Spring 2007 Sakaibrary Pilot Usage Evaluation

Mark Notess
Indiana University Digital Library Program

Last modified: 6 June 2007
Executive Summary

During the Spring semester of 2007, the first version of the Sakaibrary citation tool was piloted at Indiana University in a graduate-level library science class. Students used Sakaibrary to search from Sakai for articles in licensed library databases. They selected an article for a one-item citation list and then annotated that article, saving the list in the class Resources tool so other students could see their work. Later in the semester, students commented on one another’s citations, and the instructor collected student work into a single document for students to keep as a resource.

This evaluation of Sakaibrary uses data from three sources: a discussion during a visit to the class, a web-based survey, and an interview with the instructor. The results of this evaluation indicate that although the collaborative nature of the assignment was not well-supported by this first version of Sakaibrary, students see value in the concept of integrating licensed library resources within Sakai.

The issues below were the main ones identified in this evaluation and addressed with recommendations at the end of this report.

1. Citation tool does not support collaborative use. [High]
2. The searching as implemented did not support students’ information finding needs adequately. [High]
3. Some users couldn’t log into the pilot server. [High/Bug]
4. No easy way to combine citation lists. [Medium]
5. Too many windows and too many steps to accomplish tasks. [Medium]
6. Embedding HTML tags manually was awkward. [Medium]
7. General Sakai issue: un-web-like navigation. [Medium]
8. General Sakai issue: tab ordering. [Low]
1 Introduction ............................................................................................................................................ 4

2 Description of Pilot .................................................................................................................................... 4

3 Evaluation of Pilot ..................................................................................................................................... 9
  3.1 Class Visit .......................................................................................................................................... 9
    3.1.1 Technical Problems with the Pilot .......................................................................................... 10
    3.1.2 Finding Citations ..................................................................................................................... 10
    3.1.3 Annotation .............................................................................................................................. 10
  3.2 Web-Based Survey .............................................................................................................................. 11
    3.2.1 Scale Items .......................................................................................................................... 11
    3.2.2 Free Response Items ............................................................................................................. 12
  3.3 Instructor Interview ............................................................................................................................ 15

4 Issues and Recommendations .................................................................................................................. 16

5 Conclusion ............................................................................................................................................... 21

Appendix A. Assignment Description ........................................................................................................ 23
Appendix B. Step-by-Step Assignment Instructions .................................................................................. 25
Appendix C. Sample Completed Assignment ......................................................................................... 27
Appendix D. Web-Based Survey ............................................................................................................... 28
Appendix E. Survey Participation Email .................................................................................................. 30
Appendix F. Full Text of Free Response Survey Items .......................................................................... 31
1 Introduction

Sakaibrary\(^1\) is a project with the goal of integrating licensed library resources within the Sakai course management system. This joint project of Indiana University and the University of Michigan is supported by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. In addition to developing open source software tools to support the aims of this project, the Sakaibrary team has also committed to evaluating Sakaibrary with user tests and pilot projects. The initial version of Sakaibrary was completed during the Fall of 2006, during which time usability testing was conducted. Some improvements were made after the usability testing, yielding this first version of the software that was used for the Spring pilot. Concurrent with the Spring pilot, a second version of Sakaibrary was produced with many improvements, and was released with Sakai version 2.4. The purpose of this document is to describe the Spring 2007 Sakaibrary pilot project conducted at Indiana University.

2 Description of Pilot

Recruiting an instructor proved more difficult than we had anticipated. Instructors who showed initial interest later decided not to participate, either because of timing, lack of key capabilities in the software, or the need to run the pilot on a server separate from the institution’s production Sakai server. Eventually we were able to recruit a librarian who also teaches courses in library science. As will be seen from the findings, the selected course was not an exact fit with the features of Sakaibrary implemented in the first release, but the pilot yielded valuable data nonetheless.

Students in a graduate library science class were required by their instructor to use Sakaibrary to find a citation, annotate it, and post it within the course Resources section so that other students could see their citations. Students repeated this assignment five times during the semester. Later in the semester, students were required to comment on at least two classmates’ annotated citations. See Appendix A for a description of the assignments from the instructor. Appendix B shows the Sakaibrary instructions provided to the students during a demo session at the beginning of a the semester in a computer classroom, where students had an opportunity to practice using Sakaibrary. Appendix C shows a sample completed assignment.

For this pilot, the Sakaibrary citation tool was not yet integrated into IU’s instance of Sakai (Oncourse CL), so a separate instance of Sakai was used. The rest of this section describes how the Sakaibrary functionality worked during the pilot.

For this pilot, the Sakaibrary citation tool was not yet integrated into IU’s instance of Sakai (Oncourse CL), so a separate instance of Sakai was used. The rest of this section describes how the Sakaibrary functionality worked during the pilot.

First, students click a link (“Sakaibrary Pilot Site”) in their Oncourse course site to get to the other Sakai instance (Fig. 1).

\(^1\) [http://www.dlib.indiana.edu/projects/sakai/](http://www.dlib.indiana.edu/projects/sakai/)
Figure 1. Course Site with Sakaibrary Link

Clicking on the pilot site link brings up a separate browser window, in which students click another login link, in the upper right-hand corner of the window (Fig. 2).

Figure 2. Sakaibrary Pilot Site Login Window
Once students login, the pilot site displays just one class, along with “My Workspace” (Fig. 3).

Figure 3. Sakaibrary Pilot Site, Logged In

Clicking on the class link places students directly into the Sakai Resources Tool, where separate folders had been set up for each of the assignment due dates (Fig. 4). Note that students were expected to create their annotated citations directly in the class Resources rather than in their own workspace. Allowing students to do this required us to modify the default permissions for the class Resources tool.

Figure 4. Sakaibrary Pilot Site Resource Tool
To complete the initial assignments (Part I in Appendix A), students were expected to search for and find a citation of interest, adding it to the list. Figures 5 and 6 show these steps. Figure 7 shows how students added annotation information about the citation, using HTML tags in the citation list’s description field to provide a readable result (Fig. 8).

Figure 5. Adding a Citation List

Figure 6. Search Terms, Results, with One Citation Added to the List
Figure 7. Annotating the Citation (List)
Part II of the assignment (Appendix A) was to comment on the annotations of two other students. A few students initially tried doing this within the Sakai Resources tool. It required making a copy of the citation list they wanted to comment on and then annotating the copy, having to figure out what to title the resultant citation list, and deciding where to put it. Students and the instructor found this too difficult. Instead, students completed this assignment by copying the desired citation and annotation into an MS Word document and emailing this, with their comments, to the instructor.

The instructor had hoped to combine all the annotated and commented citations into a single annotated bibliography to provide to the students as a resource at the end of the semester. This task was not possible to complete within Sakai, there being no way to combine citation lists. So the instructor also used MS Word to address this need, copying and pasting from each citation list.

