

## **Report on Teaching Excellence Program – Educational Project**

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### **Introduction:**

This project sought to catalogue available resources and practices related to the use of Turnitin software in the School of Social and Community Services and then develop training opportunities for both faculty and students to see how this tool normally associated with plagiarism detection can be used to support student learning.

### **Project Outputs:**

The initial cataloguing of resources took the form of informal conversations with various faculty members in SSCS. I often focused on program coordinators as they would be most likely to know what courses utilized Turnitin. From this I was able to determine that Criminal Justice degree students were getting the most training and use of Turnitin, but that other programs had started to more regularly use the software for plagiarism detection. The training provided to students was minimal, and they were often directed to basic resources on the Turnitin website. CJ students were exposed to more training as part of the 'license to write' activities provided to all first year CJ students, but that program was being discontinued as a new common platform was rolled out for first year SSCS degree students.

This project also developed training materials for faculty. A pilot training session was run with Professor Iris Sokoloff and other Social Work faculty in May 2017, and that session was refined and redelivered in a professional development day available to all SSCS faculty. The session sought to understand the level at which each faculty member was familiar or currently using Turnitin, and then examine how the faculty members were conducting their grading and feedback currently. From there we discussed what makes for good feedback, and examined how several tools within Turnitin align with good feedback and evaluation practices. These included tools such as audio feedback, line by line commentary, digital rubrics, and language usage tools. The training will be offered ahead of the start of the fall term as well, and on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

Finally, a training session was developed for first year students. This will be delivered in the CJ seminar series which all first year students are required to attend. The slide deck and presentation notes will also be sent to all CJ faculty so they have a ready tool for use in their classrooms to refresh students on the concepts of using Turnitin. At a June CJ faculty meeting it was brought up that it may be useful to develop the training in to an e-module for students to access on their own time.

### **Evaluation:**

Faculty members attending the training reported high levels of satisfaction and enjoyment from the training. Our survey from the professional development day is still in the field, but initial results are quite positive. Faculty particularly enjoyed the feedback exercises we did, and commented that the exercises both showed them the value of Turnitin as a tool to support student feedback, but also reinforced good feedback practices in general. The student presentations have not yet begun, so I'm unable to evaluate their efficacy at this time.