

Engaging, Embedded and Mobile!

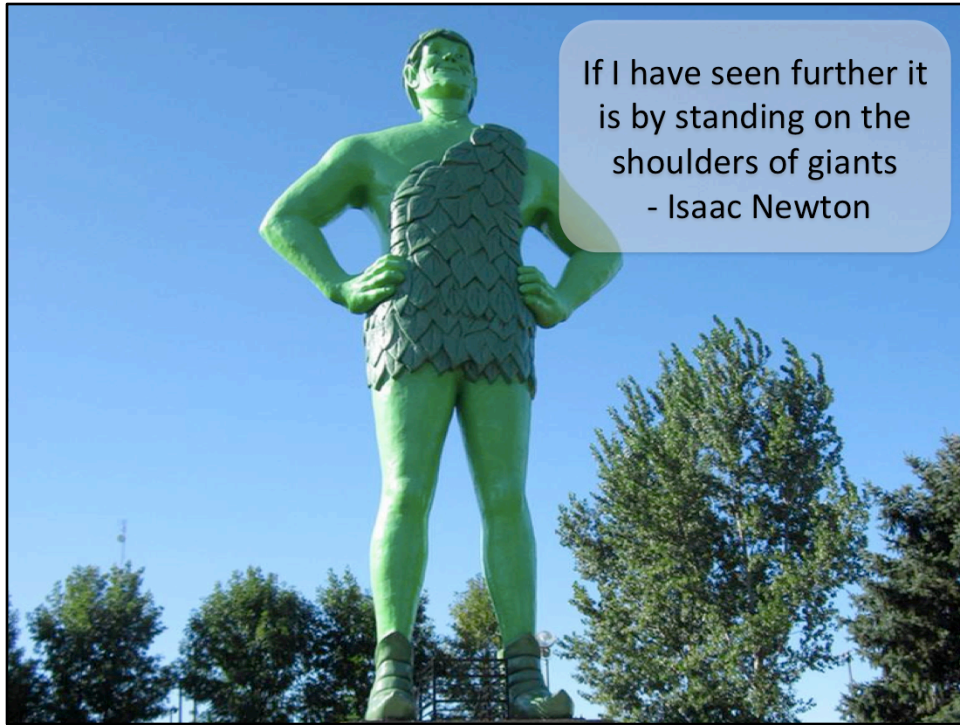
The Evolution of an Online IL Instruction
Program at MacEwan University

Joan Morrison, Jody Nelson & Tara Stieglitz



Today's Plan

- Where we came from
- Where we are
- Where we are going



[Tara Stieglitz]

In creating and evolving our IL instruction tutorial we are standing on the shoulders of the giants that came before us – Hence the start with the Isaac Newton quote.



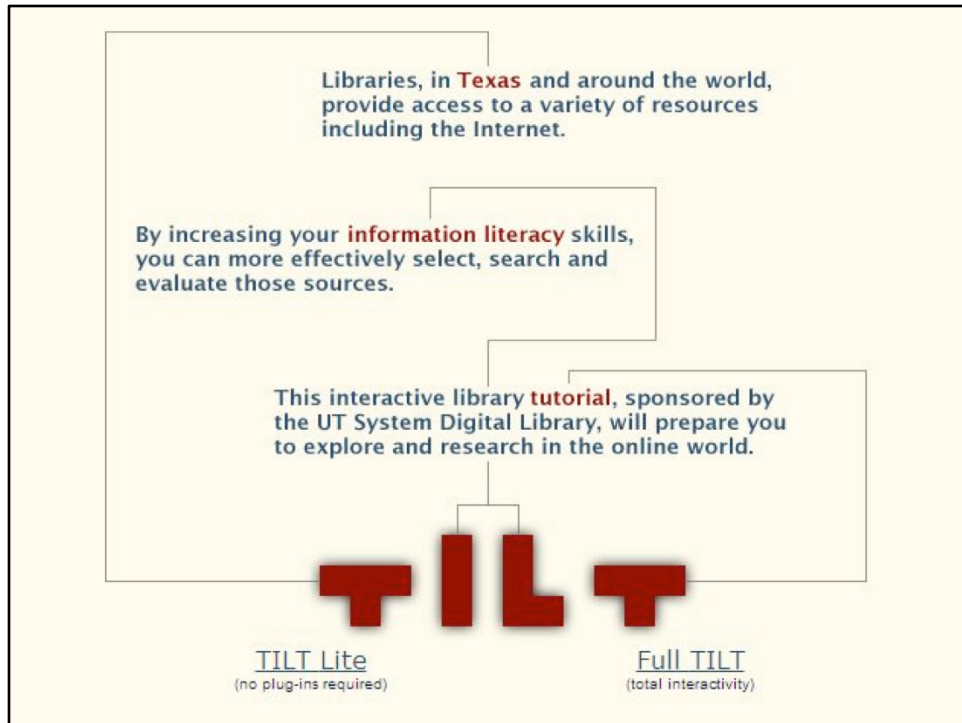
[Joan Morrison]

