

Integrating information literacy into the curriculum

How is your library measuring up?

by Cerise Oberman, Bonnie Gratch Lindauer, and Betsy Wilson

Integrating Information Literacy into the Curriculum," was the subject of a recent panel presentation at the American Association of Higher Education (AAHE) on March 24, 1998, in Atlanta, Georgia. This panel presentation, moderated by Althea Jenkins, ACRL executive director, was geared toward educational administrators, including presidents, provosts, and academic vice-presidents. As such, a unique instrument for this panel presentation was developed by Cerise Oberman (Plattsburgh State University of New York) and Betsy Wilson (University of Washington) to assist the audience in evaluating their own institutional information literacy readiness: the Information Literacy IQ test.¹

Unlike traditional IQ tests that measure an intellectual quotient, this IQ test measures an institutional quotient. Participants were asked to complete the IQ test by simply answering all the statements either true or false, totaling the number of "true" statements, and then matching that total to the five distinct stages identified: "First Steps," "On Your Way," "Experimenting," "Full Speed Ahead," and "Model Program." This IQ provided an instantaneous snapshot of where an institution may find itself on a continuum of information literacy program readiness.

The first two stages, "First Steps" and "On Your Way," are critical foundational stages in preparing an institution to understand and

embrace information literacy as a critical component of higher education. The "Experimenting" and "Full Speed Ahead" stages are the realization of the earlier conceptual stages. And the last stage, the "Model Program" stage, is the penultimate accomplishment. Under each of the five stages a series of strategies are suggested to assist institutions toward moving to the next stage.

The panel presentation that followed was constructed to expand upon some of the strategies that were outlined in the Information Literacy IQ test by answering the three most common and critical questions that are asked by all institutional planners when designing or redesigning information literacy programs:

"What are essential information literacy competencies and how are they being used by different educational associations (i.e., accrediting agencies, states, or university systems)?" Bonnie Gratch Lindauer, of the City College of San Francisco, addressed this question by providing an overview of information literacy competencies and initiatives by professional organizations, state university systems, and individual institutions. This information was particularly relevant to those institutions at the "First Steps," "On Your Way," or "Experimenting" stages.

"What critical building blocks must be in place to ensure a successful information lit-

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About the authors

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The Information Literacy IQ (Institutional Quotient) Test

This IQ test is designed to help you determine the readiness of your institution in integrating information literacy into your curriculum. Respond to each statement by marking it true or false. Total all the number of true statements you have marked and compare your rating with the chart on the reverse side.

	True	False
Librarians at your institution		
• Librarians are teachers at my institution.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Librarians are engaged in curriculum planning (i.e., serve on institutional curriculum committees).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recognition of the importance of information literacy		
• My campus has developed a definition of information literacy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Information literacy is evident in our campus-planning documents, such as strategic plans.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• University administrators are committed to the importance of information literacy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Faculty accept/partake in responsibility for information literacy education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• There are support and rewards for faculty who develop and redesign curriculum to include concepts of information literacy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning/teaching environment		
• My institution engages in resource-based, problem-solving learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• My campus encourages a climate of collaboration.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Teaching modalities are student-centered (with an emphasis on active learning).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Collaboration exists among curricula designers, faculty, librarians, academic advisors, computing staff.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information infrastructure		
• Campus is fully networked.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Library offers a variety of digital and print information resources in quantity and scope.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Your total score

(continued on next page)

Your IQ score (sum of all the statements you marked true) provides you with a relative ranking of where your institution may be in terms of developing an information literacy program. The following chart is prepared to assist you in moving your institution forward with an information literacy program, based on your IQ score. If your total score is:

0-3 You are taking "First Steps"

Why not initiate a local discussion with librarians and faculty about the role of information literacy on your campus?

- Invite a librarian/faculty member from a model program to assist you in beginning a discussion.
- Identify and share some articles on information literacy.
- Check out selected Web sites on information literacy.
- Identify your regional accreditation requirements for information literacy.

4-6 You are "On Your Way"

Why not form a campus committee or utilize an existing committee, such as a teaching, learning, and technology roundtable to address information literacy?

- Define information literacy.
- Develop a program proposal for information literacy.
- Identify faculty-librarian development opportunities or propose them.

