Analysis and Design Proposal

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Academic libraries serve as critical educational resources requiring well-trained staff to deliver quality services to students, faculty, and community members. The William Allen White Library at Emporia State University faces the ongoing challenge of efficiently training newly hired and returning student workers in essential job functions while maintaining service quality standards. Traditional training approaches often lack systematic structure, comprehensive assessment mechanisms, and integration with institutional learning technologies (Horton, 2012). This analysis and design proposal addresses the identified training gaps by developing a Canvas-based learning management system that incorporates evidence-based instructional design principles. The proposed solution builds upon existing foundational materials while expanding training coverage to include 23 essential competency areas required for effective library operations.

Needs Analysis

Current State Assessment

The William Allen White Library currently uses a basic training website (https://amosakow.wixsite.com/li820a-instructional) with foundational training content in development. However, several critical gaps have been identified that impede effective training delivery. These gaps include a lack of structured learning progression, missing assessment mechanisms, a lack of centralized assignment and tracking systems, incomplete coverage of essential job functions, and limited integration with institutional learning technologies. The existing approach cannot provide systematic competency development or measurable learning outcomes, resulting in inconsistent training experiences and variable levels of worker

preparedness. The current system lacks the administrative tools necessary for supervisors to track progress and ensure comprehensive skill development among student workers.

Target Audience Analysis

The primary learners comprise Emporia State University students aged 17 and older, including both undergraduate and graduate students who are newly hired or returning library workers. These individuals serve as part-time employees requiring specific job-related skills to perform effectively in various library positions. The target audience shows variable library experience, with some returning workers possessing institutional knowledge, while newly hired students require comprehensive foundational training. As digital natives, these learners prefer multimedia and interactive content delivery methods. However, their learning time is constrained due to competing academic and work schedule demands, necessitating efficient and flexible training approaches.

Performance Requirements

Critical job functions requiring comprehensive training have been categorized into five primary areas. Customer service and reference assistance skills form the foundation of patron interaction capabilities. Technology systems operations encompass Discovery Search Catalog navigation, library database usage, FOLIO system management, and research guide utilization. Equipment operation and troubleshooting covers Skyprint systems, standard scanners, book scanners, and phone systems. Administrative procedures include study room and classroom reservations, Book Nook operations, weeding instructions, and mail/drop box protocols. Finally, emergency response protocols address five critical scenarios: fire, tornado, flood, active shooter situations, and bomb threats.

Success criteria for the training program include demonstrated competency in all core job functions, reduced supervisor intervention time, improved consistency in service delivery, and enhanced worker confidence and job satisfaction. These measurable outcomes will guide both program development and ongoing evaluation efforts.

Instructional Design Framework

Learning Theory Foundation

The proposed training program employs a constructivist learning approach incorporating social cognitive elements to facilitate meaningful skill development. The methodology centers on the implementation of the Absorb-Do-Connect (ADC) model, which provides a systematic learning progression through three distinct phases (Horton, 2012).

The Absorb phase focuses on knowledge acquisition through the presentation of multimedia content, enabling learners to gain a foundational understanding of concepts and procedures. The Do phase emphasizes skill practice through simulations and guided exercises, enabling learners to apply newly acquired knowledge in controlled environments. The Connect phase facilitates application and reflection through real-world scenarios, helping learners integrate skills into authentic work contexts.

Modular Training Structure

The training program comprises 23 core modules, organized into five logical categories, to ensure systematic development of skills. Foundation Skills modules (1-8) establish essential competencies, including library orientation, space utilization, material checkout procedures, reshelving protocols, classification systems, customer service fundamentals, reference interview techniques, and proficiency in Discovery Search.

System Operations modules (9-14) develop technical competencies in database navigation and instruction, research guide utilization, FOLIO account management, FOLIO holds processing, room reservation systems, and Skyprint operation and troubleshooting. Equipment and Technology modules (15-17) address scanner operations for both standard and book scanners, equipment troubleshooting protocols, and phone system utilization.

Administrative Procedures modules (18-21) cover collection weeding procedures, Book Nook operations, and mail and drop box protocols. Emergency Preparedness modules (22-23) provide comprehensive emergency response training covering the five critical scenarios identified by the library administration.

Assessment Strategy

The assessment framework incorporates both formative and summative evaluation methods to ensure comprehensive development of competencies. Formative assessments include knowledge checks within each module, interactive scenario-based exercises, and skill demonstration videos that provide ongoing feedback throughout the learning process.

