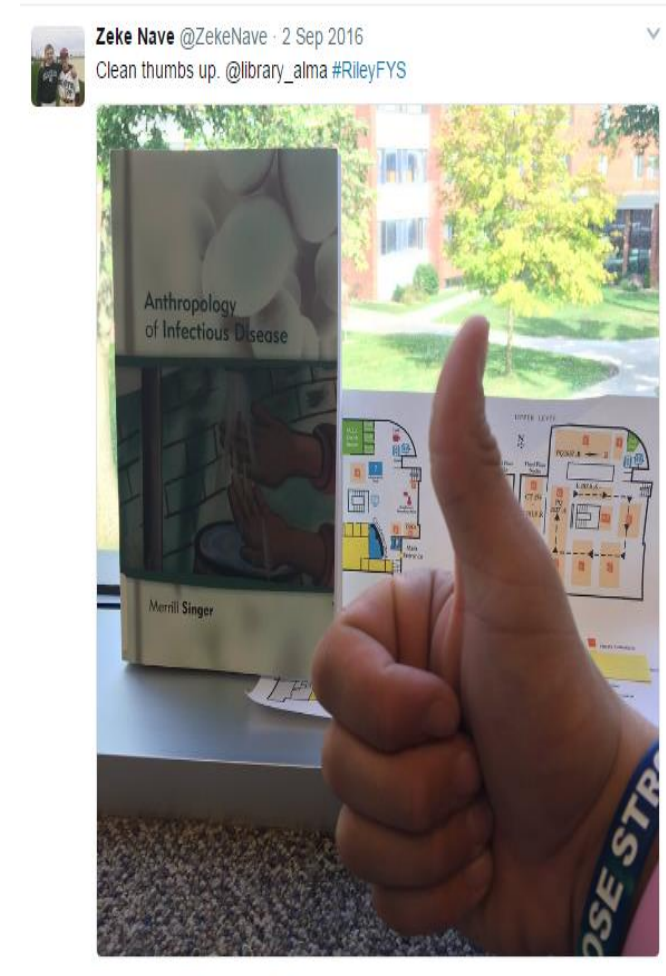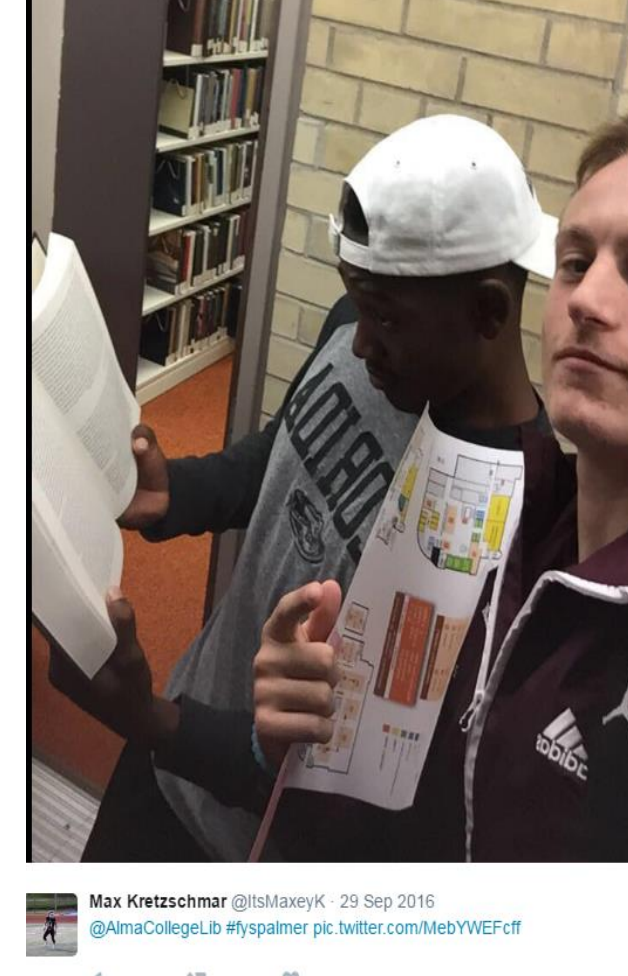# Connecting with #FirstYearExperience students by #FindingBooks @YourLibrary

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Alma College Library, Alma, Michigan

Introduction

- Small, private college

- Each first-year student must take a First-Year Seminar, during Fall term. Provost's Office requires them to include a "library component."

