

Tips for Librarians New to Online Instruction

FOR EFFECTIVE AND “HUMANIZED” INSTRUCTION

Using Tutorials:

- ◆ Collaborate with the professor to determine which tutorials to use and the appropriate time to have students complete their tutorial work. We found that the tutorials were great preparation for the Wimba/live classroom sessions.
- ◆ Suggest the idea that the professor integrate completion of the tutorials into the grade for the research paper or offer extra credit. We found that these extrinsic rewards yielded a high level of participation.

Using Wimba (or a similar online teaching/conferencing tool)

- ◆ Distribute an online handout with your biographical information. It helps personalize your presentation and may make you appear more approachable.
- ◆ Practice using Wimba with colleagues before class. It may improve your presentation style and help you relax when teaching live.
- ◆ Prepare “poll” questions prior to class. Using the polling feature is a great way to stimulate conversation and assess student knowledge.
- ◆ Encourage active participation through live discussion and the use of the hand-raising button. You may encourage students to use the hand-raising button before speaking. It can get confusing if more than one person speaks at a time.
- ◆ Ask your Wimba administrator to set up a “library room” that can be used for research appointments before and after class.
- ◆ Record your Wimba session. This will be helpful to students unable to attend the live session and to students wanting to review what was covered.
- ◆ Ask students to log-in five minutes before class.
- ◆ Do an audio check with each student before class starts. This works best if you greet the students as they enter. Connection problems can be solved by sending students to the phone-in option.
- ◆ Be sure students are alerted to the need to have a cable/land line and a headset with headphones and a microphone. The temporary loss of a wireless signal may “throw” users out of the live classroom. A microphone embedded in the computer may not be sensitive enough to pick up the student’s voice.

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Using WIMBA (continued)

- ◆ If possible, have someone available to handle technical questions. This keeps you from trying to troubleshoot a student's technical problems while the rest of the class waits.
- ◆ Consider sitting side by side with a partner. This will allow you to monitor how the students are viewing your screen in case you need to adjust screen size when sharing web pages.
- ◆ If you are lecturing or application sharing, you may wish to use the lock talk feature. If you do, be careful to turn it off when you are asking students to participate with audio.

Using Discussion Boards for Research Logs

- ◆ Check posts often and answer questions promptly.
- ◆ Try to set up a phone call, chat, or Wimba session if a student needs in-depth help.
- ◆ This is time consuming, so allow enough time to work on this. We decided to monitor and respond to the discussion for one week and this worked well.