

Critically Analyzing Information: What do first-year students need to know?

University Library System: Leslie Poljak, Diana Dill, Marian Hampton, & Berenika Webster

Background: Each year, the University Library System (ULS) provides over 70 library sessions to students enrolled in FP0001: Introduction to the Arts and Sciences. These sessions present a valuable opportunity to introduce foundational library and information literacy skills to first-year students that can be applied to almost any academic endeavor. Project leaders utilized evidence based curriculum development to create a more relevant and engaging 2017 library session, going beyond the traditional library orientation.

Assessment Collection, Data, and Impact

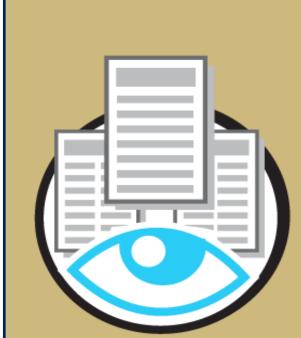
2016 Library Assignment Scores
A sampling of 200 submitted
student assignments indicated:



91.2% were competent in keyword searching



89.6% were able to find a book on the shelf



86.8% were able to examine and compare information from various sources in order to evaluate reliability, validity, accuracy, authority, timeliness, and point of view or bias

Impact on the 2017 Lesson:

- Less focus on keyword development and finding materials
- More focus on comparing and analyzing information sources

HEDS (Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium) Research Practices Survey:
HEDS Consortium, is an independent notfor-profit corporation. The survey collects
information on students' research
experiences and assesses their information
literacy skills.

The 2016 Library Class Information Literacy Indicators related to the HEDS survey were:

- Deciding which information is relevant for the assignment
- Knowing when to cite
- Knowing how to cite
- Knowing the best techniques for using resources to find information
- Deciding what resources to search for information (database, search engines, etc.)
- Evaluating information for credibility, bias, authority, and appropriateness for the assignment
- Selecting a topic

Impact on the 2017 Lesson:

 These indicators were used to survey FP0001 instructors 2016 FP0001 Instructor Survey
According to FP0001 instructor
respondents, the top four
information literacy skills first-year
students lack are:

83.3% Evaluating information for credibility, bias, authority, and appropriateness for the assignment

52.1% Deciding what resources to search for information (databases, search engines, etc.)

47.9% Knowing when to cite

39.6% Knowing how to cite

Impact on the 2017 Lesson:

- A re-designed lesson focusing on identifying information need and finding the resources to support various information needs
- A new handout including information about when and how to cite

What is Information Literacy?

The American Library Association defines Information Literacy as a "set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information."

These standards have been developed into a framework with 6 threshold concepts. The threshold concept that most closely relates to the FP0001 library sessions is *Authority is Constructed and Contextual*.

Summary and Future Plans

Through this assessment, improvements to the lesson not only allowed for more class time to focus on evaluating information, but introduced students to a wider variety of information sources while encouraging them to think critically about how they seek and understand information.

A similar process for the 2017 lesson has begun, seeking instructor feedback on current lesson information literacy objectives and presentation, as well as student performance with the updated lesson.

Recommended readings:

Association of College & Research Libraries. (2015). Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education. Retrieved from: http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework

Schaub, G., McClure, H. A., & Bravender, P. (2015). Teaching Information Literacy Threshold Concepts: Lesson Plans for Librarians. Chicago, Illinois: Association of College and Research Libraries.

The University of Tennessee Chattanooga. "Google Bucket | UTC Library." Retrieved from: https://www.utc.edu/library/services/instruction/teaching-materials/google-bucket.php