Summative assessments consist of module completion portfolios, practical skill demonstrations, and comprehensive competency evaluations that verify mastery of essential job functions.

Assessment principles emphasize authentic task alignment, multiple assessment formats, precise rubric-based evaluation, and the provision of immediate feedback to support continuous improvement and learning reinforcement.

Canvas Learning Management System Design

Platform Integration Benefits

The Canvas learning management system offers significant advantages for both administrators and learners, addressing current training limitations. Administrative benefits include centralized assignment and tracking capabilities, automated progress monitoring, grade book integration, communication tools, and comprehensive resource organization. These features enable supervisors to efficiently monitor trainee progress and identify areas requiring additional support.

Learner advantages include single sign-on access through existing university credentials, mobile compatibility for flexible learning access, support for multimedia content, integration with discussion forums for peer learning, and visibility into progress tracking. These capabilities enhance the learning experience while accommodating the diverse scheduling needs of student workers.

Course Architecture

The navigation structure begins with a welcome and orientation module that introduces learners to the training program expectations and resources. Sequential modules progressively unlock based on the completion of prerequisites, as determined by instructional design principles and supervisor requirements. A resource library and quick reference guides remain accessible throughout the learning process, enabling learners to retrieve information efficiently for job performance support.

Discussion forums facilitate peer-to-peer learning opportunities while supervisor communication channels provide direct access to administrative support and announcements. Consistent module templates ensure standardized learning experiences across all training components while maintaining clear learning objectives for each section.

Multimedia content integration includes videos, interactive elements, and documentation that comply with ADA and WCAG 2.1 accessibility standards. Consistent visual branding and high-quality multimedia production enhance professional presentation, while regular content review and updates ensure currency and accuracy. Job aids and reference materials undergo client approval to maintain organizational consistency, while self-paced learning occurs within suggested timelines to support semester-based completion goals.

Implementation Recommendations

Development Phases

The implementation process consists of four sequential phases designed to ensure systematic development and successful deployment. Phase 1 (Foundation 10/6-10/17) encompasses the creation of Canvas course shells, development of module templates, core content migration and enhancement, and initial assessment design. This foundational phase establishes the technical infrastructure and design standards for subsequent development work.

Phase 2 (Content Development, 10/19-10/31) focuses on creating systematic modules, producing multimedia content, integrating interactive elements, and implementing comprehensive assessments. This phase transforms existing materials and creates new content aligned with instructional design principles and learning objectives.

Phase 3 (Testing and Refinement 11/1-11/14) includes pilot testing with current staff, user experience optimization, content accuracy verification, and technical functionality testing. This quality assurance phase ensures program effectiveness before full deployment while identifying areas for improvement.

Phase 4 (Launch and Evaluation 11/15-12/5) involves full program deployment, initial cohort training, feedback collection and analysis, and continuous improvement planning. This

final phase initiates program operations while establishing ongoing evaluation and enhancement processes.

Resource Requirements

Staff requirements include an instructional design and technology (IDT) student with library experience to manage the implementation and integration of Canvas requirements. Current library staff will provide subject matter expertise for technology and policy aspects, while ESU Learning Technologies support will ensure optimal Canvas configuration and assistive technology integration.

Technology requirements encompass Canvas LMS configuration, screen recording software, video editing capabilities, interactive content creation tools, and assessment development platforms. These tools enable the development of comprehensive multimedia content and the creation of interactive learning experiences.

Conclusion

The proposed Canvas-based training program represents a strategic investment in workforce development that will provide immediate and long-term benefits to the William Allen White Library. By implementing a systematic, assessment-driven approach grounded in instructional design principles, the library will establish a sustainable training infrastructure that improves worker competency, reduces supervisor burden, and enhances overall service quality.

The modular design allows for flexible implementation and future expansion, while the Canvas platform provides the technological foundation for efficient program administration and learner engagement. With proper planning and execution, this training program will serve as a model for other academic libraries and contribute significantly to the professional development of ESU student workers.

Future research should examine the long-term effectiveness of competency-based training programs in academic library settings and explore the scalability of similar approaches across different institutional contexts. Additionally, ongoing evaluation of learner outcomes and supervisor satisfaction will inform continuous improvement efforts and program refinement.

References

Horton, W. K. (2012). *E-learning by design* (2nd ed.). Pfeiffer. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118256039