The roots for our current version of the MacEwan University online tutorial began in 1998 at the University of Texas where they developed TILT the Texas Information Literacy Tutorial.



TILT got lots early buzz in the Library community across North America for 2 reasons:

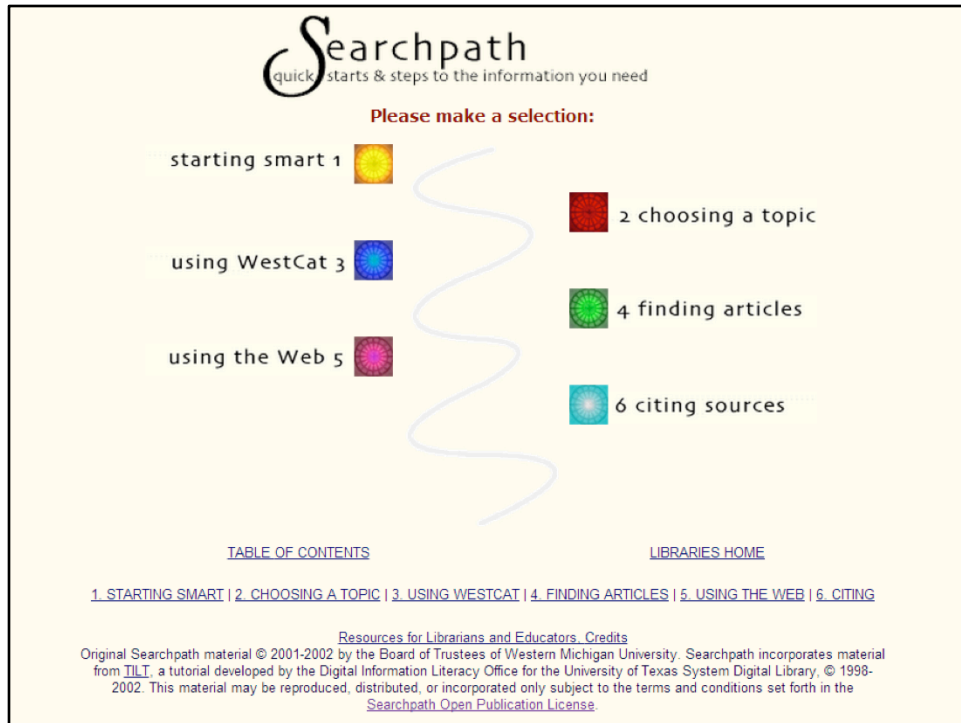
First was because TILT’s “innovative approach to teaching information literacy – it taught IL concepts without relying on resources specific to any one library and could be adapted to almost any library environment” (Bell 258).



The second is that it is not only was adaptable, but University of Texas offered it out to the broader Library community with an Open Publication License, so it could be taken and customized for your Library.