3 Evaluation of Pilot

Three forms of evaluation were used for this pilot. The first was a mid-semester visit to the class, where the students had an opportunity to voice their comments about Sakaibrary and their experience during the pilot so far. The second form of evaluation was a web-based survey (Appendix D), administered towards the end of the semester. The third evaluation activity was a post-semester interview of the course instructor.

3.1 Class Visit

Approximately two-thirds of the way through the semester, I visited a class session to ask students for their input and to let them know about the web survey later in the semester. The class discussion, for which the instructor was present, was open-ended. I asked students how it was going, what problems they were encountering, what they thought of Sakaibrary, and if they had ideas for improving it. Notes from the visit to the pilot class on 22 March 2007 are given below.
3.1.1 Technical Problems with the Pilot
At least four students (and the instructor, and I in the classroom) were unable to login to the pilot server from the link in the course’s Oncourse site. The problem seemed to be related to IE security settings. I invited the students having trouble to contact me, but none did.

3.1.2 Finding Citations
A student mentioned liking being able to do everything within Oncourse rather than having to hop back and forth between Oncourse and library websites. But another student disagreed, saying that she preferred the native database interfaces, which allowed her to limit the search the way she wanted. She found this much harder to do in Oncourse. There was general agreement that graduate students, particularly those in library science, would prefer more control by having flexible, powerful searching options rather than just having a single search field. Students wanted to be able to limit the search by date, use truncated terms, use Boolean operators, know (or set) what databases were being searched, and understand the ordering of the search results. The assignment required students to annotate articles not more than ten years old. One suggestion was to have links to the native databases somewhere in Sakaibrary so that people could get to those if they so chose.

They guessed that results were being returned either by relevancy or by the response time of the underlying databases. Students liked seeing abstracts along with the search results.

The sense was that the single-field Google-like search was more appropriate for undergraduates. Nearly half the class admitted to finding articles using other search tools and then going into Sakaibrary to either find the article as a “known item” search (for which it seemed to work quite well), or just entering the citation manually. One student located a large number of articles using a native database, saved each article as a PDF, and then used Sakaibrary to manually create the citation and link to the uploaded PDF. One student commented that Sakaibrary isn’t better than what they have today with library websites and resources, and the ability to use tools such as Endnote.

3.1.3 Annotation
Students liked having the ability to comment on the citations, but disliked having to use HTML markup to format it reasonably. They would have preferred a rich text editor with a larger editing area—the description field was too small for writing extended comments. Using Sakaibrary for collaborative annotation seemed very clunky in comparison to other tools that are out there (various forums and wikis). They very much liked the idea (which I brought up) of being able to embed a citation or citation list as an object within another Sakai document type such as a discussion forum posting.

Resources Tool
• timed release of resources was seen as a very useful tool for instructors; one of the students used is because she did her assignment far ahead of time but didn’t want it to show up until it was due
General Sakai Issues
- Students wanted to be able to have multiple windows open within Sakaibrary and have the “Back” button work. They found Sakaibrary hard to navigate because they could not do these things.
- The way Oncourse CL is configured at IU, they have too many courses listed. They can’t just have the ones they want, put them in a useful order, or delete the ones that are irrelevant.

General Comments Regarding Library Functionality in Sakai
- should have “Ask a Librarian” somewhere
- concerned that students would only use Sakai and miss all the help available on webpages/sites created by the library
- librarians need to be able to put things like research guides or class pages directly into courses rather than relying on the instructor to do it, but there was also recognition that instructors need to feel in control of what goes into their course
- they saw the creation of useful class pages for every class as a lot of work and wondered who would do it
- there should be a way to integrate e-reserves
- there should be some way to see the revision date and date of submission of the citation list (the Sakai resources tool does this already, so maybe they were wanting this information to be visible within the list itself?)

3.2 Web-Based Survey
A web-based survey (Appendix D) was used to collect students’ reactions and thoughts about using Sakaibrary. I announced the survey in an email message to the students (Appendix E). All 19 students completed the survey, for which they received five participation points from their instructor. However, the survey results were sent to me and all results are reported anonymously.

3.2.1 Scale Items
The scores below show the median results from the seven-point Likert-scale items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Median (1=easy; 7=difficult)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Finding the right place to create a new citation list</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Finding the right place to start searching for articles</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Selecting a database to search within</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Specifying a search</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Selecting and article from search results</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Adding an article to the citation list</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Annotating the citation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Titling the citation list</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Saving the citation list</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 2. Efficiency, Simplicity, Pleasantness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Median</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Viewing someone else's citation list</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Creating a citation manually (by entering the citation data instead of picking the citation from search results)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Accessing an article from the search results</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Overall, using Sakaibrary for this kind of work</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.2.2 Free Response Items

Full text of the six free-response items is given in Appendix F. This section summarizes the primary themes across these six items.

Three major themes emerged from repeated mentions in multiple free-response items.
1. Lack of fit between the assignment and the tools provided.
2. Lack of advanced search specification and helpful results display.
3. Difficulty of use as a result of multiple windows and confusing navigation.

**Appropriateness of Assignment**

Students felt the assignment was not a good fit with what Sakaibrary had been designed for. In particular, the collaborative aspect of the assignment was not well supported. The assignment had several explicit or implicit collaborative aspects, each of which was difficult.

- students were to avoid selecting articles already chosen by other students
- students were expected to browse and read other students’ annotations
- students had to comment on other students’ annotations

Student comments show that each of these aspects was problematic.

*Our task made complex because the assignment didn’t fit the original design very well. It worked, but it wasn’t pretty or easy.*

*Viewing the citations was easy but scanning was not possible. It is inefficient to keep opening each individual title.*

*I think the main problem, for me anyway, was the lack of interaction with a posting by another person and the rather difficult to follow folder scheme. Part of the requirements of our assignment was that we not post an article someone else has already posted, which was quite time consuming under the current setup.*

*A rule of the assignment was that we couldn't use the same article that someone else used, so to make sure we weren't duplicating articles I had to click on and view*
everyone's citation from every due date. Towards the end this was a lot of opening and closing of windows.

I think that Sakaiibrary is difficult to navigate for reading the annotated citation lists of other students.

Finally, it was difficult to give feedback to colleague because I could not reply to their own citation list. Thus, I had to create a new messages to upload my feedback.

Inability to post comments (or at least post them intuitively, because I certainly haven't figured it out).

The assignment was fundamentally about sharing annotations. As described above, students found sharing to be difficult. The annotation activity was likewise seen as awkward.

... the process to annotate (add text) was not bad though you have to know HTML (a help box with reminders of HTML tags would be nice).

