

# Asynchronous Online Library Instruction with Zero Cost Strategy

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## Why Asynchronous Online Library Instruction with Zero Cost?

### Fast

The final websites can be presented to administrators for review without prior cost.

### Sustainable, Equitable

The site can be reused. International or nontraditional students can take them any time, from anywhere.

### Embedded without Faculty Resistance

Faculty resistance to embedded library instructions within their classes is common<sup>[1][2]</sup>. With individual URLs and individually packaged learning modules, faculty have control over what to share.

### Personal

Quizzes and immediate answer feedback engage students.

### Data driven

By using analytical tools such as Google Analytics, you can discover which modules are high or low in demand.

## Benchmarking for Online Course Building Services

**Cost:** 100% free? Free with for-fee upgrades?

**Skills:** Does it require coding?

**Access control:** Can I control access/student enrollment?

**Admin rights:** Can I assign, control editors?

**Privacy:** Is student privacy protected?

**User Engagement:** Can students take quizzes, get feedback, engage in discussions?

**Accessibility:** Is it accessible?

**Ads:** Are there ads on the platform?

**Support:** Can I ask for help?

Currently only 3 services available for free

## Google Course Builder vs. Thinkific vs. Google Classroom Comparison

My Google Course Builder Course: <https://learn-refworks.appspot.com/new1>

My Thinkific Course: <https://yui-s-school-75c2.thinkific.com/courses/your-first-course>

My Google Classroom Course: <https://classroom.google.com/u/0/w/MTQwMTU5NDM2MDI5/t/all>

	Google Course Builder (all free)		Thinkific (free version)		Google Classroom (with free personal account)	
<b>Student anonymity/privacy</b>	No login required. Can take course without logging in	✓	Login required. Sharing email with Thinkific is necessary	✗	Login required. Gmail account needed	✗
<b>Student enrollment control</b>	Yes. email restriction (specific or all @.edu)	✓	no	✗	Yes. Email restriction	✓
<b>Assign course admin rights to others</b>	Possible	✓	no	✗	Possible	✓
<b>Ads and marketing on site</b>	no	✓	yes	✗	no	✓
<b>User communication (forum, comments)</b>	No	✗	yes	✓	yes	✓
<b>Product Support</b>	No. Google ended support in 2013	✗	yes	✓	yes	✓
<b>Accessibility</b>	No. basic HTML possible, but limited	✗	No. basic HTML possible, but limited	✗	no	✗
<b>Easy to create course?</b>	Site developer needs basic coding knowledge. Site admin, content creation don't require coding	⚠	Yes	✓	Yes	✓
<b>Quizzes with instant feedback</b>	Yes. Multiple choice, or use Regex for string matching	✓	Yes. Multiple choice	✓	No. You can assign questions but need individual grading	✗
<b>Grading assignments</b>	no	✗	yes	✓	yes	✓

## Moving Forward

Since user anonymity, no ads, and instant quiz feedback were important to me, I picked Google Course Builder for my RefWorks course as [my final product](#). Accessibility is an issue. I used [Measure](#) to check accessibility and edited HTML but editing the whole structure of the course is nearly impossible. For screen recording, I used [ShareX](#), which is also free.

Promoting my final product was another issue. I shared my site on our Citation Help Libguides. Looking at Google Analytics, usage really picked up after I started to include the URL for this site in the RefWorks greeting message for new users.

Interested in getting started with Google Course Builder? Visit my Google Course Builder workshop: <http://learningonline.appspot.com/course>

## References

- [1] Johns, E. M., & Oestreich, S. (2019). On the Edge: How to Provide Course-and Program-Integrated Library Support Without Being Embedded. *Journal of Library & Information Services in Distance Learning*, 13(1-2), 1-20.
- [2] Moran, C., & Mulvihill, R. (2017). Finding the balance in online library instruction: Sustainable and personal. *Journal of Library & Information Services in Distance Learning*, 11(1-2), 13-24.
- [3] Turnbow, D., & Roth, A. (2020). Demystifying Online Instruction in Libraries: People, Process, and Tools. American Library Association.