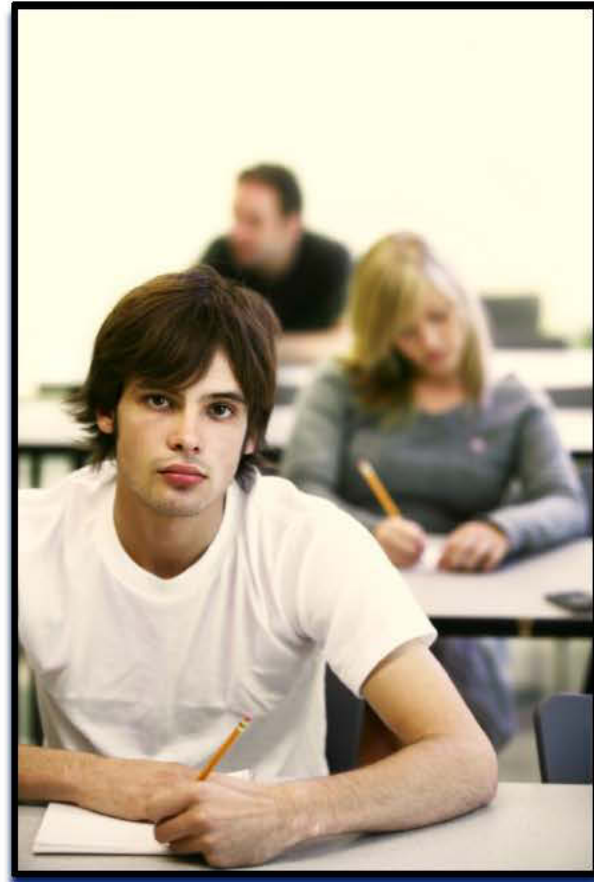# Building Information Literacy into a University Undergraduate Curriculum

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ASDAL 2010

From Bibliographic Instruction to Information Literacy

- Bibliographic Instruction (BI): Rader (1999) describes BI in the 1960's-70's as librarians bringing… "book carts of reference materials about which they lectured to students" p. 220.

- Information Literacy (IL): In the 1980s, information use became a new area of learning. The National Forum on Information Literacy was founded in 1989 (NFIL, 2010).

- In 2000, ACRL approved the IL Competency Standards for Higher Education (ACRL, 2010).

From Bibliographic Instruction (BI) to Information Literacy (IL)

- Information literacy is foundational to education and necessary for lifelong learning.
- Grafstein (2002, p. 197) points out that IL involves:
  1. **"broader, process-based principles of research and information retrieval"** and
  2. **"knowledge about the subject-specific content and research practices."**

From Bibliographic Instruction (BI) to Information Literacy (IL)

BI:

- Access the needed information effectively and efficiently

IL:

- Evaluate information and its sources critically

- Incorporate selected information into one's knowledge base

- Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose

ALA, 2000, pp. 2-3

IL at Walla Walla University
Parameters of the Program

Although WWU library had been conducting BI and then IL for many years, in 2007 we incorporated IL into our strategic plan and reviewed and rebuilt the program.

WWU IL is built to:

- Tie in with academic standards and is based on learning theory.
- Fit into the university's curriculum through documentation and an embedded curriculum.
- Span the various stages of the undergraduate study program as a cohesive whole.
- Reach *all* students at consistent points in the students' learning.
- Be sustainable and designed to fit within the university's academic strategy, recognizing financial and personnel limitations.

IL at Walla Walla University
Learning Theory and Academic Standards

Learning Theory: Cognitive-constructivism

- Cognitive-constructivism asserts that "knowledge is **actively constructed** by learners and…comprises active systems of intentional **mental representations derived from past learning** experiences" University of California at Berkley, 2009.

  ○ WWU IL builds upon previous knowledge at various stages.

 ○ Students actively construct knowledge through "authentic" class assignments in "real" classes.

Academic Standard: ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education

- a widely accepted set of standards used in many colleges and universities.

IL at Walla Walla University
Curriculum Development and Integration into the University Curriculum

- A committee of teaching librarians built the curriculum, beginning with current IL practices and building from there.