Background

What problems were we trying to fix?

- Not every FY seminar prof. brought their class into the library

- For those who *did* attend, some assignments were so complicated that there was no time for **basics**.

- Very little consistency, which led to:
  a. repetition the next time a prof. brings them to the library. "We've already heard all of this."   OR
 b. students who graduate without learning any basic research skills.

- With this model, we could do more Info. Lit. "scaffolding." For example:
  1st interaction, FYS: 'librarians are nice,' 'research is important,' how to find a book
  2nd interaction, ENG 101: Introduction to research
  3rd interaction: Upper level research in discipline of choice

- For every batch of course evaluations we do, we get this feedback:
  "I'd like to know how to find a book on the shelf."
  Roughly 30%

Materials

- A good short video on how to use LC call number system. We used one by Carteret Community College Library: "Understanding Call Numbers"
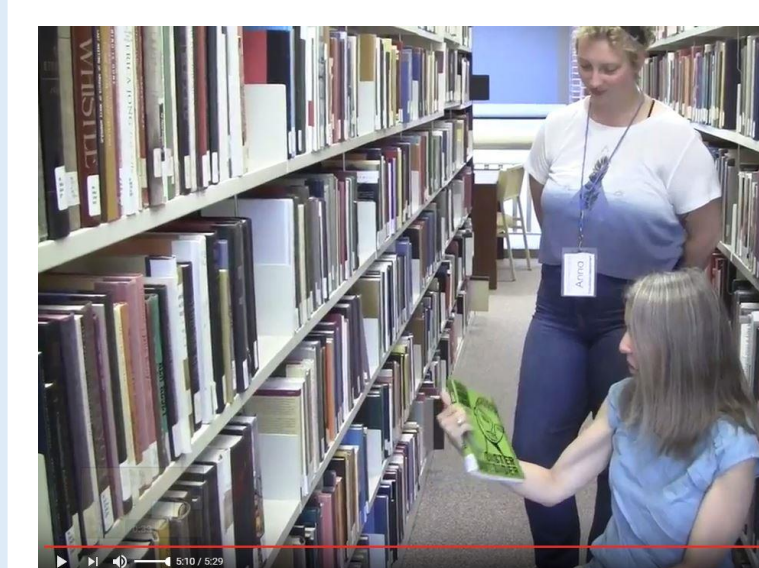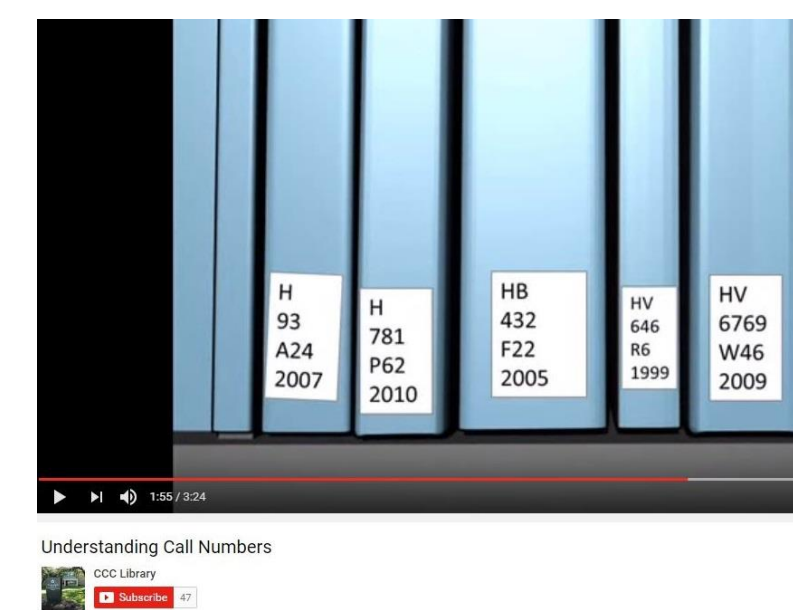
- A good short video on how to navigate around your library, using a map and LC call numbers. We created "How to Find a Book in the Alma College Library."

- A functional Twitter account with memorable Twitter handle. Ours is @AlmaCollegeLib

- Maps of your library & several sets of slips with call numbers and titles on them.

Methods

Before students come to class:

- Ask professor to have students view two videos

- Have student workers check shelves before class to be sure all designated books are there

Just before class arrives in library classroom:
- Pull up Twitter. Log in to library account:
- Have title/call number slips, and maps of library.
- Have computer and projector on.

