



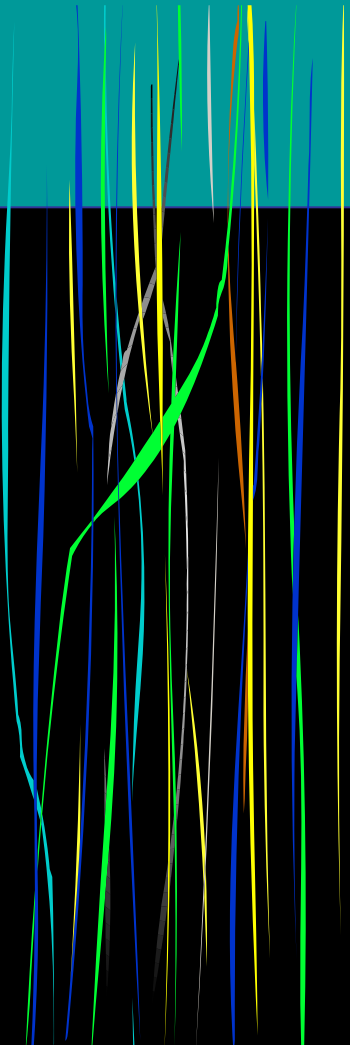
THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MELBOURNE

# Invisible threads

Weaving critical information literacy into a course:  
Criminology 2nd and 3rd year students: a case study

Melanie Lazarow

Information and Education Services



# Exercise 1

- You are a student in Information Literacy 101
- With one or two other students design a research question. Have a discussion about how you will get the evidence to answer your question.
- **PASS YOUR QUESTION TO ME AND IT WILL BE MARKED OUT OF 5**



# Back to basics but ...

- Integrated information literacy
  - Staff intensive?
  - Rotating model?
- Today's library instruction literature is dominated by three areas of interest...
  - integrated information literacy
  - active learning
  - online tutorials
- Today's literature also indicates a departure from the so-called “traditional models” of providing library instruction, such as the one-hour/one-shot class, and the lecture and demonstration method of teaching.”

# History

- Mandy Lupton: Information Literacy and the Curriculum – December 2004 Melbourne University seminar based on her book “The Learning Connection”

Design of activities and assessment where students:

- present **different viewpoints**
- reflect on and demonstrate the **development of their own viewpoint**
- reflect on and demonstrate the **development of their essay argument**
- **analyse bias** and the use of **statistics**
- set their topic in an **historical, social, cultural and political context**

# Introduction to Research Methods in Criminology - Objectives

- **By the end of the semester, students should be able to demonstrate:**
  - The ability to formulate research questions from a research topic
  - The ability to place a research question within the broader literature which informs it
  - The ability to identify, outline and rationalise an appropriate methodological approach to carrying out a specified research project
  - The ability to reflect critically on the research design process

# Assessment tasks

- **Task One: Refining a research question**
  - » **Part A** – research topic /question outline (100 words, 5%) **Due 11 Mar 5pm.**
  - » **Part B** – critical annotated bibliography (1500 words, 30%). **Due 9 May, 5pm**
- **Task Two: Report on observation exercise at Melbourne Magistrate's Court**  
(400 words, 15%). **Due 27 May 5pm**
- **Task Three: Reflective essay (2000 words, 50%) Due 6 June 5pm**



# Information Literacy Labs

- Refining the research question and the research design
- Literature searching, keyword searching, criminology and related databases, government documents, statistics, newspapers, conferences, agency databases, research papers
- Evaluating search results, particularly web searches, Google scholar, gateways
- Tutors attend library lab sessions
- Students work in groups or pairs, then individually
- (Biggest practical problem, lack of working computers)

Each lab 2 hours, 3 separate labs, 56 students



# Information Literacy Labs

- Each “info-lit” lab began with a collaborative group exercise or partnership.
  - The exercise mostly consisted of having students discuss how their research was going and whether they had any problems.
- (Scaffolding, learning as development in a social context, zone of proximal development)

# Information Literacy Labs

Ethical use of information, ethics and politics of research

- citation, copyright, plagiarism
- Use of ArtsSmart a self-paced ITC program. This module was conducted in class with tutors present
- University wide citation project “[Citing at the University of Melbourne](#)”

# Information Literacy Labs

## Quantitative and Qualitative Methods and Presentation

### Specialist Excel class based on ABS data

- The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has national statistics on crime and justice “to meet the needs of governments and the community”
- ABS data downloaded to excel – (found, in most cases, excel is a basic competency that students have)

### Advanced word skills

- working with master documents, writing collaborative papers, styles etc (taught by specialised staff from our flexible learning program)

# Information Literacy Labs

---

- Legal Resources and EndNote

## Specialist Legal Resources

- EndNote – Voluntary classes at lunch time
- Consultation times and e-mail

# Evaluation

- Meeting with lecturer and tutor
- E-mailed questionnaire to all students (anonymity an issue) 16/56 responded
- Small group discussion
- (formal university quality of teaching analysis)
- Reflective essays

