Incorporating *Information Literacy Skills* into Agricultural Coursework

Agricultural Education

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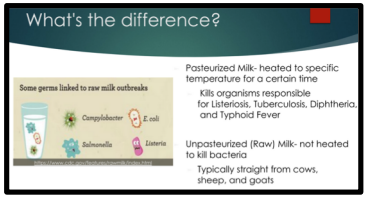
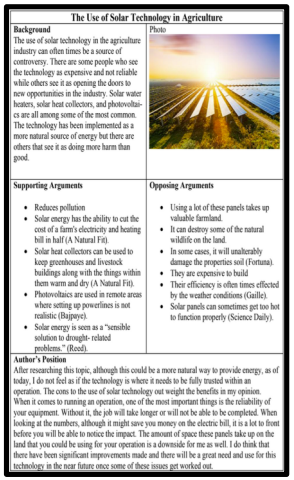
Introduction / Need for Innovation

- College students are responsible for using information ethically and produce new information (Association of College & Research Libraries [ACRL], 2015)
- "Faculty have a greater responsibility in designing curricula and assignments that foster enhanced engagement with the core ideas about information and scholarship within their disciplines" (ACRL, 2015, p. 7)
- "Agricultural literacy is a growing issue across the United States" (Chapman & Lindner, 2018, p. 95)
- ACRL's (2015) concepts for information literacy and the ag industry's concern for agricultural literacy present a need and opportunity for course redesign to yield more agriculturally literate students prepared to correspond about agriculture through multiple modes of communication

How It Works

- Students placed in groups to investigate assigned controversial topic related to ag
- University librarian gave lecture on evaluating credibility of resources
- University writing center gave lecture on tone in a writing blogs and citing references
- Each group produced : (1) oral presentation with a slide deck; and (2) blog entry shared with public audience (both due mid-term)
- Students then self-selected controversial topic in ag and wrote one-page issues brief
- In round-robin partner discussions, students discussed their issues brief with classmates





"The professor made every class meeting interesting and fun and I appreciated his care for student involvement and allowing people to discuss controversial topics in a civil manner without making anyone feel their opinion was wrong or right."

"I walked away from this class with new information and more insight on how to perceive the world around me."

"I love that the professor wants us to feel educated about both sides of a topic; he is very understanding."

Results to Date / Implications

- Students (a) realized knowledge gaps; (b) identified bias; (c) enjoyed active learning; (d) became more information literate
- Faculty teaching evaluation increased .08 pts; higher than college & university average

Web-based References	
What is the website domain? (.gov, .edu, .ac, .org, etc.)	.gov
Is this a scholarly or non-scholarly source?	scholarly
Who is the author?	The Food and Drug Administration
How/ why is the author qualified to write on the topic?	Because they are a nationwide organization determined to inform and ensure the safety of consumers
Is the page sponsored or biased?	Sponsored
How relevant is the information? What year was it published?	2018
Why was this work written?	To inform people of the difference between pasteurized and raw milk
Based on the information above, rate the credibility of the source on a scale of 1 – 5: (1 = Not Credible, 2 = Slightly Credible, 3 = Moderately Credible, 4 = Credible, 5 = Very Credible)	5

Future Plans / Advice to Others

- Piloted a student information literacy knowledge and skills test; results yielded high Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient; pre- and post-test research study planned
- Consider alternate methods for sharing blogs (e.g. email with a link or sharing a link via text message) to solicit feedback
- Group students by various characteristics(e.g. academic major, age, or ag background) to increase diversity of perspectives

Costs / Resources Needed

- Financial Resources: None
- Technical Resources: Computers, internet access, word processing application, multimedia presentation application
- Human Resources: Library & Writing Center

References

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