Hashtag Outreach:

Using Twitter as Subject Specialists to Integrate the Library in Classroom Discussions

Carolina Hernandez (University of Oregon)

LOEX 2016
Beyond the Instruction Session

- Instruction sessions are often our best chance to interact with a large group of students in our subject areas.
- How do we keep conversations going beyond the classroom?
- How do we maintain a presence and remind students of our existence?
- How do we stay connected with those in our subject areas?
- **Twitter** is one tool that can help with this.
Why Twitter?
90% of adults between ages 18 and 29 use some form of social media (Perrin, 2015).

Twitter in particular is associated with a younger demographic.

While only 32% of 18-29 group use Twitter, this is a larger ratio than other age groups, supporting the idea that Twitter skews younger (Duggan, 2015).
Certain academic disciplines are now using Twitter in the classroom:

- Heavily used in journalism, media studies, PR, and advertising courses, but also being incorporated into subjects like “English, business, biology, and political science” (DiVerniero and Hosek, 2013).

Unlike other social media platforms, the public discussion nature of Twitter allows for easier integration into discussions.

Needs to be “educationally relevant” to have an impact on what students get out of it (Junco, Heigerbert, and Loken, 2010).
Twitter in the Classroom

● How it’s used:
  ○ To take attendance.
  ○ Particularly in larger lecture classes, as a way to make sure everyone has a chance to join the discussion.
  ○ To share course-relevant articles.

● Benefits:
  ○ Increased participation.
  ○ Ongoing discussion/sharing of information after class is over.
  ○ Can help prepare students for using Twitter in their own future professions.
  ○ More opportunities for shy students to participate.
  ○ Allows for prompt feedback.

● Opportunity for librarians to jump into these discussion.
Twitter in Libraries

- Twitter is already being used in academic libraries:
  - In a survey of 100 academic libraries, all were found to be using Twitter (Boateng and Liu, 2013).

- How are libraries using Twitter?
  - Analysis of tweets yields 9 categories, with Events being the most common. Resources and Community Building also popular (Stvilia and Gibradze, 2014).

- Opportunity for growth in individual librarians using Twitter.
Twitter and the Librarian
Journalism Reading Room at UW-Madison

- The Journalism Reading Room (JRR) is a small, departmental library at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW).

- Managed by an LIS graduate student to allow opportunity to gain management experience in a library setting.

- In charge of social media accounts for library, including Twitter.

- Previous JRR Librarians already established a presence on Twitter, allowing for connections with faculty and students in J-School.
Journalism Librarian at University of Oregon

- Started in September 2015.
- Started from scratch using Twitter as a subject specialist.
- Over several months of engagement, have developed rhythm for how I approach interacting with students and faculty in my subject areas.

Hey #uoj201, I'm the Journalism Librarian at Knight Library. Excited to see what you'll be tweeting about this term!

2:40 PM - 29 Sep 2015
Embedded Librarianship and Twitter

- Similar work has been done by adapting the concept of embedded librarianship to Twitter.

- Ellen Hampton Filgo (2010) has done this by following along in real-time with class discussions on Twitter.

- Too time intensive if scaled up to more than one class at a time.

- How to modify this to expand it?
Engaging on Twitter
Before You Start

- Create a new account!
- Even if you already have a personal Twitter account, important to keep separate.
  - Allows you to strengthen online identity.
  - Helps keep personal information private.
- Create a plan and set some goals.
  - What do you hope to accomplish by using Twitter?
  - This can and likely will evolve over time.

Carolina Hernandez
@sojclibrarian
Journalism and Communication Librarian at the University of Oregon
Passive Engagement

- Easiest way to get started, especially if you’re new to Twitter.
- Involves tweeting out resources, articles, and other content relevant to those in your subject areas.
- Helps reinforce your identity as subject librarian to students and faculty.
- Most effective in conjunction with other methods.
Hashtag Interactions

- Hashtags are used to tag tweets that share a common theme or are part of the same conversation.

- Course hashtags are created by professors for their students to use in class discussions or share course-related content.

- Allows you to see what discussions they’re having and opportunities for more active engagement.
Direct Interactions

- This involves directly tweeting at individuals with helpful information.
- Important to follow others for this to be effective.
- Follow up through email when more in depth responses are needed.
Benefits

- Allows for sharing of relevant resources with students even when not doing an instruction session.
- Helps with staying in touch with current research and projects in subject area, which can help inform collection development and creation of other resources.
- Offers another avenue for faculty and students to reach out with questions.
- Reinforces existence of the subject librarian to patrons.
Future Considerations

- Still an evolving process.
- Collaborations with faculty to encourage more student engagement with library resources through Twitter.
- Integrating the use of Twitter into actual instruction sessions.
- How well can this be implemented with other academic disciplines?
References


Questions?

Carolina Hernandez
cahernan@uoregon.edu
@sojclibrarian or @carolina_hrndz