

# Library Orientation with Accountability: Using WebCT Quizzing for Freshman Library Tours

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Kenneth Burhanna  
kburhann@kent.edu  
First Year Experience Librarian  
Kent State University

Christopher Thomas  
cthoma13@kent.edu  
Educational Technologist  
Kent State University

## The Problem

First-semester freshman at Kent State University are required to take a tour of the Main Library as a part of their orientation course. From 2003 through 2006, 95% of freshmen (about 3,400 students annually) completed this requirement by taking a librarian-led walking tour. In the summer of 2007, a number of issues arose, some new and some longstanding, that required KSU librarians to rethink their approach to library tours.

**New Issues:** A major renovation project in the Main Library blocked the main stairway entrance to the 2nd floor and limited access to about half of the floor. The 2nd floor houses the library's print periodical collection and is an important stop on the tour, but with the 2nd floor now difficult to access, librarians felt that it would hard to move a large volume of students through this space, while providing convenient and engaging library tours.

**Longstanding Issues:** For years now, KSU librarians have been looking for an alternative to the paper voucher system they use for proof of completion for library tours. The vouchers were easily lost, forcing librarians to keep sign-in sheets to use as a back-up. Long lines of students who waited to the last minute were also a problem. Most importantly, librarians worried that some students simply sleep-walked through the tours and reflected little on their experiences.

## Our Solution

Working with an Educational Technologist from University Information Services, KSU librarians used technology to overcome both issues.

1. *An online option for the library tour.* Limited in-person tours would still be offered, but a flash-based online library tour was developed to be available 24x7.
2. *WebCT Vista quizzing for library tour accountability.* Regardless of whether students took their tour online or in-person, they needed to pass a quiz available through WebCT to receive credit.

For more details on the assignment and to see the online library tour, please visit [http://www.library.kent.edu/library\\_tours](http://www.library.kent.edu/library_tours).

## Results

- 3,610 students participated
- 180 course sections participated
- 98% students eventually passed the quiz
- 2.25 was the average numbers of attempts needed to pass the quiz
- 84% of students passed in three or less attempts
- Zero long lines, lost vouchers and scheduling complaints.

## Considerations

### ⊙ Faculty Familiarity with LMS

In this project, the library provided WebCT class entries for every section of the orientation course, whether or not the instructor used WebCT. This meant that many faculty who had no experience with using the LMS would now need to log in and access their grade book. Because using the grade book is fairly straightforward, we felt we had the resources to support this work, but if we needed instructors to perform additional, more complicated tasks; this could have been a much greater challenge.

### ⊙ LMS Template Functionality

A thorough understanding of how templates function in your LMS is important. It can dictate how you plan and distribute your content. KSU was operating on WebCT Vista version 3, which does not provide global functionality for templates. In our case, we needed to apply the template to each course section one at a time.

### ⊙ Instructor & Roster Changes

The orientation course at KSU experienced many instructor and student roster changes during the first three weeks of classes, while the tour and quiz saw limited use early on. The LMS handled student roster changes automatically, but instructor changes needed corrected manually. In the future, librarians will wait until after the first two weeks of classes to set up the LMS course entries.

### ⊙ Instructions & Training

Each student in the orientation course (over 3500) received a Library Tour Assignment booklet which provided step-by-step instructions. These instructions were also available online on the LMS and on the library's web site. Instructors received the same instructions. No training was provided and some instructors complained. Future implementations will require more attention to faculty training.

### ⊙ Learning-Styles

Moving the library tour program completely online is a tempting approach, but student needs and learning styles must be considered. Some learners prefer face-to-face personalized experiences, rather than online experiences. Other students with disabilities need specialized approaches. With this in mind, the KSU libraries decided not to go totally online, but continued to offer in-person tours throughout the semester for students who had special needs or preferences.