The system should allow to add title of citation and the annotation without the need of using the HTML editor elements such as <i> or </b>.

I would make it more intuitive to use. Also, I would include a text editor so there would be no need for HTML tags.

Search Specification and Results Display
Respondents were graduate level library science students, so it is perhaps unsurprising that they would be dissatisfied with having merely a basic keyword search capability. Library science students can be expected to be familiar with and comfortable using advanced search capabilities, and to miss those capabilities when they are not available.

Sakaiibrary is too simple in the search tool.

I did not like searching the library's databases through Sakaiibrary because I felt very limited to simple searches, and it was unclear if I was able to do an advanced search.

Specifying a search was incredibly easy because I only needed to enter a keyword. Unfortunately, this made it very difficult to retrieve more appropriate articles because the search box is limited to keyword only. Having an advanced search is necessary for this tool to be really useful.

I just think it will cause people to be less likely to use the database, or like to use the database interface once they no longer have access. With no advanced search, I think it is more a disservice to our patrons as they progress to being "information literate".

I also dislike searching through the format offered - it's too simplistic and doesn't get good results unless you don't care what you get.

The search feature was the least useful part of this tool. Students, regardless of their level, should not be encouraged to rely on a keyword search for conducting all research.

The assignment (Appendix A) required students to find articles on a particular topic, such as information literacy, planning, or assessment. Moreover, students were encouraged to use articles no more than ten years old. Yet the Sakaiibrary search mechanism offered no subject search or date search, nor could students limit results just to articles. The display of the search results likewise offered little help. Citations displayed in search results lists did not display dates and were not ordered by relevance.

The search results did not include the date of article publication.
Sakaibrary doesn't limit the search to articles or book

Navigation
The major clarification students offered was to explain why they either said Sakaibrary was easy or hard to use. Some said it was easy because they had been provided with detailed step-by-step instructions. Without these instructions (Appendix B), the task could not have been considered easy.

Finding the right place to search was easy simply because we had step-by-step instructions for it. If no such instructions existed, this would have been much more difficult.

Answering the questions about ease of creating a citation list was difficult. Following very detailed instructions was the only way that it seemed "easy." I would not have been able to complete the task without the instructions.

Despite the instructions, some students simply found the navigation difficult to figure out and complex to use.

I had difficulty using Sakaibrary because the interface layout. It was also difficult to navigate where all of functions were available.

it was not the most efficient method for the assignment because of two things: trouble accessing the site and needing to click multiple times to get to view someone else's citations. Also, it was difficult at first to figure out where to start (creating a new citation) but once I figured it out it was no problem.

Since I only had to use Sakaibrary for this project, it became easier to use: I could just follow the same steps for every assignment. If I ever needed to backtrack, though, I would often lose my place in all the open boxes and have to redo a search.

I really didn't like having to open ten windows to get to the sakaibrary site and then five more to get to the article.

It opened up too many windows and slowed my computer down. It just seemed like it was making the task more difficult rather than more efficient.

I did not like the number of steps involved in finding an article and then adding it to the citation list.

Other Comments
Students were generally not ready to recommend the use of Sakaibrary in its present form, or for similar assignments. When asked whether they would recommend Sakaibrary for this kind of work, two-thirds of the students were largely negative about recommending it. However, students were more positive in their assessment of the usefulness (or at least potential usefulness) of Sakaibrary. They liked the integration of library and citation capability within Oncourse, finding it “handy.” The overall assessment seemed to be that if it could be improved with the addition of better searching and could be integrated into other Sakai tools such as discussion or wiki, Sakaibrary could be a useful tool.

I do see how creating a reading list for a class could be nice in Sakaibrary, or sharing citations for an online forum-type discussion.

I would use it more as a resource organizer. Have students collect a list of resources in Sakaibrary for their term papers or final projects. Teachers or librarians could check articles for appropriateness and offer suggestions.
I would recommend stripping the tool of its best features and just incorporating them into the rest of Oncourse, but I couldn't recommend actually using it as it presently is.

For this kind of work, I think it did well. I would recommend it because a class is able to see what everybody is doing/has done and contribute.

I would recommend Sakaibrary if advanced features are added, because I had to go to library web page to locate articles and then use Sakaibrary to post my annotations. So, empowering Sakaibrary with features that make it more easy to browse and locate information, then it will be highly recommended.

With slight adjustments, I would recommend this tool for this work. It is nice to be able to search multiple databases at once, and to compile class bibliographies in one place.

Yes, I would recommend it because people can get together online and see others' work and recommendations.

Sakaibrary might be successful in a class where the instructor uses Oncourse regularly. Students can submit assignments or show the instructor the work they are doing on their research. I think it would be really useful to have more of a collaborative component to Sakaibrary - where students can share resources and ideas with each other. (Similar to what our class was trying to do.)

Despite the lack of fit between the assignment and the Sakaibrary tool, students saw validity in the activity and did not see Sakai as an inappropriate place for such work. However, without better integration into the collaborative features of Sakai, and without improved searching, Sakaibrary loses most of its appeal, and students would recommend other tools instead.

I think that any web forum would have been more efficient for this kind of work.

No, I do not recommend the use of Sakaibrary. I think it would be easier and more worthwhile for instructors to create a personalized search engine on Google or simply tell students which databases they should use for a particular project.

I would not use Sakaibrary for a class bibliography. It was not useful because of the individual folders. I wonder if just a regular webpage would work - people just enter citations into a form.

Just teach the professors how to use EndNote.

...looking at models such as Blackboard and WebCT would be helpful. Librarians are already using these tools to provide library sources and services (and are even conducting library instruction sessions) to onsite and distance education students. Oncourse and Sakaibrary have a long way to go before librarians could even consider using them to provide services.

### 3.3 Instructor Interview

Approximately ten days after the end of the semester, I met with the instructor to get her perspective on how the pilot had gone. She was fully cognizant of the problems students had during the semester, whether in simply getting access to the Sakaibrary pilot server or using the tools successfully. In fact, she herself was never able to access the pilot server from the tool link in the production version of Oncourse—she had to access the pilot server directly via a URL.

The instructor felt she “had the wrong assignment” for Sakaibrary, because of her collaborative learning objective. She puzzled over what Sakaibrary was actually designed
for since it did not support collaborative learning well. The explanation she had arrived at herself was that Sakaibrary was like “federated searching married to Endnote.” She thought this was a useful tool—just not a good fit with her assignment. What she thought might have worked better would have been to use one of the Sakai collaboration tools such as the discussion forum or the wiki, and have students put their citations, annotations, and comments into one of those.

Another aspect of this being the “wrong assignment” was that she wanted to “end up with a printable document” of all the annotated citations on a given topic. If she were to use the wiki, for example, there would be no way for students to access the material after they finished their (usually) one-year graduate program.

