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Western Libraries Graduate Student User Persona (Neil Burtson)

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Neil Burtson, Graduate Student

Neil Burtson is a graduate student in the Rehabilitation Counseling Program through WWU Everett program. At 39, Neil is a returning older student who works full time at a disability rights advocacy non-profit in Maryville, WA. He has two young children with his partner, Chris. He attended the University of Colorado at Boulder for a degree in Sociology before moving to the Pacific Northwest for a job opportunity in 2006.



While Neil is a good student (having graduated with a 3.5 GPA from UC Boulder), his full-time job, young family, and extended time away from school means that he doesn't have much time to devote to his studies. Thus, he is always seeking ways to get his schoolwork and various academic tasks (e.g., registering for classes) done quickly. Neil is always looking for the most recent scholarly publications in his field and is comfortable being online, but doesn't want to spend a lot of time searching, and isn't sure that he's really getting the most out of the library.

Neil has an older PC laptop with Windows Vista OS, and uses Firefox. He also often borrows his partner's Lenovo tablet (which operates on an Android OS) to do schoolwork whenever he can. Besides doing research he also accesses Canvas, checks his email (Gmail and Outlook), and often checks his work e-mail from home. He prefers to access full text articles but is willing to use the Interlibrary Loan service to get materials the library doesn't own. He still isn't sure how he feels about OneSearch – it's very different from the institutional catalog he used at UC Boulder.

GOALS:

- Find the best sources to support his studies as quickly and easily as possible.
- Have the chance to get additional instruction on using the library and research strategies. However, since he's remote, Neil cannot attend these instructional opportunities in person.
- Wants to find research and / or tech support for his coursework.

SCENARIOS:

1. Neil has been assigned a research paper for his RC 501 Rehabilitation Research class, for which he needs to find peer-reviewed, scholarly articles. He hasn't conducted a search for peer reviewed articles in over a decade, and doesn't know where to start.
2. Neil is looking for a current psychology book, but can't find a copy in the library catalog. He knows the library can get books for him that they don't own, but

doesn't know how to request a copy of the text through OneSearch (via Summit).

3. Neil sees that some of his classmates have an easier time doing research than he does. After a quick inquiry, he discovers that there is a subject librarian for the Rehabilitation Counseling program. But where can he locate this person?