Using a Rubric When Assessing Information Literacy

Information literacy (IL) at its most basic is defined by the ACRL as “a set of skills needed to find, retrieve, analyze, and use information,” which are essential in today’s information environment. These skills include the ability to use and understand tools and resources, the ability to perform research within a discipline, and the ability to understand and participate in scholarly communication. These skills form the foundation of lifelong learning, providing students with the skills and abilities they will need to grow and succeed in their chosen fields. If we are “to prepare students for … the rapidly changing and increasingly interconnected 21st century world,” as the Pitt Johnstown Vision Statement states, we need to know we are developing these skills in students in a measurable way.

The University Library System (ULS) developed an information literacy rubric for the benefit of faculty, in support of the University of Pittsburgh’s commitment to the assessment of student learning. The ULS Information Literacy and Assessment Working Group designed this rubric based on standards defined by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) and skills sets identified in the Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS) survey currently used at Pitt.

The rubric offers an overview of IL skills as a progression from novice to accomplished. This highlights the fact that information literacy skills develop over time, and need regular reinforcement and periodic expansion. Incoming freshman need to be introduced to the concept of scholarly information and novice level understanding and competencies, sophomores and juniors should be in the developing and proficient stages of information literacy skills development, and seniors should be at or near the accomplished level with the ability to capably use discipline-specific resources in their major area of study effectively and efficiently.

Continued on p. 2

Information Literacy Defined

“Information literacy forms the basis for lifelong learning. It is common to all disciplines, to all learning environments, and to all levels of education. It enables learners to master content and extend their investigations, become more self-directed, and assume greater control over their own learning. 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”

Source:

Always walk through life as if you have something new to learn and you will.
—Vernon Howard
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Novice</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Accomplished</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Develop Research Strategy</strong></td>
<td>Unable to narrow topic; Unsure of how to find information needed for assignment</td>
<td>Understands nature &amp; scope of assignment; Determines general keywords in relation to topic to begin searching</td>
<td>Shows an increased understanding of information needed for topic; Refines keywords and develops synonyms for search terms</td>
<td>Able to adapt search process to topic; Knows what keywords and phrases to employ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Select Finding Tools</strong></td>
<td>Unclear as to what information sources to use or where to find sources appropriate to information need</td>
<td>Understands the difference between scholarly &amp; general sources; Seeks assistance in selecting information sources</td>
<td>Selects appropriate tools for research on a particular topic</td>
<td>Identifies disciplinary research sources; Utilizes non-traditional information sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Search</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates &amp; applies an understanding of keyword searching</td>
<td>Demonstrates how searches may be limited or expanded by modifying search</td>
<td>Understands &amp; utilizes controlled vocabulary</td>
<td>Utilizes advanced search techniques to retrieve appropriate information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use Finding Tool Features</strong></td>
<td>Understands appropriate search tools</td>
<td>Uses search tools at basic level</td>
<td>Finds &amp; utilizes advanced searching tools</td>
<td>Consistently utilizes advanced search features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retrieve Sources</strong></td>
<td>Recognizes different information formats</td>
<td>Determines availability of and locates sources</td>
<td>Efficiently retrieves different formats of information</td>
<td>Identifies various retrieval methods for items not available at the library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluate Sources</strong></td>
<td>Limited ability to evaluate information quality &amp; source</td>
<td>Understands difference between primary &amp; secondary sources</td>
<td>Understands difference in quality of various information sources</td>
<td>Evaluates sources using discipline-specific criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Document Sources</strong></td>
<td>Understands the need to cite sources</td>
<td>Interprets citations &amp; is able to locate a required style guide</td>
<td>Is able to correctly complete citations for various formats</td>
<td>Utilizes discipline-specific citation formats; locates source material from citations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Understand Economic, Legal, and Social Issues</strong></td>
<td>Understands University policies regarding plagiarism &amp; intellectual integrity</td>
<td>Properly cites sources using a standard format; Understands plagiarism &amp; does not plagiarize</td>
<td>Uses information ethically</td>
<td>Understands the economic issues of information; Recognizes when to obtain copyright permission</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Owen Library’s instruction librarians are committed to supporting faculty teaching and student lifelong learning through the development of critical thinking and information literacy skills. The librarians actively seek to work with faculty in a variety of ways to develop Pitt Johnstown students’ information literacy skills. These include library instruction sessions tailored to the needs of specific classes and assignments, consultation and collaboration on the design of research assignments to meet information literacy standards and outcomes, and the development of research support materials, such as LibGuides (http://pitt.libguides.com/).

