

Supporting Online Courses: The Impact of Covid-19 on Academic Librarians and Online Education

Jennifer Elaine Steele

The University of Southern Mississippi, USA

jennifer.e.steele@usm.edu

ABSTRACT

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic pushed the number of college students in the United States learning virtually to an all-time high, leading the services that academic librarians provide to students enrolled in online courses to become more crucial than ever before. According to [EducationData.org](https://www.educationdata.org), some estimates show that 3,278 higher education institutions and 22.3 million students have been impacted by a switch to online courses. In addition to the students impacted, faculty not previously familiar with teaching online were impacted as well. This has led to a growing concern with the quality of online education versus traditional classroom education.

With this rise in online education and concerns over quality, library services to faculty and students in online courses are becoming increasingly important. However, different views exist regarding the appropriate role an academic librarian should play in an online course. The proposed study will utilize an online survey of faculty, students, as well as academic librarians at The University of Southern Mississippi, located in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, regarding the use of a librarian in an online course. Questions will focus on strategies for using librarians in online courses, which strategies were successful and which were not, and gather perspectives from faculty, students, and librarians themselves in order to better establish best practices for providing the growing number of online students with the library services they need.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

academic libraries; curriculum; online learning; students; teaching faculty

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

academic libraries; COVID-19; embedded librarianship; online education; virtual learning