faculty are aware of this resource and continue to make use of it in their courses. Our Fall New Faculty Orientation and Faculty Development Day

events are great ways to reach the faculty at the start of each academic year.

Readers are welcome to view the live version of our updated plagiarism tutorial at <http://www.butler.edu/library/tutorials/understanding-plagiarism>. The authors would like to give their special thanks to Jeana C. Rogers and Jeff McGregor of Butler's Instructional Technology department for all of their effort toward making this project a success.



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