# Subject Resources Statistics

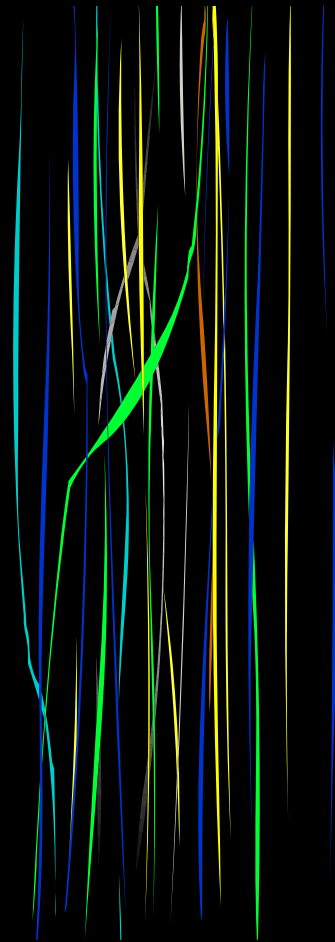
[Home](#) > [2005](#) > Arts : [\[2002\]](#) [\[2003\]](#) [\[2004\]](#)

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>This time last year</b>
<a href="#">Political Science</a>	22229	3625
<a href="#">Criminology</a>	15764	3751
<a href="#">English</a>	15436	3400
<a href="#">Geography and Environmental Studies</a>	15068	4415
<a href="#">Media and Communications</a>	11279	1693
<a href="#">Cinema Studies</a>	10209	1211
<a href="#">Cultural Studies</a>	8526	117
<a href="#">History</a>	7500	1452
<a href="#">Sociology</a>	7269	994
<a href="#">Art History</a>	6921	1466
<a href="#">Social Work</a>	6591	2181
<a href="#">Anthropology</a>	6407	1190

# Problem based learning

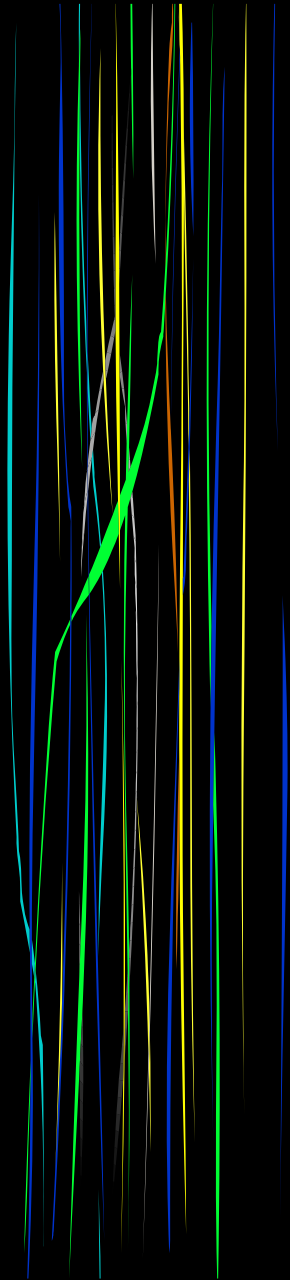
Finkle and Torp (1995)

- ◇ “Problem-based learning develops both problem solving strategies and disciplinary knowledge bases and skills by placing students in the active role of problem solvers confronted with a problem that mirrors real-world problems” (p. 1).



# Cooperative Learning

“Mabry (1995), “I found, however, that the instructor's first step in applying cooperative learning techniques involves rethinking his/her role ...one of the primary tenets of cooperative learning is that, if instructors are prepared to give up some control, students will learn more and retain that knowledge longer” (pp. 183).”



# Comments

- All (Information lit labs) should be retained as they are useful to people (like me) who don't bother to learn till it is part of my course.
- END NOTE should have been emphasised most as the subject was considered with how to use literature! This program would be an easier way to keep a record of the notes and would most likely be used by student if they undertake research.
- Peer reviewed material was helpful especially knowing how to find out if something is peer-reviewed.
- The 100-word outline at the beginning was good it forces us to actually come up with a topic and not leave it to the last minute.
- The lit review was great as it taught me valuable lessons about assessing the validity of sources and only choosing articles from well respected journals rather than just finding an article that says what I want it to say and using it.
- While it is essential to know as much about plagiarism as possible so as to avoid it, I think it could have been covered in 15-30 minutes rather than 90.

# Comments...

I found all assessment tasks helpful. The annotated bibliography helped me by providing a way to keep all my notes organised. The observation exercise helped me as it made me look at the obvious features of a courtroom and analyse how they play a part in the states power. The final essay was extremely helpful as I was able to put all the knowledge I had acquired from the course together

# Comments

- Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed the semester in Introduction to Research Methods. All the staff were very helpful and willing to assist the students in any way they could. The content was interesting as it provided a new perspective on criminology, and the skills acquired in this course will further assist me in future research assignments. Sometimes the assessments were a bit stressful but I think that was mainly due to the fact that all the assessments across a lot of other subjects were due around similar times. Otherwise, thank you for a good semester!

# Issues

- *Designing the course collaboratively*
- *Introducing problem based, active, learning on a course level*
- *Introducing problem based active, cooperative learning at an individual tutorial level*
- *Introducing problem based active learning with ICT*
- *Can this be a model for other research methods courses*
- *Adaptation to learning management systems*



# Exercise 2

- Please get into 4 groups and prepare questions or comments you want to make about Introduction to Research Methods in Criminology
- Suggestions welcome
- General Questions