The instructor commented that two of her students were significantly older (”mid 40s”) than the others and that they were more excited about Sakaibrary because they had work experience and could see the potential. However, both also had trouble accessing the tool and getting it to work and were therefore disappointed. One student teaches an online course at another institution using Blackboard and was constantly comparing it with Oncourse. The younger students were also frustrated with Sakaibrary, but were less aware of the potential—they just wanted it to work for their assignment.

The instructor expressed some nervousness about using Oncourse tools. She was concerned that any tool she turned on for her class to use she would be expected to be an expert in, and would have to be able to explain. Yet she did not feel she had the time to learn these tools or even attend the training classes. “I should have taken the workshop,” she said. She wondered whether there was a training class just devoted to the collaborative aspects, implying that she might be willing to attend such a class if it existed.

4 Issues and Recommendations
This section collects together the issues from the three data sources above. Where issues have already been resolved in the Sakai 2.4 release of Sakaibrary, that fact is noted (by placing [done] after the recommendation).

The importance of each issue is categorized according to the criteria in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Issue leads to loss of data or demonstrably discourages pedagogically important student or instructor behaviors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Issue is a major inconvenience but workarounds exist; issue may discourage pedagogically important student or instructor behaviors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Issue is a minor inconvenience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bug</td>
<td>Issue probably results from a coding/technology error.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **Citation tool does not support collaborative use. [High]**

Students and the instructor all felt that the assignment concept—collaborative annotation of citations—was pedagogically valid, and many felt doing this within Sakai could be convenient.

Sakaibrary as implemented within the Sakai Resources tool did not support the kind of collaboration this course needed. Default permission settings for a given course’s Resources do not allow students to add resources. Instructors have to know it is possible to change these permissions, figure out how to change them, and should also understand the implications of changing them. Citation lists can only be modified by their author. To annotate or comment on someone else’s citation list requires making a duplicate of the list. However, the Resources tool does not have any built-in threading capability to easily relate these duplicates to each other to form a coherent conversation.

Recommendations:

- Implement the ability to locate and paste a citation within the rich text editor. With this approach, any Sakai tool making use of the rich text editor can also include citations. Having students find, annotate, and comment on citations within the Discussion tool or the Wiki would have been a much better fit with what was needed for this assignment. In answer to the question of what the best-liked feature of Sakaibrary was, on student colorfully comments,

  \[ \text{The ability to link directly to the full text article in a database. Very useful...just make it a part of the regular Oncourse discussion tools and you have fried gold. Having it separate is a pain the butt and doesn't all[ow] interaction and conversation about the articles.} \]

- Provide the ability to embed a citation and/or citation list object within a rich text document. This is similar to the previous recommendation, but has the additional benefit of Sakai knowing that an embedded citation is a citation, not just text with a URL. An embedded citation could then be edited in the same way that a citation in a citation list is edited; the format of the citation could be change, once we support formats; links could be displayed for additional URLs such as a link to local full text.

- Provide a configuration wizard for instructors so that it is easier for them to configure Sakai to meet the needs of their particular course. Such a wizard could ask, for instance, whether they want to have the course resource area open for collaborative use, by giving students “new” and “revise.any” permission.

2. **The searching as implemented did not support students’ information finding needs adequately. [High]**

Although many students seemed to appreciate the usefulness of searching library resources within Sakai, there were several obstacles to their satisfaction.

- Limited ability to select desired databases
- Inability to know which database citations are from or to move easily from Sakaibrary searching to native database search interfaces.
- No fielded searching.
- No obvious way to search with truncated terms or use Boolean operators.
• Inability to search by date or easily scan for an article’s date.
• No obvious order to search results—inability to order results by relevance.

Because of these problems, some students admitted to doing their searching outside of Sakai and then adding their citation information by hand.

Recommendations:
• Provide better abilities for refining database selections. [done]
• Indicate which database citations are from.
• Consider providing searching with truncated terms. (Although library science students wanted this, it is not clear that this is generally desirable.)
• Consider supporting Boolean operators beyond the implicit “AND”. (Likewise, this may not be generally desirable.)
• Provide navigation from Sakaibrary’s search to the native database search interfaces, ideally carrying along the ability to send search results to the citation list (as is now possible with Google Scholar).
• Provide fielded searching. [done]
• Provide date-based searching.
• Display year in search results [done].
• Return results based on relevance.

Some of these recommendations may not be possible to implement for all (or any) of the available metasearch products. In such cases, using Google Scholar within the citation tool as is now possible in Sakai 2.4 may be preferable to using a metasearch product that does not provide these features. Google Scholar advanced search offers both relevance ranking and date limiting. Google Scholar is not perfect either, but institutions may want to consider whether they wish to support both methods of finding citations, or just one—and which one.

3. Some users couldn’t log into the pilot server . [High/Bug]

The way the pilot was set up on two servers created some problems for users with Internet Explorer, where the security settings kept them from being able to access the pilot server using the link in the production Oncourse tool list.

Recommendations:
• Work with Sakai developers, or those who support Sakai on a given campus, to find a way to pilot tools or tool features on a limited basis within a fully functional instance of Sakai. A fully functional version would have the necessary connections to the institution’s student information system and other systems such that a course could be offered solely on the pilot server. Ideally, the Sakai architecture would understand and support the notion of piloting.
• Where a pilot server is used alongside a production server in this manner, provide initial instructions to students regarding security settings. Test on multiple platforms and environments to see whether the connection works.

4. No easy way to combine citation lists. [Medium]
The instructor wanted to provide students with a combined, annotated citation list so that they could continue to reference these after they graduated. This is an issue particularly because students eventually lose access to their course materials in Oncourse after they graduate. The only way Sakaibrary helps with this task is by allowing citations within a single list to be exported to RIS format. These exported lists could then be combined into a single list and loaded into something like Endnote (there is no way to import RIS into Sakaibrary). The instructor instead chose to open each citation list and copy/paste into an MS-Word document—a tedious process at best.

Recommendations:
- Supporting locating and pasting of citations into the rich text editor so that multiple students can build up a single citation list within the wiki (for example) is probably the best solution to this issue (see first two recommendations under Issue #1, above).
- Support citation list import.

5. **Too many windows and too many steps to accomplish tasks. [Medium]**

Students disliked and were sometimes confused by the number of windows and steps involved in using Sakaibrary.

Some of these extra windows and steps resulted from having to use two Sakai servers for the pilot, one for Sakai itself and the other for the Sakaibrary functionality. Within Sakaibrary itself, in addition to the main window, students had to navigate separate browser windows for different tasks.

Recommendations:
- Reduce the number of windows and steps required to complete Sakaibrary tasks.

