PREPARING YOUR CROP:

Understanding Student Experiences with New Technology and the Impact on Instruction

Presenters:
Christi Piper, Instruction Librarian
Joel Tonyan, Systems and User Experience Librarian
Objectives

- Summon in our Library
- Previous Research
- Study Design
- Results
- Implications for Teaching and Using the ACRL Framework
Who We Are

• **Kraemer Family Library**—midsize academic library serving a community of approximately 12,000 undergraduate and graduate students.

• **Instruction**—We primarily teach one-shot classes and do not teach a for-credit information literacy course.
Summon in our Library
In 2015, the University of Colorado system (Boulder, Denver, Colorado Springs, Anschutz) was offered a deal on Summon by Ex Libris.

To receive a discounted price, all four libraries had to agree to subscribe to Summon.
Summon and Instruction

Pre-Summon:

• Instruction sessions largely focused on teaching interfaces

• Critical thinking skills were on a class by class basis and depended on time
What do we do with Summon?

- GPS (Freshman Seminar)
- Writing Program
- Discipline Classes/Capstone
Launching Summon

Website Redesign:
Previous Research
Previous Research

- Students want library search tools to mirror popular search tools (Buck & Steffy, 2013)
- Students have a hard time evaluating results (Asher, 2013)
- Librarians prefer to teach the traditional library interfaces (Kulp et al., 2014)
Learned about what other libraries were doing

Needed a better understanding of how students, librarians, and faculty interact with Summon at UCCS

**Decision**: conduct a usability study to determine how intuitive our students found Summon and how they handled research
Study Design
1. **Find a book** and identify its availability and call number

2. Determine **how many books and eBooks** were available on a given topic

3. **Find a video recording** and identify its availability and call number

4. **Find a journal article**, locate its citation in MLA format, email themselves a link to the article, and access the full text

5. **Locate two peer-reviewed journal articles** published in the last **five years** relevant to a provided research topic, locate MLA citations for each, email both articles to themselves, and access the full text

**Usability Study: Five Tasks**
Pre- and Post-Surveys

**Pre-Survey:** Asked questions about...
- Demographics, library instruction, frequency of library usage, and confidence in using library tools for research

**Post-Survey:** Asked questions about...
- how difficult they found Summon for research, whether they preferred using Summon to the library catalog and databases, and confidence level in using Summon
Results
Participant Demographics

- 9 total participants
  - Four freshman, one sophomore, three seniors, and one graduate student
- 2 participants previously had library instruction
  - Both were seniors
- 7 had never used Summon before, 2 were unsure
Results: Known Item Tasks 1 & 3

- All 9 participants completed these tasks in under two minutes
- Some participants struggled with the Content Type facet in Task 3, which accounts for the greater variation in completion time

Task 1: Find a known book

Task 3: Find a known film
Problems Applying Content Type Filters
• Participants had no trouble locating the correct article

• Several struggled with locating Summon’s pre-formatted citations feature

• Participant 1 took more than four minutes to locate the MLA citation
Problems Locating Citation Feature
Results: Topic Research Task

• Results were far more mixed when participants were asked to research a topic
• Participant 8 was unable to complete the task
• Participants mainly struggled with keyword formation

Task 5: Find two journal articles published in the last five years about a given topic
Problems with Keyword Development
Results: Other Observations

• 7 of the 9 participants reported they were confident and 2 reported they were somewhat confident in their ability to use Summon to research a topic.

• Their actual performance suggests the participants overestimated their own confidence in using Summon for topic research.

• One of the confident participants was unable to complete task 5 and the two somewhat confident participants took a median time of more than 11 minutes to finish.
Performance With/out Library Instruction

The bar chart shows the performance times in seconds for various tasks with and without library instruction. Tasks 1 to 5 are plotted on the x-axis, and the y-axis represents the time in seconds.

- **Task 1**: No instruction significantly faster than Yes instruction.
- **Task 2**: Similar performance times for both instruction levels.
- **Task 3**: No instruction takes longer than Yes instruction.
- **Task 4**: No instruction is faster than Yes instruction.
- **Task 5**: No instruction is much faster than Yes instruction.

The chart indicates that library instruction can improve performance, especially in Tasks 1, 3, 4, and 5, with the most significant improvement in Task 5.
Implications for Teaching and the ACRL Framework
Teaching Considerations

- Intuitive search interface
- Known item searches
- Topic searches
Instruction Decisions

- Interdisciplinary topics
- Early in students career
- Move from interfaces to critical thinking skills

Students will be able to apply Boolean strategies in online searching to produce concise search results.
Instruction Decisions

- Interdisciplinary topics
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- Move from interfaces to critical thinking skills

Students will be able to develop search strategies that are appropriate to the research question and to the tools being used.
Searching as Strategic Exploration

- Sample search
- https://padlet.com/cpiper3/v090kxrai31j
- Revise Your Search
Framework Activity: Searching as Strategic Exploration

Knowledge Practices:
- Utilize divergent and convergent thinking when searching
- Design and refine needs and search strategies as necessary, based on results
- Use different types of searching language

Dispositions:
- Understand that first attempts at searching do not always produce adequate results
Moving from Google to Summon

- Building your background knowledge of a topic
- Natural starting point for students
- Natural interface comparison that isn’t intimidating
- Allows for more in-depth conversation about information sources
References and Resources


• Padlet: [padlet.com](http://padlet.com)
Thank You! Questions?

Christi Piper: cpiper@uccs.edu
Joel Tonyan: jtonyan@uccs.edu