Library Instruction Program

Faculty librarians teach information literacy to students and faculty in a variety of ways in support of campus instructional programs. These efforts integrate research skills into the curriculum of General Education, graduate programs, and other programs as necessary, contributing to student success, persistence, time to graduation, graduation rates, and lifelong learning after graduation.

Information Literacy Curriculum

According to the American Library Association (ALA) Committee on Information Literacy report, an information literate person is one who is “able to recognize when information is needed,” knows what information is needed to address a given problem or issue, and, beyond that, has “the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information” (Presidential Committee, 1989).

According to the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education (2000) from Academic, College, and Research Libraries (ACRL), an information literate individual is able to:

- Determine the extent of information needed
- Access the needed information effectively and efficiently
- Evaluate information and its sources critically
- Incorporate selected information into one’s knowledge base
- Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- Understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally

In other words, information literacy includes knowledge of the research process, skill in using resources, critical thinking about them, and an appreciation of proper documentation of sources. It also expands to include knowledge of how information is created and produced, disciplinary standards about the use of information, and computer literacy in the communication of that knowledge. It is interdisciplinary in general, though disciplinary at the upper division level.

Librarians partner with faculty to teach information literacy in a variety of ways.

- The History and social science programs require a course on information literacy (SSCI 3005) taught by librarians.
- The Honors program requires a junior-level course that incorporates writing and research skills to prepare students for their senior Capstone Thesis, HONS 3500. This course is team taught by Honors faculty and a librarian.
- The First Year Experience program includes librarian-led sessions to incorporate its information literacy learning goal into MDIS 1200.
- Other courses on request. Librarians teach on average 80 sessions per semester for department instructors on request. This robust program allows information literacy to be incorporated into Freshman Composition, General Education, and upper division courses when research assignments are required.
Most graduate programs include information literacy instruction by librarians to enhance instruction in primary resources, discipline databases, correct citation, and correct formatting of the thesis.

**Pedagogy**

The library instruction program traditionally has served programs with in-person instruction, but more instruction is going online to adapt to campus trends. Whether in person or online, librarians collaborate with the instructor on session goals. In person, librarians demonstrate strategies, concepts, skills, and tools, then give time to practice. Online tutorials are tailored to courses or to broader goals, and they are available with other resources on the library web site 24/7. Technologies include Collaborate, Blackboard, Captivate, PowerPoint and HTML.

Rather than teach information literacy in a separate instructional program, librarians partner with faculty in their programs and in their courses to integrate information literacy into their instructional goals. Although librarians are well placed to teach information literacy, faculty are also experts at citation and discipline-specific sources that upper division and graduate students must learn. Best practices suggest that librarians and faculty collaborate in order to integrate information literacy instruction into the disciplinary writing process.

**Assessment**

The library instruction program is engaged in ongoing assessment, as are the instructional programs and support units.

- We regularly assess our SSCI 3005 and HONS 3500 courses through several methods.
- We carried out a multi-phase assessment of our course-integrated instruction in 2009-2010 by surveying faculty on how well the goals for our sessions were met in students' products. In the future, we plan to automate this survey and expand it to many more sessions.
- In an online collaboration for ENGL 1002 in 2010, a faculty member included library instruction assessment questions on his larger assessment instrument.
- In our FYI courses, we used minute papers to get immediate feedback on students' learning in the library session, and we will use a rubric to directly assess student products for writing and research skills.
- The library instruction coordinator will begin a project to develop an information literacy rubric to apply to general education course products and a team of evaluators to assess the integration of information literacy in General Education.

Submitted by Tim Held. Approved by library faculty 2011.