Table 4 shows the number of windows and clicks (not counting typing or scrolling) minimally involved in completing the base-level tasks, once users are logged in to the production server and have navigated to the correct course page. The pilot implementation, which ran on two servers, is compared to the current version of Sakaibrary (part of the Sakai 2.4 release) running on just one server, with an improved user interface.

The analysis in Table 4 shows that even the improved interface does not reduce the minimal number of clicks required to complete the tasks (assuming a single-server production environment), but it does reduce the number of windows by two. The simplifications made for the current implementation consist of reusing the main Sakai window for search, search results, and citation revision. Whether this reduction is sufficient to remove students’ dissatisfaction with task complexity remains to be investigated by future pilots or usability tests.

Other simplification ideas:
- If possible, change the SFX resolver window to be reused, thereby getting rid of one window (but not one click—instead of closing the window, users have to click the back button).
• Put the title and description fields back on the “revise citation list” page, getting rid of a click.
• Implement the ability to locate and paste a citation within the rich text editor. Depending on how it is implemented, this approach would remove some navigation (perhaps just one click), scrolling, and other complexity associated with being embedded within the resources tool.

Table 4. Multiplicity of Windows and Clicks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Pilot Implementation on Two Servers</th>
<th>Current (Sakai 2.4) Implementation on a Single Server</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Starting from the home course page within production Oncourse, get to the Resources tool</td>
<td>Production Oncourse course page</td>
<td>Production Oncourse course page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Main Sakai window on pilot server</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal Clicks</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add citation list, searching library resources, examining article full text, closing unneeded windows, adding a citation, revising that citation, and saving the citation list.</td>
<td>Main Sakai window</td>
<td>Main Sakai window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Search &amp; Search results window</td>
<td>SFX resolver window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SFX resolver window</td>
<td>Article or native database window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Article or native database window</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Revise citation window</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal Clicks</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browse other students’ citations to see which articles they chose</td>
<td>Main Sakai window</td>
<td>Main Sakai window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>View Citation List window (one for each list viewed)</td>
<td>View Citation List window (one for each list viewed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal Clicks</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. **Embedding HTML tags manually was awkward. [Medium]**

To annotate their citations, students used the citation list description field, which accepts only plain text. To provide a readable citation annotation, students had to embed HTML tags such as `<b>` and `<br>`.

Recommendations:
• Supporting locating and pasting of citations into the rich text editor so that multiple students can build up a single citation list within the wiki (for example)
is probably the best solution to this issue (see first two recommendations under Issue #1, above).

7. **General Sakai issue: un-web-like navigation. [Medium]**

As has been found in other Sakai user studies, users become frustrated when Sakai does not behave predictably, as they expect from other websites. The two main frustrations expressed were being limited to a single main Sakai window, and not being able to use the back button with predictable results.

Recommendations:
- Support the ability to work with multiple windows within a single tool.
- Support use of the browser’s back button.

8. **General Sakai issue: tab ordering. [Low]**

Students complained about having too many classes listed within Sakai and not being able to get rid of the irrelevant ones or order the remaining ones. Sakai 2.3 did provide this functionality, but students apparently were unaware of this.

Recommendations:
- Make tab management more salient within the user interface.

5 **Conclusion**

Students and the instructor all felt this pilot project was not an ideal fit with Sakaibrary capabilities. Nevertheless, the pilot did provide valuable information about how people wanted to use Sakaibrary and validation that this kind of Sakai-library integration is potentially quite useful, particularly if it can be integrated more seamlessly with the collaboration functions of Sakai. These library science students seemed to appreciate the value of this integration, both to them personally and for their future professional use as well, providing some of the key issues are addressed. The opposite concern was also expressed: that integrating library functionality within Sakai might cause students to make less use of the richer resources available on library websites.

These library science students also had some thoughts about future planned Sakaibrary functionality. They wanted “Ask a Librarian” functionality integrated as well as e-reserves. They understood the balance of interests between librarians and instructors, where the former may want to provide research guides directly into courses based on subject, but instructors may want to modify or remove these.

Progress made in the second iteration of the citations helper for the Sakai 2.4 release addresses some of the issues raised by this pilot, particularly in the area of advanced search and the integration of Google Scholar. The fact that Google Scholar search results can be placed directly into citation lists should speed the adoption of Sakaibrary, particularly because it requires relatively less configuration work than integrating a metasearch product and configuring subject groupings.
Future pilot projects would be more effective if there were a way to use Sakaibrary on the same server as the production Sakai environment. This will be easier because Sakaibrary is now included in the Sakai release as of 2.4. However, pilots with prototype versions of Sakaibrary will still face the same challenge.
Appendix A. Assignment Description

Class Bibliography Project

PART I
Cite & write an annotation for a journal article or book or part of a book or Web site/document.
One (only one!) can come from the class readings list (posted on OnCourse).
If item is older than ten years, your annotation must justify its inclusion.
Items can be practical or theoretical. But they must relate in some way to the major course themes (see categories attached to this document).
Post submission via Sakaibrary L554 site, place in appropriate folder no later than noon on Monday
   Jan 29
   Feb 12
   Feb 26
   Mar 12 (note that this falls during Spring Break)
   Mar 26

Submitting a citation implies a recommendation. In other words, you learned from and liked this item and believe that others in the class should read it. Your annotation should explain why.
Submissions cannot be duplicated. If someone posts a citation for an item you were planning to use, you must submit a different item. (All is not lost, however, see part 2 below.)
Do not post more than one week ahead of the deadline date. We will discuss “claiming” an item in class.

Part II
Add to at least two submissions. (NOT your own!) Comments should relate to the item cited, NOT to the quality of the annotation. If you disagree with the annotation, do so courteously, respectfully and in the spirit of academic/scholarly exchange. More than one person may add to a single submission.
Additions should be completed by noon on Monday
   Apr 9
   Apr 23
Do not post more than one week ahead of the deadline date.
Major Course Themes - Categories

♦ Information Literacy Issues
♦ Learning theories/styles
♦ Audience characteristics/motivation
♦ Planning
♦ Writing instructions
♦ Making presentations
♦ Teaching techniques/strategies
♦ Assessment

Each Submission is worth 8 points

2 points Citation
5 points Annotation
See the LIRT News “Check These Out” column or annual “Top Twenty” for examples of “descriptive and evaluative” annotations.
1 point posted within timelines provided in assignment description

Each Comment is worth 5 points

4 points substantive, respectful
It should be evident that you read the article and are adding new ideas to the annotation, not simply saying “me, too.”
1 point added within timelines provided in assignment description

Total Points for Entire Assignment: 50 points
Assignment is 25% of course grade.