7-9 You are "Experimenting"

Why not implement a pilot information literacy program?

- Examine "best practices" at institutions similar to your own.
- Construct an assessment tool.
- Consider scalability.

10-11 You are "Full Speed Ahead"

Why not consider establishing a fully developed information literacy program?

- Provide an evaluation of the pilot program.
- Clearly articulate the goals of a fully developed information literacy program to faculty and students alike.
- Construct a mechanism for continual evaluation and renewal.

12 + You have a "Model Program"

Why not consider sharing your information literacy program as a model program?

- Give a paper at a professional meeting (e.g., AAHE, EDUCOM, CAUSE, a conference in a discipline).
- Maintain a Web site that is linked to the NILI Web site.
- Publicize your success and share your experiences.

—Designed by Cerise Oberman and Betsy Wilson

Compilation of Core Information Literacy Competency/Outcomes for Undergraduates

The following "Compilation of Core Information Literacy Competencies/Outcomes for Undergraduates" has been prepared as part of the AAHE panel presentation on information literacy. Bonnie Gratch Lindauer reviewed many source documents coming from individual academic libraries, university systemwide reports (e.g., California State University's "Report on Information Competence," 1995 and State University of New York's Council of Library Director's "Report on Information Literacy," 1997), state department of education or state library organization documents (e.g., Colorado Department of Education's "Model Information Literacy Guidelines," 1994), and from the AASL/AECT's document "Information Literacy Standards for Student Learning," 1996. While the exact wording varies from source document to source document, what is common among most of the documents consulted is the existence of the ideas expressed in the eight broad categories of information literacy competency areas. Students who are information literate can:

I. Recognize and articulate information need

1. Student states a research question, problem, or issue.

2. Student defines a manageable focus and timeline.

II. Develop effective search strategies

1. Student determines the information requirements for the research question, problem, or issue.

2. Student determines what category of information resource is most relevant to the information need and develops a plan to search for needed information.

III. Select and use information retrieval tools

1. Student selects and uses effectively information retrieval tools, including modifying the search strategy for any given tool in response to the results obtained.

2. Student uses the technological tools for accessing information.

3. Student can access and effectively use the campus information systems, information networks, and the Internet to locate information appropriate to the need.

IV. Locate and retrieve information sources

1. Student correctly interprets bibliographic citations and Internet equivalents and knows how to obtain cited items.

2. Student uses interlibrary loan, document delivery, electronic transmission, or other means to obtain material not available locally.

V. Analyze and critically evaluate information

1. Student analyzes and critically evaluates the results of a search for accuracy, relevance, timeliness, authority, etc.

2. Student filters large amounts of information and distinguishes among facts, points of view, and opinion.

VI. Organize and synthesize information

1. Student synthesizes information from a variety of sources and organizes information for practical application.

VII. Use/apply information

1. Student applies information to critical thinking and problem-solving situations.

2. Student communicates using a variety of information technologies.

3. Student integrates information resources into academic discourse.

4. Student produces and communicates information in effective and appropriate formats.

VIII. Awareness and attitude formation about information and information technology

1. Student is aware of the ethical, legal, and socio-political issues surrounding information and information technology, such as copyright and the responsibility to properly credit information sources.

2. Student appreciates that the skills gained in information competence enable lifelong learning.

3. Student is aware of the difference between information and knowledge.

4. Student is aware of the structure and dissemination channels of the global information environment. —Bonnie Gratch Lindauer

California State University–San Marcos

Information literacy is identified as one of the five areas required within CSUSM's general education program of study. General education courses include an information literacy component. The mission of the information literacy program is to infuse throughout the curriculum the teaching of information theory, concepts, skills, and use of the library to the CSUSM community and formal CSUSM outreach programs, focusing on those skills necessary for accessing, retrieving, evaluating, and using information. <http://ww2.csusm.edu/library/ILP/index.htm>

Florida International University–Miami

FIU's information literacy initiative is a partnership of the university libraries, the Academy for the Art of Teaching, and individual FIU faculty. The initiative focuses on "changes in the way we teach students and support their learning can make a significant difference in students technological sophistication and critical thinking skills." The information literacy initiative helps faculty find ways to provide information literacy skills to students within the context of individual courses and disciplines. The initiative plans the integration of a sequence of information literacy experiences into the curriculum, providing workshops and yearlong working sessions for groups of faculty and entire departments. <http://www.fiu.edu/~library/ili/ilibroc.html>