For additional information about literacy contact Paul Bond, Library Instruction Coordinator, at 269-7287 or e-mail paulbond@pitt.edu.
Spring Library Workshops @ Owen Library

Writing in the Cloud with Google Docs
Tuesday, January 31st 3:00 p.m.
Wednesday, February 8th 5:00 p.m.
By popular demand - Come and discover how to work and collaborate online with Google Docs. You may never need a flash drive again!

RefWorks 2.0: Writing Papers Just Got Easier
Wednesday, February 22nd 3:00 p.m.
Tuesday, March 13rd 11:00 a.m.
Learn to manage your research, citations and references with RefWorks 2.0. See how it can automatically extract citation information from library databases! Watch it populate a paper with citations and generate a references page!

Extra! Extra! Read All About It!
Wednesday, February 15th 3:00 p.m.
Thursday, February 23rd 4:00 p.m.
Tuesday, February 28th 6:00 p.m.
Historic newspapers provide contemporary accounts of news events, culture, and society. Discover digital newspaper repositories that are accessible free through the University Library System and elsewhere online.

To Life! Explore Online Resources in the Life Sciences
Thursday, February 9th 11:00 a.m.
Tuesday, February 21st 2:00 p.m.
Explore online resources such as BIOSIS and those available through the Falk Library’s website.

These 1-hour workshops are free & everyone is welcome!
All workshops held in Owen 209

Please RSVP at least one week in advance by contacting Julie Dewey at judewey@pitt.edu or (814) 269-7289 or stopping at the Library Circulation Desk.
LibGuides are digital guides that the library uses to organize content and resources for specific topics, courses and assignments. All Pitt LibGuides may be accessed through the link in either the Faculty Express or Student Express page on the Library’s website. You may also go to them directly by using the address pitt.libguides.com.

LibGuides provide a number of benefits to students. As they are digital, they are accessible 24/7 on and off campus. They organize information to make it visually intuitive and relevant, and make it available at the point of need. LibGuides also help students focus on quality, relevant resources so that they can spend more time engaged in learning, and have to spend less effort on searching for and evaluating information.

Some LibGuides are developed for use in specific courses. Faculty who have taken advantage of LibGuides can attest to the value. Dr. Christine Dahlin of the Biology department states "Finding the proper sources for a term paper or other project can be overwhelming for students, and LibGuides provides a way for students to quickly and efficiently utilize appropriate search engines and find appropriate sources, all on a single webpage. They are a great way to help students become more adept at library searches, and for professors to make sure students are looking in the right places."

The following are sample LibGuides developed for specific courses and disciplines taught at Pitt Johnstown. Content can be customized for any course, and updated throughout the semester, if necessary.

**Vertebrate Biology—Johnstown Campus**
http://pitt.libguides.com/bio1170

**Social Work - Johnstown Campus**
http://pitt.libguides.com/johnstown_msw


**Education Research Guide—Johnstown Campus**
http://libguides.com/upjeducation

**Major American Dramatists - Johnstown Campus**
http://pitt.libguides.com/upjenglit1420

Continued on p. 5
LibGuides (cont.)

Public Speaking—Johnstown Campus
http://pitt.libguides.com/pubspeaking

The LibGuide for Public Speaking features information on how to choose a topic, where to find visuals for speeches, and other tips for public speaking.

Finding Primary Sources @ The Pitt Libraries
http://pitt.libguides.com/primarysources

Google
http://pitt.libguides.com/google

Additional information about LibGuides is also available online at:

LibGuides @ Pitt - A Faculty Resource
http://pitt.libguides.com/faculty

Suggestions or requests for LibGuides are welcome. If you would like to do so, contact Paul Bond, Library Instruction Coordinator, by calling 269-7287 or by emailing at paulbond@pitt.edu.