PURPOSE - explore, on your own, the professional literature related to information literacy and other topics covered in class. Learn from your peers. Develop a portfolio of sources that inspire you.
Appendix B. Step-by-Step Assignment Instructions

Sakaibrary Pilot Project
Creating a Citation List

1. Click on the “Sakaibrary Pilot Site” link on the L554 course web site. A new window will open. [You may get a message about “this page contains both secure and nonsecure items. Do you want to display the nonsecure items?” We’ll just live on the wild side and say “yes.” ☺]

2. A new window will open titled “Oncourse: SPO7 BL SLIS L554 26680 : Sakaibrary Pilot Site.” This is the pilot server. Click on the “login” button on the top right to access the course pilot site.

ARRGGHH!! Yes, that’s right – a new window might have opened yet again (we’re going for a record). This is a result of Internet Explorer and we have a rather cumbersome fix for this if you would like to change some settings on your computer. Just contact Sharon Hay at sehav@indiana.edu if you are interested.

3. In this window, click the tab on the top bar entitled “SPO7 BL SLIS L554 26680” to go from “My Workspace” to the course pilot site.

You have now arrived at the Resources Tool within the course pilot site. This is where you will be creating your citation list and saving it for the class to review.

4. Click on the “Add” button next to the folder with the appropriate due date. For your first assignment, you would click on the “Add” button to the right of the “January 29” folder.

5. You are now going to create a citation list. On the pull down menu by “Add Item Type”, select “Citation List.” The title of the citation list is your first and last name (e.g. Jane Smith). The description field is where you will write your citation annotation. Ignore this for now.

6. To begin searching for citations, scroll down the page and select “Search Library Resources.” A fourth window will appear – we are almost up to the record number of windows now 😊

7. Select the database that you wish to search. There are many databases from which to choose – some pertinent to this class, others not so much.

8. Enter your search term(s) in the “Enter search terms” box. The search engine automatically uses the Boolean operator “and” with multiple search words. You can also do phrase searching by using quotation marks (e.g. “information literacy”).

25
9. Click on the “Search” button. A list of search results will appear. There are 10 citations displayed but you can change this by selecting up to 50 items in the navigation tool at the top of the list. You can click on the title of citation to see additional information about the article or the “IU-Link” button to see if we have the article available in full-text. Not all articles will be available in full-text.

10. Read through the articles that look of interest and decide which one you want to add to your citation list. Click “Add” to the left of the chosen citation. By clicking “Add”, you automatically add it to your citation list (you may see the window underneath change somewhat).

11. Click “Done” when you have found your article and added it. This will close the search window.

12. You have now returned to your Citation List page. Scroll down the page and you should see the citation listed under the heading “Citations.” At this point, you can again look at the full-text of the article by clicking on “IU-Link” (if the full-text is available), revise the citation (which you probably won’t need to do) or remove the citation if you want to start over.

13. Now it is time to add your annotation. Type your annotation in the description field. You may want to use a `<br>` tag to include line breaks and the `<b>` word you want bolded`</b>` tags to bold text.

14. When you are satisfied with your annotation and your citation, scroll down the page and click on the “Add” button. You should now see your citation list in the folder.

15. To view your citation list, click on the title of the file (i.e. your name). A new window will appear (yes, I believe we now have a new world record) where you can review your citation list. Use the close button at the top of your browser window to close the window.

16. You are now back to your list of files. Keep in mind that you can also revise your citation list by clicking on the “revise” button to the right of the file name if you wish to make changes. You can remove your list by clicking in the checkbox to the left of your file name and then clicking “Remove Checked” above the gray header. You should only be able to revise and remove your own list not that of classmates.

If you have any questions, concerns or comments, please feel free to email Sharon Hay at sehay@indiana.edu.

Many thanks for your participation in this pilot project.
Appendix C. Sample Completed Assignment

Citation List: <student’s name>
Category: Libraries and the Web


Abstract:
Oder and Albanese discuss ways <more comments... Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepetur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad ...>

Click on citation's title for details. Click on 'IU~Link' to see if a copy is available through your library.

Google Gains with Librarians, Oder, Norman and Albanese, Andrew. Library Journal, 131(7) 2006. 2. IU~Link
Appendix D. Web-Based Survey

Sakaibrary User Experience Survey

The purpose of this survey is to understand your experiences with Sakaibrary in class this semester. Please answer the questions below and click the "Submit Survey" button at the bottom of this web page when you are finished.

Your answers will only be reported anonymously. However, to get credit for the assignment, please enter your name here--I will give a list of names to <the instructor’s name>.

Name: _____________________

Thanks!

Mark Notess (mnotess@indiana.edu)
Sakaibrary Project

For each of the following activities, indicate the level of difficulty you experienced by selecting 1-7.

If you did not do the activity, leave it blank.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>difficulty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Finding the right place to create a new citation list</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Finding the right place to start searching for articles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Selecting a database to search within</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Specifying a search</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Selecting and article from search results</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Adding an article to the citation list</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Annotating the citation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Titling the citation list</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Saving the citation list</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Viewing someone else's citation list</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Creating a citation manually (by entering the citation data instead of picking the data)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>difficult</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. Accessing an article from the search results: easy [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] difficult

13. Overall, using Sakaibrary for this kind of work: easy [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] difficult

Complete each of the statements below by picking a value from 1 to 7.

13.² Using Sakaibrary for this kind of work was: efficient [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] inefficient

14. Sakaibrary is: simple [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] complex

15. Overall, my experience with Sakaibrary has been: pleasant [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] unpleasant

[Each of the items below had a multi-line text area for students to provide answers.]

Please use the space below to add any clarifications to the above answers.

What did you like best about the Sakaibrary tool?

What did you like least about the Sakaibrary tool?

What suggestions do you have for improving Sakaibrary?

Would you recommend people use Sakaibrary for this kind of work? If so, why? If not, why not, and what would you recommend instead?

How do you see tools such as this being useful in a library setting? How might instructors use this?

[ Submit ] (may take a few seconds--please press only once!)

Thank you for your time!

---

² Even though the survey mistakenly had two items numbered “13”, answers to both items were included in the responses received from the students.
Appendix E. Survey Participation Email

I sent the email below to all students on April 17, 2007, which was after the first of the Part II commented annotations was due. On the 26th, I send a reminder, because three students had not completed the survey. By the end of the day, all did.

All,

The Sakaibrary evaluation is now available online--please fill it out, and make sure to fill out your name. I will give a list of names to Emily Okada so that you can receive the 5 participation points she has promised for completing it.

To receive credit for the survey, please submit it on or before April 26th.

I will also summarize the results of the surveys after the semester is over, but all results will be reported anonymously. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about this.

Here’s the URL for the survey:

http://variations2.indiana.edu/Sakai/sakaib-survey-sp07.html

Thanks for taking time to fill this out and help us improve Sakaibrary.