Pierce College–Lakewood, Washington

Pierce College has used the outcomes assessment based model to articulate information competency objectives. Pierce College believes that its students need to find, use, and evaluate information in progressively complex ways. Pierce College has developed curriculum-based information competency objectives, and faculty have applied these objectives in disciplinary programs. A description of the approach is provided in Debra Gilchrist's "To EnABLE Information Competency: the Abilities Model in Library Instruction."¹ <http://www.pierce.ctc.edu/>

Ulster Community College–Stone Ridge, New York

Ulster Community College librarians and faculty developed a for-credit information literacy program and have involved teaching faculty from various academic disciplines in delivering the courses. Librarians recognized that they could never teach enough sections and that many faculty did not know how to integrate information literacy into their courses. A collaborative faculty development program supports instructors who teach the information literacy course and wish to incorporate new information resources into disciplinary courses. <http://www.ulster.cc.ny.us/libcour.htm>

University of Iowa–Iowa City

By using appropriate new information technology and interactive instructional programs, the University of Iowa library seeks to support the information literacy of the greatest number of students and faculty. Current efforts include:

- *Library Explorer*. A Web-based tutorial, which includes interactive segments dealing with all aspects of library research.
- *Information Arcade*. A prize-winning advanced facility for using electronic information and multimedia for teaching, research, and independent learning.
- *Twist*. A three-year project to create a model training program for librarians and faculty on networked information resources. <http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/info.html>

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University of Washington–Seattle

UWired was created to provide resources and support to help find effective ways to integrate information literacy and technology in teaching and learning at the University of Washington. Founded in 1994 as a collaboration of the university libraries, computing and communications, and the Office of Undergraduate Education, UWired has grown from a small pilot project for a small number of incoming freshmen to a campus-wide initiative that serves thousands of students and hundreds of faculty. Partners in the UWired collaboration now include Educational Outreach and the Office of Educational Partnerships. The UWired collaborators believe that “the future of higher education will be determined in large part by how individuals and institutions respond to the challenge of information technology and information literacy.”

Among UWired’s major accomplishments are: 1) working with the Freshman Interest Group program to insure that incoming students are prepared to use new information technologies; 2) a framework for the instruction and assessment of information literacy; 3) supporting the educational activities of student athletes; 4) assisting the Interdisciplinary Writing Program with the incorporation of technology into their curriculum; 5) developing and team-teaching an information literacy credit course; 6) building and maintaining the UWired Collaboratories and the UWired Commons; 7) operation of the faculty UWired Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology; and 8) outreach to the K–12 community. <http://www.washington.edu/uwired/>

Other institutions

Information on a wide-variety of institutions and approaches to integrating information literacy into the curriculum can be found on the University of South Florida’s information literacy Web site at <http://www.cas.usf.edu/lis/il/>.

Note

1. In Shirato, Linda, *Programs that Work*, Library Orientation Series, 28 (Ann Arbor: Pierian Press, 1997).
—*Lizabeth (Betsy) Wilson*

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eracy program?” While the IQ test identifies some of these, Wilson presented the critical structural components for implementing and maintaining an effective information literacy program. Wilson also identified some exemplary or best practices in information literacy programs from across the country (see sidebar). Institutions that were “On Your Way,” “Experimenting,” or “Full Speed Ahead,” were particularly interested in this overview.

“Where can my institution seek assistance in the development and delivery of information literacy programs?” Oberman addressed this question by sharing the work and plans for the National Information Literacy Institute (NILI) that are currently underway.² The mission, goals, and four initial programmatic initiatives, including an

immersion program, best practices and assessment seminar, community partnership program, and the NILI Web site were shared. The NILI initiative is relevant to all the IQ stages from “First Steps” through “Model Program.”

The program was well received by the audience and the Information Literacy IQ test was successful in giving individuals an opportunity to assess their own institutional progress on information literacy.

Notes

1. The Information Literacy IQ test will be available on the NILI Web page at <http://www.ala.org/acrl/nili/nilihq.html>.
2. Betsy Wilson presented this portion of the program due to a blizzard in the northeast that prevented Cerise Oberman from attending. ■

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