Based on the TILT tutorial, the Western Michigan University Library developed the Searchpath tutorial in 2001, and in 2004 Karen Hering was the lead on creating a customized version of Searchpath for MacEwan – then Community College.



[video script] Hi, I'm Joan Morrison and sorry I could not be with you today. Karen Hering and I were office mates during this time when Karen was working on customizing Searchpath for MacEwan, and there were many conversations in both our Library and in the profession about the benefits of online tutorials, consider that at this time our team was teaching 350 classes face to face information literacy sessions per year.

The original Searchpath tutorial contained over 200 pages and most of those pages required customization, changes were made to most of the text to MacEwan-ize and Canadian-ize it and updated the graphics. Screen shots were added of the MacEwan website and search tools.

Here is what the early version of MacEwan Searchpath looked like.



Starting with the Library...

Library resources go through a review process.

Library staff and faculty select books, magazines, journals, databases, and Web sites. The library collects sources that are considered to be reliable, historically relevant, and supportive of our college curriculum.

Library resources are free or discounted for your use.

Libraries are able to purchase one copy of an item or a very expensive database, which can be shared by many people.

Library resources are organized.

Items are organized so you can find all the sources on a topic. For example, each title has a unique call number. The books shelved in or near the same [call number](#) will cover a similar topic.

Library resources are meant to be kept permanently.

A primary function of an academic library is to be an organized storehouse of information published throughout time. As well as finding very current information, you can also find books that are no longer published and older issues of magazines and journals.

Library resources come with personal assistance.

Libraries have staff who are trained to help you. They'll help you learn to use print and online resources and answer any questions you may have.

Example.



Now, Get Curious!

Choose a topic that interests you, something you'd like to know more about.

You could start with a very broad topic, for example, **marketing**.

But you would find way too much information on this subject--enough to write several books! The topic is too **broad**.

[Trouble brainstorming?](#)



Contents



Example.

Narrowing a Topic



You could narrow a broad topic like **marketing** by limiting your research to a special group, such as:

an age group	i.e. - marketing to adolescents
a location	i.e. - marketing in Japan
a specific medium	i.e. - marketing in magazines
a population	i.e. - marketing to minorities or women

In this way, marketing information that is not relevant to your subtopic is filtered out, resulting in more focused research.

It is helpful to write out your topic as a sentence or a question. Let's say the question that most interests you is:

How do advertisers market their products to women?



Contents



Example.



In MacEwan Library internal meeting minutes from 2004, in anecdotes from staff at the time, and in broader scholarly literature we hear that this editing and the following troubleshooting processes for these Open Publication tutorials was an absolute ton of work!



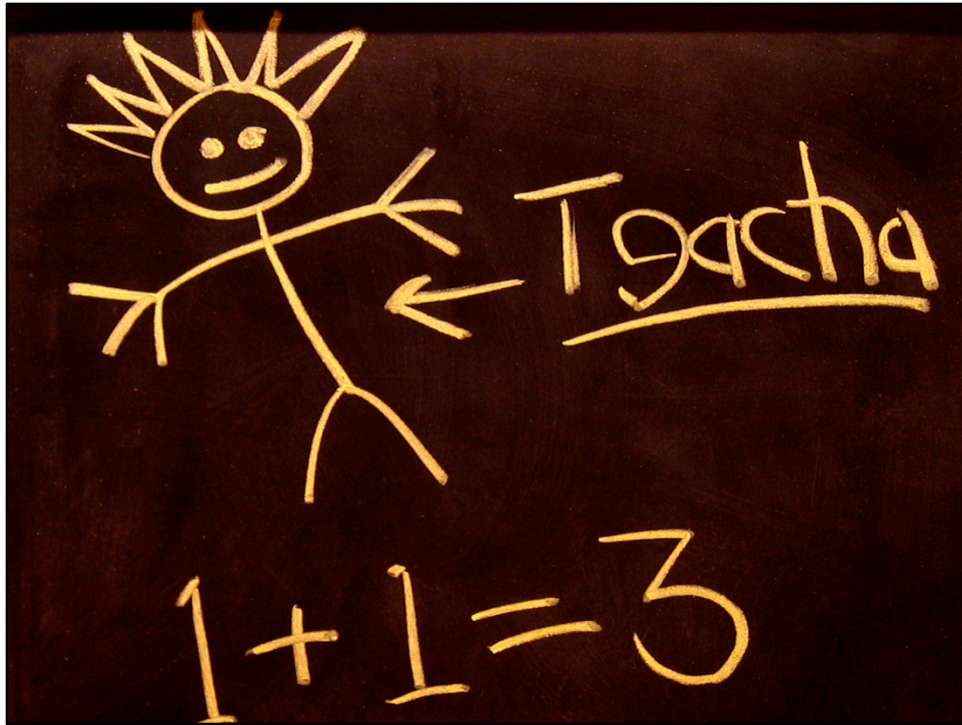
The original hope was that this tutorial could be used in a number of ways, as an alternative for in-class library instruction, as a basis for more advanced and discipline specific instruction, and as a tool that students could use on their own.