Best,

Mark
Appendix F. Full Text of Free Response Survey Items

Please use the space below to add any clarifications to the above answers.

Just teach the professors how to use EndNote.

Sakaibrary is too simple in the search tool. Our task made complex because the assignment didn't fit the original design very well. It worked, but it wasn't pretty or easy.

I think the main problem, for me anyway, was the lack of interaction with a posting by another person and the rather difficult to follow folder scheme. Part of the requirements of our assignment was that we not post an article someone else has already posted, which was quite time consuming under the current setup.

I did not like searching the library's databases through Sakaibrary because I felt very limited to simple searches, and it was unclear if I was able to do an advanced search.

Finding the right place to search was easy simply because we had step-by-step instructions for it. If no such instructions existed, this would have been much more difficult.

I had difficult using Sakaibrary because the interface layout. It was also difficult to navigate where all of functions were available. Finally, it was difficult to give feedback to colleague because I could not reply to their own citation list. Thus, I had to created a new messages to upload my feedback.

I answered #13 based on the L554 classFassignment - it was not the most efficient method for the assignment because of two things: trouble accessing the site and needing to click multiple times to get to view someone else's citations. Also, it was difficult at first to figure out where to start (creating a new citation) but once I figured it out it was no problem. Finally, the process to annotate (add text) was not bad though you have to know HTML (a help box with reminders of HTML tags would be nice).

It was a good tool only for the purpose for which we used it. Otherwise it has many deficiencies.

The system should allow to add title of citation and the annotation without the need of using the the HTML editor elements such as <i> or </b>.

I think that Sakaibrary is difficult to navigate for reading the annotated citation lists of other students.

Since I only had to use Sakaibrary for this project, it became easier to use: I could just follow the same steps for every assignment. If I ever needed to backtrack, though, I would often lose my place in all the open boxes and have to redo a search.

While I personally wasn't troubled by Sakaibrary, I knew a lot of people were. I think as library students we are more capable of adjusting our searches and working around the bugs in the system, but I'm not sure non-library students would go to the trouble.

It has only been in the last two weeks that I have been able to log on Sakaibrary. I was able to log on during the first couple of weeks and then after that a couple of weeks ago.

#5 - Specifying a search was incredibly easy because I only needed to enter a keyword. Unfortunately, this made it very difficult to retrieve more appropriate articles because the search box is limited to keyword only. Having an advanced search is necessary for this tool to be really useful.

I was not able to complete the assigned work because I was not permitted to create a list or easily see the lists created. I think that this software will be excellent when tailored to
the students needs. I'm a distance student and fairly computer literate so I would say the problem is with the security settings.

Sakaibrary doesn't limit the search to articles or books.

Answering the questions about ease of creating a citation list was difficult. Following very detailed instructions was the only way that it seemed "easy." I would not have been able to complete the task without the instructions. Viewing the citations was easy but scanning was not possible. It is inefficient to keep opening each individual title.

What did you like best about the Sakaibrary tool?

I like the concept of being able to search and create citations lists from within OnCourse - it's a good idea.

Nothing

I think if we could have applied the tools to a different assignment, some of the features could have worked well.

The ability to link directly to the full text article in a database. Very useful...just make it a part of the regular OnCourse discussion tools and you have fried gold. Having it separate is a pain the butt and doesn't all interaction and conversation about the articles.

Nothing really, although there was a way to include a link to the article we were annotating. Maybe that was helpful.

This may be a useful feature for collecting an individual bibliography not meant to be used collaboratively.

I like the fact that I can save sources that I just looked up. It also helps with the citation.

The citations were easy to do and find.

Once you could log on and get access to the citation page, it was easy to find articles in the database. I had no trouble with the search (though I could see that it would be difficult for a narrow subject).

The ability to see other people's annotations without being able to edit them. That the writer only can edit them is a great feature. I also liked the way it puts folders in place for assignment due dates

It is a good tool to locate library resources without going to the library webpage.

Being able to automatically include the citation of an article was nice.

I liked being able to click on a search result and read the citation or annotation without being taken away from the list itself.

I liked that it was very easy to add or remove citations. I also liked that you could view abstracts within Sakaibrary, where available.

It is handy that library resources are available for the class.

I think the basic idea was interesting; however, I think other course management systems should be examined before making improvements. For instance, Blackboard can contain links to the library, and you are able to work conveniently within one search screen as opposed to multiple log-ins with Sakaibrary. You can also provide links directly to the library catalog from Blackboard. It seems as if Sakaibrary is being developed without knowing about existing software.

I like the concept. I think it will be a worthwhile system when it is fully operational.

Handy resources which relate to the class.
I like the idea of the sakaibrary tool. Connecting library resources to students specific courses is great.

What did you like least about the Sakaibrary tool?

It was never really clear until our class chat what the point of any of this was - I'm still not sure that there's a clear focus to what it's meant to do. I also dislike searching through the format offered - it's too simplistic and doesn't get good results unless you don't care what you get.

Everything

I really didn't like having to open ten windows to get to the sakaibrary site and then five more to get to the article.

Inability to post comments (or at least post them intuitively, because I certainly haven't figured it out).

It opened up too many windows and slowed my computer down. It just seemed like it was making the task more difficult rather than more efficient.

While searching was not difficult to do, Sakaibrary does not offer any advanced search options to help refine a search. It is also unclear if truncation, etc. is allowed.

interface, limited search function, searching strategies, reply to messages, uploading documents, tagging html

No advanced search feature.

Trying to get access to the site and trying to view other citations.

It was not easy to navigate between various functions and the arrows that I finlayy found out one can use are not clear.

The search results did not include the date of article publication.

Overall Site Navigation

The number of pop-up boxes got to be confusing, and I didn't think it was very intuitive. Without step-by-step instructions, I would have had a hard time figuring out where to go and what to do.

A rule of the assignment was that we couldn't use the same article that someone else used, so to make sure we weren't duplicating articles I had to click on and view everyone's citation from every due date. Towards the end this was a lot of opening and closing of windows. It would be nice if there was one list of everyone's citation (not the annotation) in one place. This frustration may be due more to the assignment than the functionality of Sakaibrary, however.

It was very frustrating not being able to log on and I had to come up with an alternate method to place my articles. This ended up just being on the drop box.

The search feature was the least useful part of this tool. Students, regardless of their level, should not be encouraged to rely on a keyword search for conducting all research.

LOL ...The fact that I couldn't us it...effectively from <student’s city>.

There are too many steps just to get to the start.

I did not like the number of steps involved in finding an article and then adding it to the citation list. Also, the databases were not in any particular order and there was only one search box.

What suggestions do you have for improving Sakaibrary?
Offer links that lead to the full database searching, or improve the search feature. It's hard to really give other feedback without knowing what it will look like integrated with OnCourse.

