

## International students' information behavior

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student mentioned "I love Wikipedia, it's amazing how I can find everything."

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### **Students' ability to question, evaluate and analyze information from the Web is limited and worrisome**

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Although most students agreed that they do not accept Web information at face value, they were only able to mention currency and design as criteria used to evaluate Web sites. Other criteria such as authority, site sponsorship, accuracy,

coverage, point of view or bias were not identified, which raises some concern about their ability to analyze information found on the Web and also in other sources.

When it comes to citing sources, most students acknowledged the importance of properly attributing credit within their assignments and preparing bibliographies. However, Asian students confirmed what other researchers have noted: citing sources is not something they were asked to do previously, which may lead to instances of inadvertent plagiarism.

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### **Asian students confirmed that they have limited knowledge of what constitutes plagiarism and of the need to cite sources**

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Although findings from these two focus groups cannot be used to generalize international students' experiences and practices, they do provide valuable and useful insight into their information research behaviours and patterns that should be considered by both librarians and faculty members when planning and designing instructional materials. ☺

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## Fifth Annual Poster Forum From discourse analysis to Web 2.0

In June, Vanier Library hosted the 5th annual Concordia Libraries Poster Forum. Librarians and student librarians gathered from Concordia, Université de Montréal and the University of Ottawa to present research proposals and results.

Three library school doctoral students from the Université de Montréal presented their thesis proposals. Éleine Ménard and Aida Chebbi plan to examine contemporary aspects of library research: image retrieval and intranet archiving respectively. Dominique Gazo is undertaking a project to understand how Quebec politicians perceive the public library's mission and the impact of their discourse on this mission.

From the University of Ottawa, Information Literacy Coordinator Ann Hemingway presented her study on the construction and maintenance of online tutorials used to instruct students on the basics of library research. Hemingway concluded that online pedagogy can facilitate and accommodate different learning styles, levels and scheduling constraints.

As for the Concordia contingent, five librarians presented their research findings, one of which was the

keynote address by Kumiko Vézina. The results of her research on the opinions and practices of Québec scholars regarding open access publishing were published in the Winter 2006 edition of *bibliofile*.

Patrick Labelle studied the research behaviour of international students. Through focus groups, Labelle found, among other things, that assumptions about these students had to be reconsidered as some of their characteristics – such as computer and library use – did not differ significantly from their Canadian counterparts (see article on page 4).

Andréa Harland's presentation detailed the accessibility of specialized databases in business. Business databases are often multi-purpose and used to find a variety of information such as industry, market or company reports or data. This makes it hard to categorize and position them on a library Web site.

Ann Golubowski's presentation on the social and epistemological characteristics of academic disciplines and their implications for academic libraries analyzed


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## Fifth Annual Poster Forum

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evidence indicating how the differences between disciplines impact their library needs.

Olivier Charbonneau presented his plan to utilize Web 2.0 technologies to create a user generated catalogue of graphic novels and comic books.

The interdisciplinary nature of library research makes it particularly amenable to perspectives from other disciplines in academia. For more information or to exchange research ideas with Concordia librarians, consult <http://library.concordia.ca/research/subjects/>. 

Danielle Dennie

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concerns, only a single article from a journal issue can be requested at one time. This service, which is intended to support research and study, only applies to journals held in either the Webster or Vanier Library. Requests for articles not held at Concordia must still be made through the COLOMBO Interlibrary Loans System (<http://library.concordia.ca/research/ill>). 

Joanna Duy

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## Improving undergraduate students' research skills

This fall, Concordia Libraries will test a sample of incoming undergraduate students by participating in Project SAILS (Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills). This standardized test was designed by Kent State University in conjunction with the Association of Research Libraries and was developed over three years with the help of 82 North American institutions. Project SAILS is used to learn more about students' information search skills as it uncovers what they already know

and, more importantly, what they don't.

Project SAILS assesses a wide variety of knowledge, including knowing how to develop a research strategy to understanding the economic, social and legal issues surrounding access to and use of information.

The Libraries plan to use the results of this test to improve its services. Concordia librarians teach information search skills to students through both general and course-specific workshops. Results from



Project SAILS will provide librarians with data they can use to fine-tune these workshops to ensure that students learn the skills they need to succeed.

Results will be available early in 2008. For more information, consult <http://library.concordia.ca/help/sails/>.



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