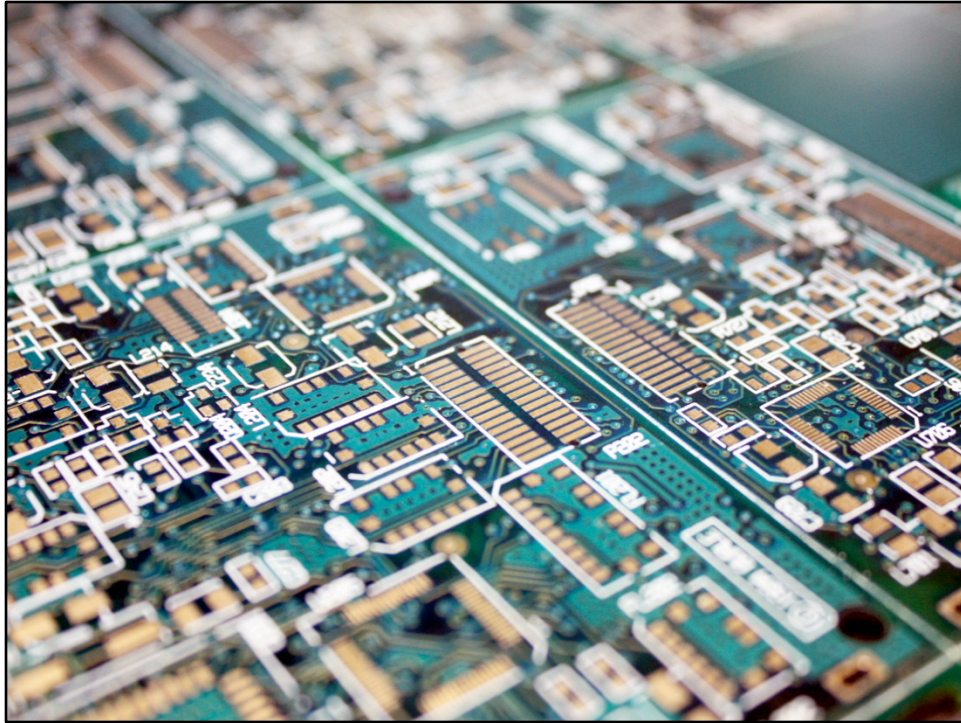
These goals are still solid, 9 years later we still have the same goals for our tutorial.
And editing and troubleshooting is still a ton of work!



Back in 2004-5 Students, English department faculty and Library staff were all give an opportunity to provide feedback on this new tutorial.



In the earliest stages of Searchpath we realized that an integrated evaluation tool was missing. We wanted to see our students results, we wanted to know if they were learning.