Once students (and professor) are in the library.
- Introduce self & explain objective for today - learn how to find a book on the shelf.

- Refer to two videos . Ask who watched them?

- Ask who has a Twitter account already set up on their phone? Pair up – get a smart phone and Twitter account in each pair.

- Hand out titles and call numbers, maps

- Have student pairs pull up Twitter on phones, ask them to begin tweet with @AlmaCollegeLib #prof'snameFYS

- Direct them to take photo of the items you find, and post to Twitter. Show examples on your Twitter feed.

- Creativity is encouraged.

- Tell them to be back at X time (10 minutes was usually enough for us).

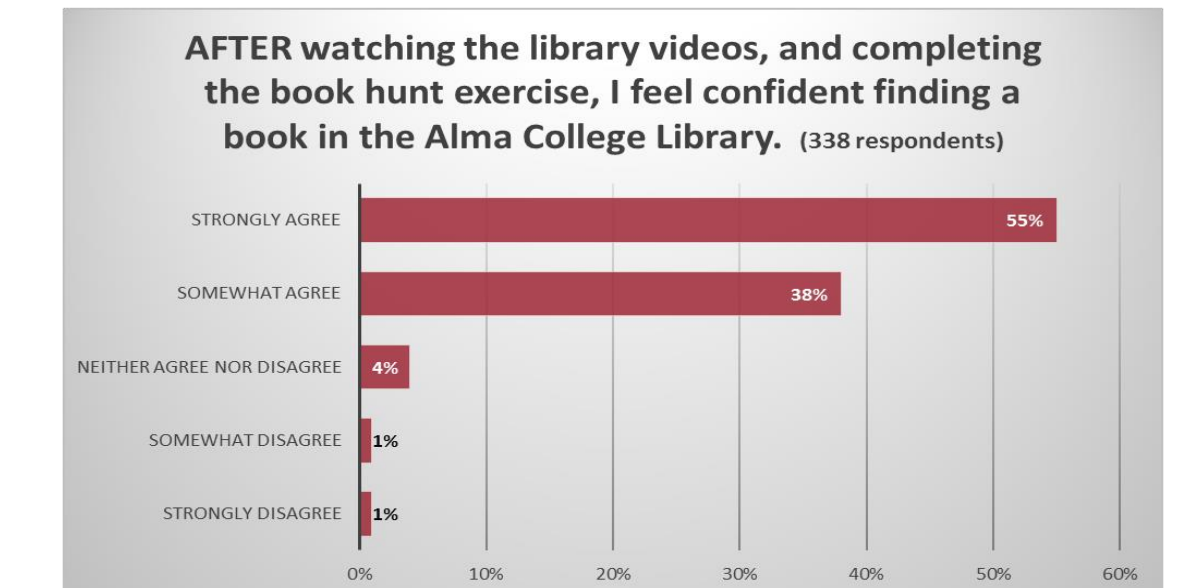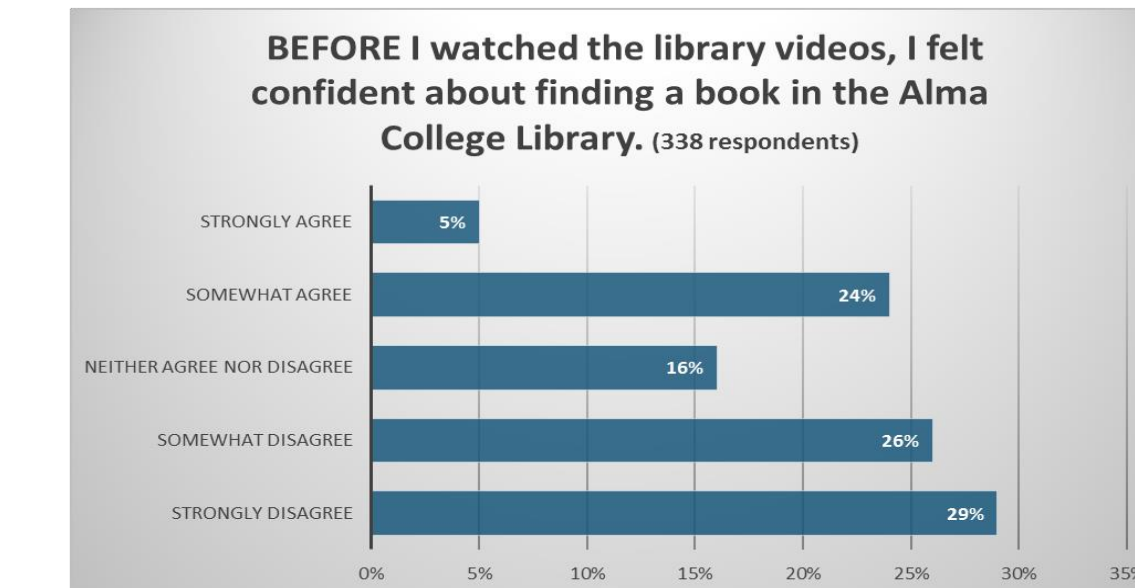- Regroup, in classroom. Refresh and scroll through projected Twitter feed.