Now you know...

Print books aren’t dead, according to Bowker’s 2011 Annual Book Production Report. Despite the increasing popularity of e-books, traditional print titles increased 5 percent in 2010. Science and technology publishing continued its growth, while literature has declined. Science print books increased 37% and Technology increased 35% over 2009. Print-on-Demand production increased 169% in 2010.


Other LibGuides are created to fulfill a more general need for information, such as the examples below. These can meet individual needs or be used, when appropriate, in courses. LibGuides can also be linked into an instructor’s CourseWeb so students may more easily find them.

CareerResources@Pitt
http://pitt.libguides.com/careers

Citation Styles: APA, MLA, Chicago, Turabian
http://pitt.libguides.com/citationhelp

Discovering PittCat+
http://pitt.libguides.com/pittcatplus

Ebooks @ Pitt
http://pitt.libguides.com/ebooks
Database Spotlight: RefWorks

RefWorks is a citation management tool available to all University of Pittsburgh users, which allows users to:

- Build and store personalized collections of references
- Organize and manage citations within folders
- Compile bibliographies
- Easily format and insert citations into research/term papers
- Share references with others using RefWorks.

Pitt users can access it from the ULS Digital Library (www.library.pitt.edu), clicking on the Find Articles tab and then clicking on the “By Title” link in the Locate Databases heading. This takes you to the alphabetical list of databases, where you click on the RefWorks link.

RefWorks is particularly useful to those conducting their research from computers in campus labs or in the Library, as it saves citations to the web database rather than to individual computer memory. It is similarly useful on home and office computers, as it is not dependent on installed software and allows for easy retrieval from multiple locations.

In order to access the database, and store and retrieve citations, RefWorks requires the user to register with a username and password. For security reasons you should not use your Pitt account, but create a new and different username and password when you register. Remember, if you would like to use RefWorks or any other ULS database while you are off campus, you must first log-on to Secure Remote Access at https://sremote.pitt.edu

RefWorks saves all the elements of a research citation so you do not have to look for the citation information in a stack of article printouts. The RefWorks 2.0 update also provides easy links back to the research database or online journal, so users do not need to print everything. Those working on multiple projects can easily organize their research in separate folders within the database. RefWorks can formulate works cited bibliographies in a multitude of styles such as MLA, APA, Chicago Manual of Style and many more. Since these citation styles are computer generated, it is wise to double check your results with the recommended style guide. For the researcher hoping to submit their work for publication, the RefWorks database also contains the recommended formatting styles for hundreds of academic journals. One enhancement is the Write-n-Cite application which allows users to insert cited references into a document as it is being created and formatting the works cited within the manuscript in the selected style.

A detailed Libguide on using RefWorks is available to assist users at http://pitt.libguides.com/refworks. Library workshops are also offered on the Johnstown campus to train users. Call the Library for more information and register today.

Faculty can request an introduction to RefWorks as part of any library instruction session by calling Paul Bond, Library Instruction Coordinator, at 269-7287 or by emailing at paulbond@pitt.edu.

How to Contact Us

- Circulation Desk 814-269-7300
- Administration Office 814-269-7289
- Reference Desk 814-269-7295
- Library Instruction 814-269-7287
- Collection Management 814-269-7290
- Interlibrary Loan 814-269-7292
- Course Reserves 814-269-7300

Check us out on the web: http://www.library.pitt.edu/john/owen.html
New Books Spring 2012

Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other.  
Sherry Turkle.  
HM851 .T86 2011

Anti-Bullying Handbook.  
Keith Sullivan  
BF637.B85 S85 2011

Beauty of Fractals: Six Different Views  
Denny Gulick, ed.  
QA614.86 .B438 2010

The Catcher in the Rye, by J.D. Salinger.  
Joseph Dewey, ed.  
PS3537 .A426 C3224 2012

Creating a Veteran-Friendly Campus: Strategies for Transition and Success.  
Robert Ackerman and David DiRamio, eds.  
LB2343 .N43 no.126

