**The Challenge**

- The new Blugold Seminar in Critical Reading and Writing (BGS) combines four course goals:
  - Rhetorical Knowledge
  - Information Literacy
  - Writing Craft
  - Digital Literacy
- Previous iterations of composition at UW-Eau Claire had primarily relied “one-shot” library instruction by McIntyre Library faculty for information literacy instruction.
- In order to effectively incorporate information literacy throughout the BGS, additional lessons and pedagogical tools needed to be developed.

**The Plan**

- We proposed developing multimedia objects that could be used in or out of class that would develop students’ understanding of research as a rhetorical process.
- Approaching research and inquiry using the course’s rhetorical framework could be effective for two reasons:
  - It contextualizes the process of research using rhetorical terms the students understand.
  - It portrays research as more than simply a retrieval process and, instead, as part of how we understand and develop our ideas.

“**The Information Cycle**”

Penn State Libraries developed a flash tutorial in 2001 that uses the triggering event of the Columbine killings to trace the development of information, from news broadcasts, to newspapers, magazines and eventually academic articles and books.

We decided to adapt this tutorial to the BGS curriculum. We chose a more recent triggering event, Hurricane Katrina. We also wrote our script to highlight the rhetorical dynamics at play in each stage of the cycle, as well as the way that rhetoric responds to what has already been said.

To create our video, we made a Prezi presentation and used Camtasia to sequence the video with our recorded script.

**Results**

- Our rhetorically-based “Information Cycle” video has been in use for two semesters.
- Individual instructors incorporate the “Information Cycle” into the BGS curriculum at different points in the seminar and with different levels of follow up. We did not attempt to make this distinction, but instead attempted to assess how the video works as part of the broader curriculum to promote a rhetorical understanding of information.
- In Spring ’13, a short quiz was distributed to BGS students in 7 sections.
  - Students were prompted to characterize the change in the nature of information over the course of an information cycle and to apply this knowledge to a specific research scenario.
  - 25 students turned in complete quizzes through Qualtrics.
  - In describing the Information Cycle, 72% both correctly described the typical development of information and displayed some rhetorical understanding related to that development. Of those students, 36% displayed a more complete rhetorical scheme for the relationship between sources.
  - In discussing a specific research scenario, 92% of students were able to identify how the content of sources can be influenced by their position on the cycle.

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