

## **The Impact of an Online Tutorial on Student Learning**

Margaret Fain, Librarian  
Robert Stevens, Assistant Librarian

In 2003, we received a Teaching with Technology Grant that enabled us to develop an online library instruction tutorial for use with both freshmen classes and distance education courses. We adapted SEARCHPATH, a widely used web based tutorial. The tutorial consists of six independent modules: beginning research, choosing a topic, using the catalog, searching indexes, using the internet and citing sources. The tutorial is self-paced and provides quizzes at the end of each module to measure student success.

With the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Grant we will be investigating the effectiveness of the tutorial as a method of enhancing student learning. We have recruited six English faculty teaching 22 sections of English 101 to incorporate the tutorial into their syllabus. These students will be required to take all six sections of the tutorial over the course of the Fall semester and attend at least one library instruction session with their class. Another 22 sections of English 101 will serve as the control group. We will be administering the 14 item library skills assessment test to all 44 sections of English 101 during the first two weeks of class. At the conclusion of the semester, the sections will be tested again. From this data, we should be able to see if the tutorial made a difference in the overall improvement of test scores from the beginning to the end of the semester. We have seven years worth of assessment data from English 101 classes to use as an additional comparison. We will also be evaluating individual module quiz results, faculty feedback and student feedback on the tutorial.

We will be using the results of the assessment in several ways. First is to use student responses to ascertain the effectiveness of the tutorial as a method of communicating library skills. Second, we will be refining the tutorial based on the feedback received and the results of the assessment test. Third, we will be using the aggregate information and data to determine the best placement of the tutorial in the library instruction program.

Funding from the grant is providing a salary for the graduate assistant who will be working at the reference desk during some of our shifts to enable us to have the time to set and administer the assessment and analyze the resulting data.