Reinventing the wheel is fun for some but heck for the guinea pigs.

The folder design works well for some ideas, but a more intuitive layout may help some of the confusion.

The only useful thing is the ability to link to the articles. Even the searching is rather annoying, and Oncourse already provides a way for a librarian to provide a list of selected databases for a class so why bother with the extra pull down menus (which are never ever intuitive)?

Providing the same search functions that the library databases have when searching without using Sakaibrary.

As far as searching goes, an advanced search screen would definitely be nice.

interface, limited search function, searching strategies, reply to messages, uploading documents, tagging html

I just think it will cause people to be less likely to use the database, or like to use the database interface once they no longer have access. With no advanced search, I think it is more a disservice to our patrons as they progress to being "information literate".

Don't use HTML tags or use the Wiki feature (similar to Oncourse) for class bibliography projects (add search feature to Wiki)

The search interface with the library databases needs to allow for more flexibility in setting up a search strategy that is more precise.

Allowing for viewing other's citations and annotations in a more simple way without going and browsing each record.

More information presented coherently in one window, rather than a series of popups.

Different viewing modes.

Provide more options for search strategies or an advanced search.

I would make it more intuitive to use. Also, I would include a text editor so there would be no need for HTML tags.

It does need some search tools, like an advanced search or subject search. It needs to be more than just keyword search.

The search feature needs to be enhanced. The method of posting and viewing citations needs to be less cumbersome.

I think you are making all the right moves by talking with our class and I agree with the ideas given in the class chat session.

I think that by using numbers for the results, it would be easier to use.

I think changing the interface may help. However, I do not like the oncource interface, so it may just a personal bias. Reducing the steps and making the citations more scannable would make it better to use.

Would you recommend people use Sakaibrary for this kind of work? If so, why? If not, why not, and what would you recommend instead?

Not for what we did - but I do see how creating a reading list for a class could be nice in Sakaibrary, or sharing citations for an online forum-type discussion.

No, there are much better and easier programs already available.
I would use it more as a resource organizer. Have students collect a list of resources in Sakaibrary for their term papers or final projects. Teachers or librarians could check articles for appropriateness and offer suggestions.

I would recommend stripping the tool of it's best features and just incorporating them into the rest of OnCourse, but I couldn't recommend actually using it as it presently is.

No. OnCourse is the same thing as far as I can tell, and I would rather just search the library databases anyway. In fact, in OnCourse, it is more efficient to read each other's postings because you don't have to open each individual folder without knowing the title or subject of the article. Also, you have the ability to respond to someone's posting.

If they are looking for a tool to compile a bibliography which allows them to link to the full-text, then yes. A lot of this can be done using programs like EndNote though.

I think it will be just good to compile resources for classes rather than using it as a post reviews. This is also possible within oncourse using "Message Center" or "discussion." So, I don't know why we had to go through tagging each article and upload them when people cannot even reply to each individual postings. (Does this make sense?)

Difficult for group bibliographies but fine for an individual

For this kind of work, I think it did well. I would recommend it because a class is able to see what everybody is doing/has done and contribute.

I would recommend Sakaibrary if advanced features are added, because I had to go to library web page to locate articles and then use Sakaibrary to post my annotations. So, empowering Sakaibrary with features that make it more easy to browse and locate information, then it will be highly recommended.

Not really. I think that any web forum would have been more efficient for this kind of work.

While I thought Sakaibrary was really clunky for our bibliography project, I'm not sure that anything would have worked better. If there'd been a way to view the full versions of all our citations on the same page (in one continuous list), that would have been ideal, but I don't think Sakaibrary allows for that (yet).

With slight adjustments, I would recommend this tool for this work. It is nice to be able to search multiple databases at once, and to compile class bibliographies in one place.

This will be very helpful when the kinks are lined out, especially for undergrad.

No, I do not recommend the use of Sakaibrary. I think it would be easier and more worthwhile for instructors to create a personalized search engine on Google or simply tell students which databases they should use for a particular project.

I like the idea of seeing and commenting on what others are reading. I can see where having these bibliographies stored up could help with serious topic research.

Yes, I would recommend it because people can get together online and see others' work and recommendations.

I would not use Sakaibrary for a class bibliography. It was not useful because of the individual folders. I wonder if just a regular webpage would work- people just enter citations into a form.

How do you see tools such as this being useful in a library setting? How might instructors use this?

Honestly, I'm not sure - I'm not really clear on what it's meant to accomplish.
If they were smart they wouldn't.

see above

It could be handy for instructors, actually, making the process of linking to class readings and articles and easier one for them. But for students, I would shy away from using it. So I guess I now recommend it to instructors, and have the students make comments elsewhere?

I don't. Just use OnCourse.

Sakaibrary might be successful in a class where the instructor uses Oncourse regularly. Students can submit assignments or show the instructor the work they are doing on their research. I think it would be really useful to have more of a collaborative component to Sakaibrary - where students can share resources and ideas with each other. (Similar to what our class was trying to do.)

to compile reading list and make readings available online

With improvements, it could be used for a group bibliography project (as intended).

such tools are also useful in creating a kind of social networking. Apart from the use mentioned above, instructors can also use them to post course outlines and discussion questions that need every person to respond to. They can be developed to be good online discussion forum for a given class.

Sakaibrary can be highly useful because students will use it for their assignments instead of going directly to Google. Integrating library materials into Sakaibrary will be helpful for instructors and librarians.

I don't see a legitimate use at this time in a library setting.

Being able to search the library resources and share the citation and IUlink with others in the class was handy for our purposes and would be for other courses, too. So I can see Sakaibrary being useful for the interaction between specific courses and the library, but as a tool separate from a class assignment, I don't see much of a use for it.

Like I said above, using one search tool will be useful for students, especially if the topic is simple enough for keyword searching. Then students could search and document their work in one place, the way we did for our assignment.

This could be used to coordinate resources between the libraries and instructors. It could also be used specifically for classes in certain fields. For instance, in a music program, resources and the Sakaibrary could be designed for more specific research.

Again, looking at models such as Blackboard and WebCT would be helpful. Librarians are already using these tools to provide library sources and services (and are even conducting library instruction sessions) to onsite and distance education students. Oncourse and Sakaibrary have a long way to go before librarians could even consider using them to provide services.

The basic concept of Saki is an online classroom combo list serv...pretty cool if you can get it to work. One more way for students to stay in contact with their professors and students.

In a library setting, it allows for quick reference to a particular topic. Instructors can use it in class for students to easily find and use relevant resources with just a little online help.

I see how this could be used to customize library resources for students- help them be aware of resources specifically useful for them. Instructors could use it as a reference tool to demonstrate to students what is available. However, I do not necessarily think that this tool or similar tools would be that useful in a library setting.