Demystifying Online Instruction in Libraries: People, Process and Tools

By Dominique Turnbow & Amanda Roth. (2019), 112 pages, ISBN: 9780838919378. $59.99

Subject: How to be a better teacher

Useful for: Useful for those who teach online and want to use instructional design to create better instructional materials.

Format: Chapters with index; appendix with sample documents.

Reviewer's Comments:

This book was written by an instructional designer and instructional technologist, who explain how to use instructional design principles in the design of information literacy instruction. It is published by the ALA and aimed more generally at libraries than at law libraries in particular, however the information provided in the book can be easily transferred into a law library setting. The book covers the instructional design process from beginning to end and includes a sample work agreement, design document, and project template in the appendix.

The book is a quick read, and it is very thorough in its explanation of the instructional design process. The key strength of this book is the direct explanation of how the instructional design process can be applied in a library setting as opposed to a classroom setting or other context. For example, the authors give specific examples of how to write learning outcomes that align with library assessments, rather than learning outcomes written for a class assessment. This is extremely helpful, as most literature on learning outcomes is geared towards the classroom and does not anticipate the need for outcomes that could be used in for a library workshop assessment. Additionally, throughout the book the authors also refer to specific instructional design projects at the UC San Diego Libraries that can be used to further illustrate how instructional design concepts can be applied in a library setting. The authors also discuss technologies that are traditionally used by libraries, like Libguides, and they recommend technology work arounds and best practices for using technology.

This book would be helpful to anyone interested in using instructional design principles in their library learning objects or class materials. This book would also be a good addition to any library collection as the principles discussed in the book are classic instructional design principles and are not likely to become outdated in the near future.

Reviewed by: Shannon Kemen, University of Cincinnati, in 2021.