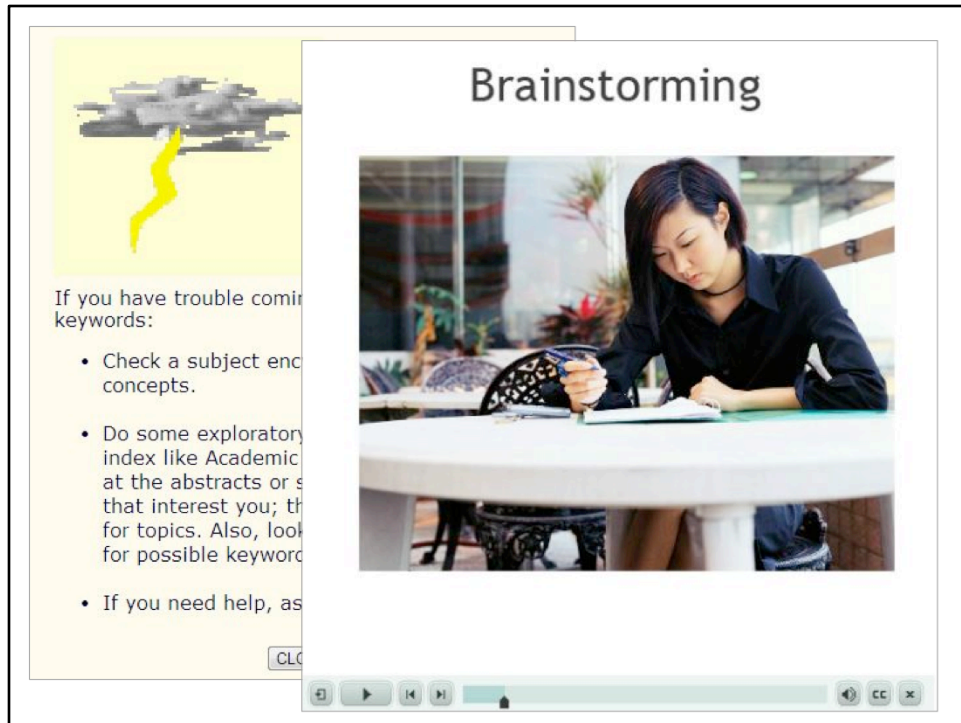
Within the first year of implementing the Searchpath tutorial in 2004 there were already discussions and plans for edits and incorporating it into a Learning Management System.



[Tara Stieglitz]

Our tutorial has evolved a great deal over the years we've been using it at MacEwan University.

In collaboration with the University of Alberta we converted it into a new format in our first major redesign.



It was initially very text heavy so we converted it into a video format that had more images and used audio to deliver the content. We included closed captioning to improve the accessibility of the content.

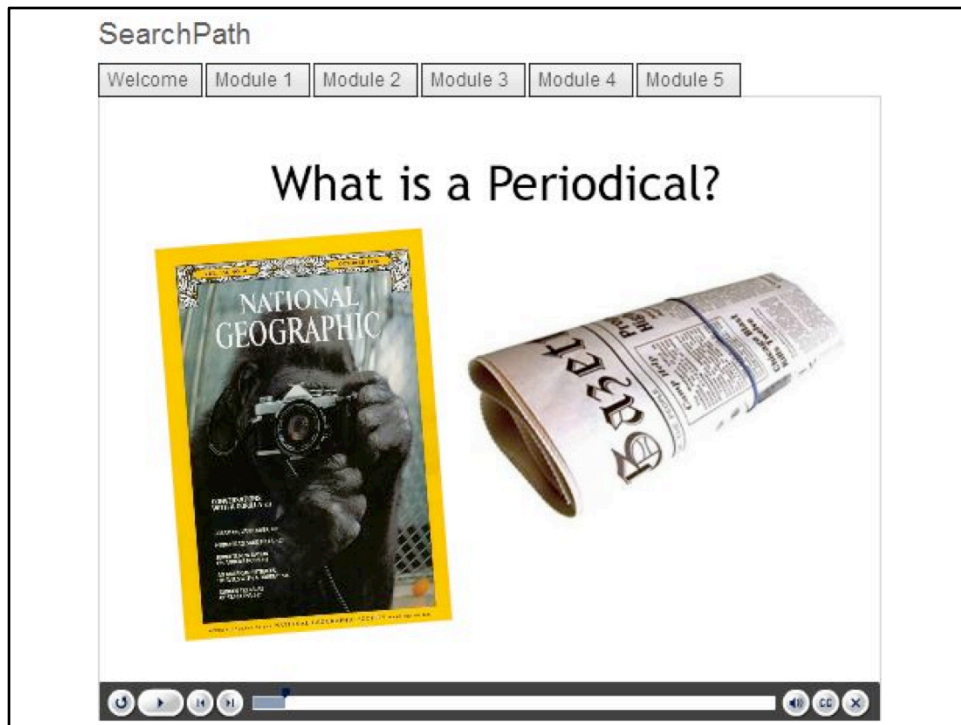
[left image is original “Brainstorming” page, right is updated “Brainstorming” page.]