Optional:
- Note other library collections, Lib guides, hours. how to find a reserve.

- Talk about what we can do for them, how nice we are, etc.

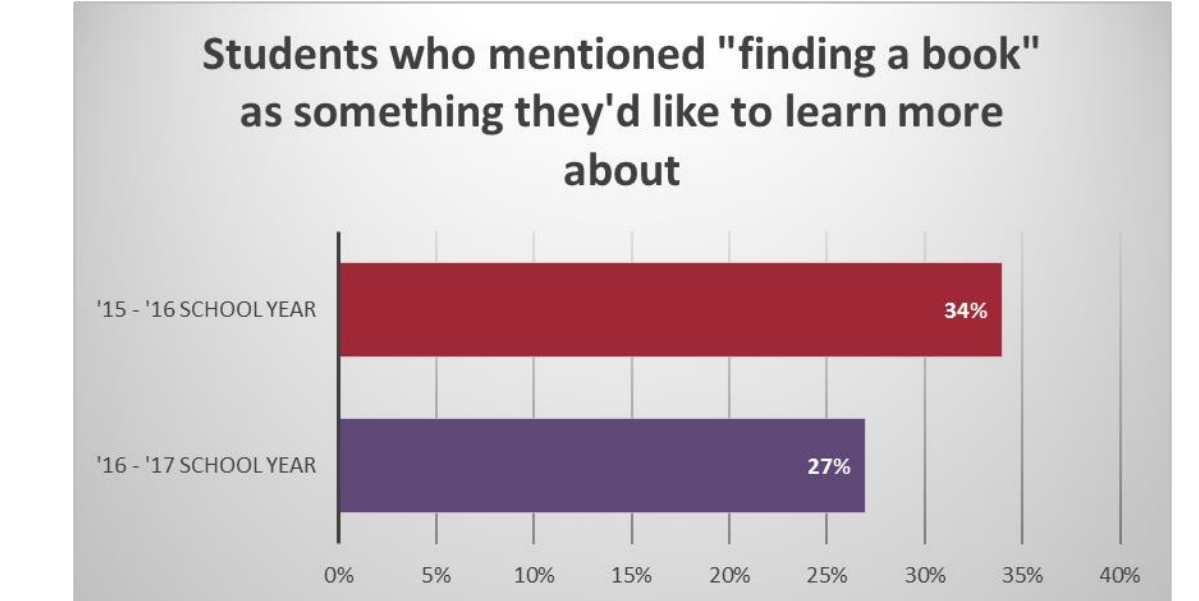- Have them complete brief course evaluation (3 questions).

Results

- Students really enjoyed it. Professors seemed pleased too.

BEFORE I watched the library videos, I felt confident about finding a book in the Alma College Library. (338 respondents)

AFTER watching the library videos, and completing the book hunt exercise, I feel confident finding a book in the Alma College Library. (338 respondents)

* Based on evaluations given at the end of each "new & improved" FYS library class.

- Nearly all first-year students had a positive experience in the library.

- We are seeing fewer "How do I find a book on the shelf?" comments on our evaluations.

Students who mentioned "finding a book" as something they'd like to learn more about

'15 - '16 SCHOOL YEAR — 34%
'16 - '17 SCHOOL YEAR — 27%

* Based on evaluations given at end of ENG 101 library classes

Conclusions

- Social media and selfies are very popular with this generation of students.

- Not all students have smart phones, and not all use Twitter.

- There is time to incorporate more content - for example: how to use the catalog. However, that might require each student to have laptop in front of him/her, or a very mobile-friendly catalog.

Acknowledgements