- The WWU Library worked with the university General Studies Committee to build information literacy standards into the General Studies Program Goals and Objectives. The revised goals and objectives will be in the 2010-11 WWU Bulletin.
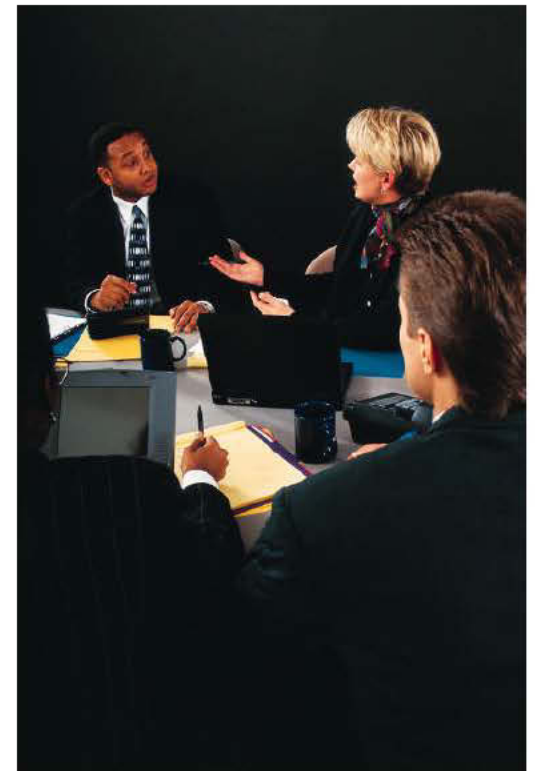
Matching IL Competency Standards, Performance Indicators and Learning Goals to IL Entry Points

- The committee assigned information literacy competency standards to each entry point, matching them to the class goals and distributing them in a way that students would learn them in a sequential manner.

- Learning goals and outcomes were then developed for each stage.

Example of Competency Standards and WWU Curriculum

The information literate student…
(Standard 1) …determines the nature and extent of the information needed.

(PI3) …considers costs and benefits of acquiring needed information.

(Outcomes)
a. Determines availability of information and searches beyond local sources
    Jumpstart—Understands how to confirm availability of an item, check it out and renew it
    ENGL 122—Correctly uses library search tools
    ENGL 223—Correctly uses library and outside search tools, including Summit and Interlibrary Loan
b. Considers feasibility of acquiring new language/skill to gather information
    Teacher-led
c. Defines realistic plan/timeline to acquire information
    ENGL223—Develops and follows research plan from general to specific and evaluates body of knowledge for possible follow-up in time to prepare an annotated bibliography.

WWU IL Program: Curriculum Entry Points within the Academic Program

Subject classes — Subject-specific Instruction

ENGL 223 — Advanced Information Literacy

ENGL 122 — Basic Information Literacy

Jumpstart — Basic Library Skills

Standardized Curriculum

IL competencies, performance indicators and outcomes, as well as certain structural standards have been formalized across all sections of each entry level. For example:

a. Standardized ENGL 223 IL module (4 class sessions and 4 library assignments that count toward the final grade) and help students source their research paper.

b. A library pre-quiz is administered that tests students on knowledge gained from Jumpstart and ENGL 122; remedial assignment.

c. An electronic IL class guide is prepared for each section but may be tailored to the essay topic of the class.

d. Librarians have the freedom to use whatever teaching methods fit their style best.

Conclusions

- Pre-quizzes show that the program is reaching the vast majority of the student population.
- Making library assignments part of the final grade is a vital part of the success.
- It is important to continue to educate faculty on information literacy.
- Sustainability requires exploring alternatives to face-to-face teaching (e.g. http://clip-il.wetpaint.com/)

Recommendations for those wishing to set up a similar program

- Find someone on staff with a pedagogical background who can lead the planning.
- Utilize instructional relationships that the library has already established.
- Engage all or most librarians in teaching.
- Work through university channels to get information literacy included in the university academic program
- Build the program level by level.

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