Creating a Learning Community: Faculty/Student/Librarian collaboration at Washburn and Kansas Universities

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This paper reports on a pilot project implemented during the Fall 2001 semester at a small liberal arts university (6500 students). Approximately 30 Educational Technology students have 3 weeks to develop an annotated resource list as part of a class assignment and a further 6 weeks to develop the resource list into a unit of work suitable for use in their classrooms. The students, all education majors, vary in specialization from pre-K through High School and include every subject area. They were given a "one-shot" library instruction session at the beginning of the project and then were paired up with one of five instruction librarians. The students will meet with their librarian twice in a one-on-one research consultation, and then submit their list of resources to their librarian for grading. The students were also paired with a student from the western civilization program at the University of Kansas. The collaboration between the Washburn University (WU) and Kansas University (KU) students was to be carried out totally through email. Data will be gathered from pretests and posttests administered to the students and the librarians and anecdotal reports will be solicited from all participants. The project will be repeated in the Winter 2002 semester, and results compared with Fall 2001 data. Among the goals of this project are: improving students’ information literacy skills; promoting the librarian as a valuable resource; librarians learning about the needs and research habits of today’s students; creating mutually beneficial faculty/librarian/student partnerships. This report will present findings, learning experiences, and suggestions for future projects.