We chose Adobe Captivate over Camtasia for several reasons:

- Flexibility for editing – it is made up of slides, not a complete seamless object.
- Allows us to include interactive elements – uses Flash instead of creating a true video.

We split the content into approximately 24 modules:

- Could be used as a whole with English
- Could be used as individual chunks with other classes or with individual students at the reference desk.



We kept the design simple and generic whenever possible so the tutorial would be transferable to different disciplines and to other intuitions. It also makes it easier to edit and update.



In the next major edit the content was slimmed down. We removed parts that were not vital for students, one example of a video we removed was a video that introduced students to the physical spaces of MacEwan's four libraries.

We tried to adhere to e-learning best practices:

- Short videos - less than 3 minutes long.
- Only 1 learning concept per video
- Interactive elements in almost every video



Searchpath became integrated into our learning management system (Blackboard). This is where students are and where the rest of their course content is found so it is natural for them to find Searchpath there. We built in graded assessment questions are part of their coursework grade.



[Activity] Bigfoot question / answer pairs. Conclusion: Students complete assessment for SearchPath in their English courses in Blackboard. We do not see their results; that is our missing link.



[Jody Nelson]

From the very first implementation of SearchPath at MacEwan, we have sought access to the student assessment data, but without success. Because SearchPath is embedded in English courses in the LMS, to date, only English course instructors have had access to the assessment data, and only for the specific section they are teaching.

Beginning in September 2014 we will be running SearchPath as a separate course in Blackboard. Students will still be graded for completion as part of their English courses, but the Library will control content, and will have access to the assessment data.

We will have access to the SearchPath assessment data for the first time ever in the Fall 2014 semester. This will give us a window into what students are learning and taking away from the tutorial, it will show us where our content might be falling short, and how and where we can improve the tutorial to maximize student learning.



Recognizing that our 1-hour online tutorial is the cornerstone of our English Information Literacy instruction program, we wanted to seize this opportunity to build relationships with our students, in *addition to* fostering learning. We wanted to know how to make the virtual learning experience more relational and engaging. According to our preliminary review of the literature on best practices for online learning, incorporating instructor video within tutorials to "teach" the content does not increase student learning. Video introductions to instructors, however, do increase student's perceptions of personal connectedness with the instructor, and consequently with the content.

