

A REPORT ON INFORMATION LITERACY TRAINING SESSIONS BY ALBERT COOK LIBRARY MARCH - APRIL 2008

Introduction

The sessions were conducted for undergraduate students in the Faculty of Medicine from 8th March – 5th April 2008 by Ms. Alison Kinengyere, Ms. Sara Mbagi, Ms Faith Akiteng, Ms. Julia Royall and Mr. Mark Gentry from University of Yale. The total number of students trained was 77 and only 3 were females.

Duration of the session

Each training sessions lasted 4 hours from 9.00 am to 1.00 pm. This was an introduction to some of the resources and time was not enough to cover all the resources in detail.

Participation

All undergraduate students from first year to fifth year in the Faculty of Medicine.

The resource persons were assisted by Mr. Kenneth Osiapil and Ms. Sylvia Sekitoleko.

Content:

The students were introduced to searching specific databases. The following databases were covered:

Accessmedicine, ELIN, HINARI, NLM resources, OVID, Blackwell, Cochrane Library and Blackwell.

Evaluation:

There were 77 participants in total and 69 filled the evaluation forms. An evaluation was made on year of study, length of presentation, time for practice, relevancy of the training, content of the presentation, organization of the presentation and the facilitators.

Presentation of Results:

Year of study: There was 26 first years, 15 second years, 21 third years, 5 fourth years and 2 fifth years.

Length of presentation: 58 participants rated the presentation as adequate, 4 indicated that it was too short while 6 said it was too long.

Time for practice: 38 indicated that the time was adequate, 23 said that it was too short, and 7 rated it as too long.

Relevancy of the training: 59 indicated that the training was very good, and 10 said that it was good.

Content of the presentation: 44 rated the content as very good, 20 indicated that it was good and 3 said it was fair.

Organization of the presentation: 32 said that the organization was very good, 26 indicated that it was good, 8 rated it as fair while 1 said that it was poor.

Facilitators: 44 rated the facilitators as very good and 23 said that they were good.

Below are the comments made by the participants after the training sessions.

Importance of the training:

- How to search articles from Pub Med, Medline Plus, Ovid, etc.
- The power of information search and facilities.
- Different ways of accessing medical information free of charge and lot of information indeed everywhere oh my God – it is interesting.
- I have been totally exposed to the electronic way of accessing information and have compared it with the literature system. Indeed it is better.
- At first I had a problem on finding resources from computer but now its okay.
- Literature resources which are invaluable in USDL.
- I have been able to access the books for medical use, nice ideas for medical practice through reliable websites.
- Acquired skills of obtaining what I want quickly and more specifically hence saving time.
- I have got interesting and more resourceful websites that are alternative to Google and Yahoo.
- Access to quality health information, most current and up to date information easily with e-resources.
- To save articles in PDF, various IDs, passwords, URLs for new databases and how to use databases and online services.
- Sending articles to my mail box.
- Ability to use the e-resources section of Albert Cook Library.
- I have been opened up to new methods of finding desired information.
- Enabled me not to waste any more time on irrelevant websites.
- More experience in computer use, being a learner, especially searching for articles.
- I have known easy fast access to reliable academic information than the usually known ways of using Google which is otherwise commercial.

Difficult areas to understand:

- Using Mesh needed extra attention.
- I didn't find any difficult area to understand because all the facilitators have been very clear on their instructions
- Getting to know specifically how to turn left/right when you go to a particular website.
- How to obtain extra information needed.
- Accessing the different links especially in the use of HINARI, Pub Med.
- Combining more than two search findings to get an intersection from history.
- Switching from one data source to another.
- Creating attachments because there was no internet.

- How to save information from a given article using HTML or PDF.
- Using ELIN.
- How to send files into your e-mail address of an attached file.
- Understanding software complications.
- How to apply for an article online.
- Looking for information from databases and journals.
-

Areas of training that need improvement:

- Reduce number of students per session to number of computers to enable each person have reliable hands on experience.
- I think everything was good enough and up to standard and so I recommend the presenters
- Sensitization of the whole student body about the availability of all e-resources available at Makerere University Library.
- More time for training so as to grasp the ideas better and practice more.
- Techniques on how to get what is really wanted.
- More explanation on ELIN and HINARI.
- More improvement in the bandwidth.
- Facilitators should be many to attend to individual participants.
- If you can, organize computer sessions for packages relevant to data collection will be useful since there's a number of us who are computer phobic.
- We need more trainings and exposure to these services.
- The teaching is good but I recommend that after a presentation and questions (summary) of the presentation should be given in about 2 minutes for the interest of the late comers.
- Speed of presentation should be reduced a bit for some learners because participants were sharing computers and it becomes difficult to internalize new concepts when one has lost track with the instructor.
- Time management needs to be emphasized so as to avoid missing some crucial information on the side of students opening up new resources.

How to pass on the knowledge gained:

- Encouraging them to attend sessions individually, teach them how to get articles themselves.
- Bring them before the computers and show them practically.
- I will be willing and ready to offer the knowledge to any person who comes and requests.
- Practice quick searches with them.
- Directly talking to other medical students about the benefits of e-resources.
- During group discussions/tutorials and research.
- Train friends who have been absent so that I can also grasp the procedures followed.
- Continuous practicing.
- By sitting in the computer lab and go through the stages I have learnt.
- By telling them the better methods of accessing good proven information compared to Google search.

- Advise them to consult the library computer experts.
- By introducing them to the Gateway system using the university website.
- By word of mouth and demonstration about its benefits.
- Peer consultation.
- I plan to them how important these trainings are.

Comments/Suggestions:

- It would be better if these resources could be accessed outside Makerere intranet otherwise this was very good, thank you.
- It is really a good idea and I have learnt a lot which is going to make my reading easier. The facilitators are really good.
- We should encourage all library users to learn these programs
- The training was really nice and educative facilitators were knowledgeable and always willing to help those lagging behind thanks.
- It has been a very useful session to enhance our research.
- Further trainings should go on in various aspects of computer technology for the benefit of the medical school.
- It was perfect for me.
- The organization should consider junior computer users in terms of speed and providing more times of training in a semester.
- The number of computers should correlate with the number of students so as to avoid over crowding.
- If possible design a hard copy hand out that can be photocopied by everyone and kept for review.
- Next time provide a refreshment
- Liked the session, expanded my knowledge base.
- The internet services are not fast enough to allow maximization of such web based resources.
- I have liked the training I just wish we also get training in power point presentation.
- The only complaint I have is the facilitators assume that all of us have uniform knowledge on computer know how, next time mind about speed.
- The training should be passed onto other facilities of the university.
- Many thanks for organizing the training which is very helpful, appreciation to the organizers for this initiative and incentive.
- Considering the relevance of the program or arrangement its sustainability should be strictly observed.
- Sessions should be organized at least twice a month so that there is a wide coverage.
- Very good presentation I am grateful.

Conclusion:

The above results indicate that the students indeed appreciated the training and requested for continuous trainings throughout the semester, however there is need to sensitize female students to attend the trainings because very few attended.

Recommendations:

- Hand outs during training sessions.
- Need for more computers to correlate with the number of students.
- Facilitators to slow down on speed of training.
- Smaller groups to be trained at a time.
- Need for refreshments.
- Publicize the trainings.
- More facilitators to attend to individual participants.