Denying Science: Conspiracy Theories, Media Distortions, and the War Against Reality.  
John Grant.  
Q175.5 .G734 2011

Failed Bridges: Case Studies, Causes and Consequences.  
Joachim Scheer.  
TG470 .S34 2010

Head Off & Split: Poems.  
Nikky Finney.  
PS3556.I53 H43 2010  
*2011 Poetry National Book Award Winner*

The Mindset Lists of American History: From Typewriters to Text Messages, What Ten Generations of Americans Think is Normal.  
Tom McBride and Ron Nief.  
E169.12 .M236 2011

The Net Delusion: The Dark Side of Internet Freedom.  
Evgeny Morozov.  
HM851 .M665 2011

Salvage the Bones: a Novel.  
Jesmyn Ward.  
PS3623.A7323 S36 2011  
*2011 Fiction National Book Award Winner*

Steve Jobs.  
Walter Isaacson.  
QA76.2 .J63I722 2011

Stephen Greenblatt.  
PA6484 .G69 2011  
*2011 Nonfiction National Book Award Winner*

Recently Added Electronic Resources

Criminal Justice Abstracts with Full Text

This database includes over 300,000 citations and offers full-text access to more than 200 journals, as well as some full-text books, book chapters and conference proceedings. The topical coverage of the database includes corrections and prisons, criminal investigation, criminal justice, criminal law and procedure, criminology, forensic sciences and investigation, history of crime, police and policing, probation and parole, substance abuse, and addiction. The coverage is international in scope, offering resources from around the world.

Criminal Justice Abstracts with Full Text has a search interface familiar to users of other EBSCO products such as Academic Search Premier. The various tools and options are user friendly and intuitive. The Advanced Search options include Boolean operators (AND, OR and NOT) to combine search terms. Limiters for scholarly (peer reviewed) journals, publication and document type, and publication date are also available. Tools include options for e-mailing and citing articles, and for exporting citation information to RefWorks or other citation management programs.

Users can also save articles and citations in personalized folders for future use. These tools and options can help users locate and manage references efficiently and effectively, resulting in improved research with reduced effort.

The World Scholar: Latin America & the Caribbean

World Scholar: Latin America & the Caribbean brings together in a single place a rich collection of primary source documents about Latin America and the Caribbean; academic journals and news feeds covering the region; reference articles and commentary; maps and statistics; audio and video; and more.

Topic pages cover countries in the region, notable people such as Hugo Chavez, and Simón Bolívar, commerce and industry, history, politics, and much more.

World Scholar blends instructive learning content with rare, high-value research content. These materials are accessed through an interface that presents information in ways that mirror the workflows of students and scholars.
Monday, March 19, 6:00 p.m. Book Talk, Perkins Restaurant

Thursday, March 22, 5:00 p.m. Panel Discussion, Study Abroad?, Eight students relay their study abroad adventures from France, Italy, and Mexico. Pasquerilla Library, St. Francis University.

Tuesday, March 27, 7:00 p.m. Panel Discussion, Happiness: Interpretations on a Theme, Dr. Ola B. Johansson, Dr. Daniel J. Santoro, Dr. Steven E. Stern, Blackington Hall, Room 131 University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown.

Tuesday, April 3, 7:00 p.m. Lecture, Positive Psychology: Researching Happiness, Dr. Brad Hastings, Alumni Hall, Mount Aloysius College.

Tuesday, April 17, 6:00 p.m. Tea Tasting, Tea Merchant, Community Room, Cambria County Library. Call 536-5131 for reservations.

Saturday, April 28, 8:00 a.m., Bus Tour, Nationality Rooms, Cathedral of Learning, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh See website for registration information.
Friday, May 4, 2012

- The Fabled Fifth Graders of AESOP Elementary School
- Muncha! Muncha! Muncha!
- Clever Jack Takes the Cake
- Boxes for Katie
- Amelia Lost

Candace Fleming

- The Cinder-Eyed Cats
- My Friend Rabbit
- A Kitten Tale
- Clara and Asha
- Time Flies

Eric Rohmann

University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg
For registration information
www.library.pitt.edu/green/webclc.html