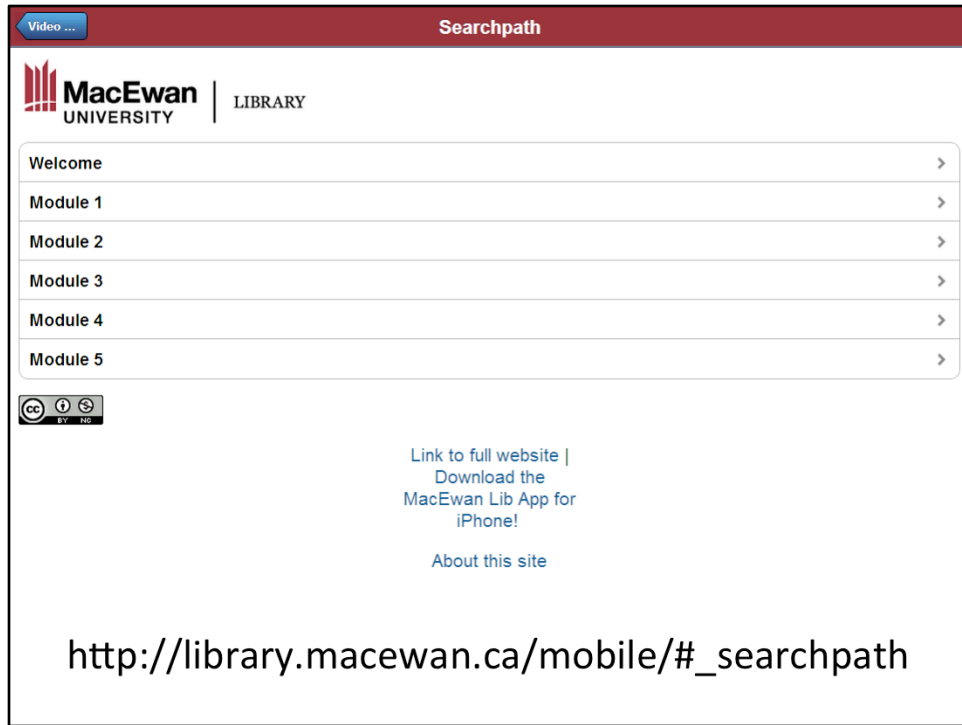
Using very basic greenscreen technology and fairly inexpensive equipment, we are creating videos in-house to introduce students to the people in the library, as well as to the content, resources and services. The first project was to create a welcome video for SearchPath featuring our English Librarian, who you have already met: Joan Morrison (link to video: http://library.macewan.ca/video_tutorials/searchpath). The disembodied voice narrating the tutorials was given form, and a face! Joan has reported that she has overheard students whispering: "she's the one in the video!". And that is exactly what we wanted. For students to feel that they have already "met" in the virtual the librarian who will be visiting their class in the physical, face-to-face environment.



A third new direction moving forward with the evolution of SearchPath is ensuring and improving mobile compatibility. Students are connected to the library and to blackboard through their mobile devices, and SearchPath needs to be there too!

When we originally chose Captivate we knew of the lack of capabilities for m-learning. It was a trade-off between the advantages of the interactive elements and ease of editing, and the disadvantages of only being able to publish in flash. Tara and I were thrilled to discover that Captivate 6, released in 2012, had the ability to publish in html 5, which would enable us to make our tutorials available to students on their smartphones and tablets!

This fall (2013) we are piloting a mobile version of SearchPath (link to mobile site: http://library.macewan.ca/mobile/#_searchpath). The most difficult piece to translate in the mobile environment is the interactive element. The interactive components, which were the reason why we chose Captivate in the first place, do not translate well, at least directly, to the mobile environment. Certain interactions are simply not offered in html, and had to be replaced, other interactions seem to be glitchy or clunky in html 5, while others, such as clicking through a database or typing keywords into a searchbox, are very difficult on such a small screen!



If you have a mobile phone type in: http://library.macewan.ca/mobile/#_searchpath

Have a look at our newest beta version of Searchpath – Mobile.

Discussion questions

1. what worked / what didn't work?
2. How could you see your library using or adapting?
3. **What are you currently doing for online / mobile learning at your institution?**



SearchPath is Creative Commons Licensed, and we are eager to continue in the tradition of sharing by making this new version of the Searchpath tutorial available to the broader community. We are investigating submitting Captivate files to the ANTS (ANimated Tutorial Sharing Project) repository, but we are also looking for other means and mechanisms to make this content more accessible and available to anyone who would like to use and adapt.

Questions?

Joan Morrison

morrisonj25@macewan.ca

Jody Nelson

jody.nelson@macewan.ca

Tara Stieglitz

stieglitzt@macewan.ca



Please contact us if you have any questions.