Executive Summary for William Allen White Library

William Allen White Library Student Training

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November 19, 2025

## Project Overview

The William Allen White Library (WAWL) at Emporia State University undertook a comprehensive initiative to develop a systematic, Canvas-based training program for student library workers. This project, led in collaboration with senior library staff under Alex Moskowski, aimed to address critical gaps in the existing training infrastructure and establish a scalable, assessment-driven approach to workforce development.

The proposed solution encompasses 23 essential training modules organized across five competency areas: Foundation Skills, System Operations, Equipment and Technology, Administrative Procedures, and Emergency Preparedness. During the initial implementation phase, nine modules were successfully developed and deployed for pilot testing.

## Problem Statement and Needs Assessment

The current training system, based on a basic Wix website, presents several critical deficiencies: (a) absence of structured learning progression and systematic competency development, (b) lack of assessment mechanisms and measurable learning outcomes, (c) no centralized tracking system for monitoring trainee progress, (d) incomplete coverage of essential job functions and emergency protocols, and (e) limited integration with institutional learning management systems. These deficiencies result in inconsistent training experiences, variable worker preparedness, increased supervisor burden, and potential service quality issues.

## Solution Architecture

The Canvas-based training program employs the Absorb-Do-Connect (ADC) instructional model (Horton, 2012), grounded in constructivist learning theory. This framework ensures systematic skill development through three phases: knowledge acquisition (Absorb), skill practice (Do), and real-world application (Connect). The integration with Canvas provides critical administrative capabilities, including automated progress tracking, gradebook integration, mobile accessibility, and single sign-on using existing university credentials.

## Pilot Implementation Results

The pilot testing phase, conducted on October 27, 2025, involved two student workers with varying levels of experience: one undergraduate with 3 years of experience and one graduate student with 1 year of experience. Participants tested modules covering Material Checkout Procedures, Reshelving Protocols, and Customer Service Fundamentals.

Key findings included: (a) overall quality ratings were "good," indicating solid foundational development; (b) primary concern identified was outdated content requiring verification and updates; (c) students provided valuable suggestions for additional module topics; (d) technical functionality and Canvas integration performed as expected; and (e) need for broader testing with more participants to validate comprehensive effectiveness.

## Recommendations and Next Steps

### Immediate Actions (Weeks 1-4)

Four immediate actions are recommended: (a) conduct a comprehensive content review and update all module information in collaboration with library staff, (b) address specific

technical corrections identified during pilot testing, (c) complete development of remaining 14 modules with enhanced quality control processes, and (d) implement expanded pilot testing with 8-10 student workers across all modules.

**Strategic Initiatives (Months 2-3)**

Strategic initiatives include: (a) establish regular content review cycles with subject matter experts, (b) develop comprehensive assessment rubrics for each module, (c) create a supervisor dashboard for tracking trainee progress and competency development, and (d) integrate student-suggested module topics based on operational needs.

### Expected Outcomes and Impact

Upon full implementation, the Canvas-based training program will deliver measurable benefits including: (a) standardized competency development ensuring consistent training experiences and minimum proficiency levels, (b) reduced supervisor burden with self-paced learning modules decreasing direct supervision requirements by an estimated 40%, (c) enhanced service quality through improved consistency in patron interactions, and (d) scalable infrastructure with modular design enabling easy expansion and adaptation.

### Conclusion

The William Allen White Library Student Training Program represents a strategic advancement in academic library workforce development. While pilot testing revealed areas requiring refinement—particularly in content currency and expanded testing protocols—the foundational architecture demonstrates strong potential to achieve program objectives. Success

will require continued collaboration between instructional design expertise and library operations

knowledge, commitment to iterative improvement based on user feedback, and investment in

comprehensive content development and maintenance processes.

## References

Horton, W. K. (2012). *E-learning by design* (2nd ed.). Pfeiffer.

https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118256039