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Content Rules: Val Swisher

Course Objectives

Let's review the course objectives for this elective.

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Efficiently use information technology to identify relevant, high-quality evidence and apply it to the improvement of Wikipedia's WikiProject: Medicine articles.
2. Identify clinical questions that currently exist on WikiProject: Medicine articles and identify and apply evidence relevant to answering those questions.
3. Appraise, assimilate, and apply relevant, high-quality evidence in editing WikiProject: Medicine articles.
4. Determine whether clinical evidence can be applied to the reference standards of Wikipedia.
5. Access and appropriately apply information from practice guidelines while editing WikiProject: Medicine articles.
6. Identify a WikiProject Medicine article that has not yet reached "Good Article" or "Feature Article" status.
7. Use secondary literature (systematic reviews, meta-analyses), textbooks, and practice guidelines, to edit an article using the WikiProject Medicine Style Guidelines, providing references as required.
8. Demonstrate proficiency in appraising the quality and reliability of a Wikipedia medicine article.

References:

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Problem:

Physicians and medical students must cope with rapidly increasing volumes of information, most of which is in a digital format. Wikipedia is the most visited source of health and medicine information worldwide; healthcare professionals and students use it heavily for healthcare information.

Physicians and medical students have much valuable information to share with the world. Traditional publishing models fail to provide information that is universally available and intelligible to a broad audience without cost,

Approach:

In November 2013, five medical students edited a top importance health/medicine Wikipedia article of their choice in a month-long elective for academic credit. Students were supported by faculty, medical librarians, and experienced WP editors. The aims of the course were to improve medical student information literacy, improve plain language communication skills, advance the awareness of open-access to information, and to foster lifelong learning. The elective provides students a means to share their growing knowledge and make a difference in the world. Students learned about WP in a two-day introduction, then used high quality review level research to revise articles to be understood by a wide audience.

Outcomes:

Course leaders used pre- and post-course surveys, individual mid-course interviews, an end-course group session, measures of student editing activity, and readability data to evaluate the elective. Students were highly engaged and satisfied by the experience. Each student made substantive changes to their chosen article.

Next Steps:

Course leaders identified areas to improve for a second iteration of the course planned for April 2014. The second course will improve student oversight, provide clearer class milestones, enhanced information literacy instruction, and advanced instruction in WP editing and the WP community.