Plan for Integrating Information Literacy into the General Education Curriculum
February 2011

Executive Summary
Plan

page 2
page 4

General Education Information Literacy Committee
Kim Gunter, Department of English
Sherry Alusow Hart, Department of English
Gary Moorman, Department of Language, Reading & Exceptionalities
Ann Viles (chair), University Library
Elizabeth Williams, University Library
General Education Information Literacy Plan

Executive Summary, November 2010

Framework
Appalachian students will complete a minimum of four information literacy units before graduation. Each unit will include the following three elements:
1. An assignment or exercise targeting an information literacy learning outcome or outcomes;
2. One or more class sessions or equivalent tutorials related to the learning outcome/s; and
3. Either of the following: (1) At least one question or grading criteria in a midterm, final exam or final project measuring student success in achieving the learning outcome/s; or (2) A course level assessment of the information literacy unit.

The four information literacy units will be included in the following course sequence:
1. First Year Seminar (UCO 1200) units will include a general library tour outside of class in addition to a class session taught by Library faculty.
2. First Year Writing (ENG 1000) units will be developed and taught collaboratively by Library faculty and Composition and Rhetoric faculty.
3. Sophomore Writing (ENG 2001) units will be developed and taught collaboratively by Library faculty and Composition and Rhetoric faculty.
4. Upper-level Writing in the Disciplines (WID) units will be discipline-specific. Library faculty will provide support as consultants and collaborators with discipline faculty and Writing across the Curriculum consultants.

Learning Outcomes
Developing learning outcomes that are reflective of the disciplines is critical. Most faculty teaching research oriented courses throughout the curriculum already include information literacy outcomes implicitly in their expectations for student learning. Consultants in the Writing across the Curriculum program and librarians will support faculty in the development of discipline specific outcomes. Examples of information literacy outcomes reflective of specific disciplines at other institutions are available on the Library’s website at this url: http://www.library.appstate.edu/admin/discipline_outcomes.html

Faculty Development
Successful Information Literacy efforts are faculty driven; therefore, faculty development is a key component to the success of this program. General Education will appoint a standing committee with representatives from the Library, Hubbard Center, Writing across the

---

1 Written by the General Education Information Literacy Committee: Kim Gunter, Department of English; Sherry Alusow Hart, Department of English; Gary Moorman, Department of Language, Reading & Exceptionalities; Ann Viles (chair), University Library; Elizabeth Williams, University Library, May 2010. The Executive Summary was approved by the General Education Council, February, 18, 2011.
Curriculum Program, and Composition and Rhetoric Program to plan faculty development activities. Successful formats at other universities have included:

- A “kickoff” university-wide symposium on information literacy;
- Ongoing information literacy retreats, symposia, and workshops;
- Stipends and grants for faculty to experiment with alternative delivery models;
- A “peer tutoring” model that aims at developing a cadre of expert students as a resource for both students and faculty;
- Information literacy embedded within existing faculty development activities; and
- An Information literacy faculty fellows program.

Triangulated Assessment—Self-reported, Performance-Based, and Knowledge-Based Self-Report Survey

The committee proposes using the Council of Australian Universities Information Skills Survey for University-wide longitudinal assessment and benchmarking. This survey, “designed for use within Higher Education Institutions as part of the procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of policies aimed at ensuring that students are information literate,” is a cost effective self-report questionnaire that would complement a variety of course-level assessments in the information literacy sequence and program assessment using ePortfolios.

Course-Level Assessment

Students’ knowledge of and competence in applying progressively more sophisticated skills for obtaining, evaluating, and using information effectively and ethically may also be measured by performance-based and knowledge-based evidence in the sequence of courses containing information literacy units. Evidence of student learning can be evaluated in numerous ways, including but not limited to the assessment of “essays, tests, seminars, portfolios, journals, projects, reports, performances, theses, professional experiences, and observations.” The purpose of assessment will be to measure student learning and performance of course-defined information literacy learning outcomes and to improve the quality of the information literacy teaching program.

Student Portfolios

A third component of assessment—portfolios of student artifacts—could provide direct performance-based evidence for student skill and sophistication in the program as a whole. Randomly-selected portfolios evaluated by trained readers would reveal real-world successes and target areas of weakness in the application of information literacy among students at periodic stages across all four years of their instruction.

---


Plan for General Education Information Literacy Requirements
May 2010

Appalachian students will complete a minimum of four information literacy units before graduation. Each unit will include the following three elements:

1) An assignment or exercise targeting an information literacy learning outcome or outcomes;
2) One or more class sessions or equivalent tutorials related to the learning outcome/s; and
3) (a) At least one question or grading criteria in a midterm, final exam or final project measuring student success in achieving the learning outcome/s; or
   (b) A course level assessment of the information literacy unit.

The four information literacy units will be included in the following course sequence:

4. First Year Seminar (UCO 1200) will require students to complete a general library tour outside of class in addition to a class session taught by library faculty as part of an information literacy unit related to a “shared process of inquiry around a broad, interdisciplinary topic or question...using a variety of research tools and methods.”

5. First Year Writing (ENG 1000) students will learn basic concepts of the research process, basic strategies for obtaining information resources using online catalogs and databases, and basic skills for documenting information. Units in this course will be developed and taught collaboratively by Library faculty and Composition and Rhetoric faculty.

6. Sophomore Writing (ENG 2001, formerly ENG 1100) students will learn basic concepts of information organization within different academic communities and basic strategies for research, source evaluation, and responsible documentation in different disciplines. Units in this course will be developed and taught collaboratively by Library faculty and Composition and Rhetoric faculty.

7. Students in the upper-level Writing in the Disciplines (WID) courses will learn to develop discipline-specific research plans and complete research projects using controlled research strategies, investigative methods, and protocols appropriate for their majors. They will understand the processes of “knowledge creation, scholarly activity, and publication” within their discipline. Library faculty will act as consultants and collaborators with discipline faculty and Writing Across the Curriculum consultants in the development and teaching of upper-level information literacy units.

Rationale
The common expectations for First Year Seminar (UCO 1200) courses include involving students in “problem-based learning with a research/library component,” and the majority

---

4 ‘First Year Seminar. Appalachian State University’ <http://firstyearseminar.appstate.edu/>.
5 ‘Writing in the Disciplines (WID). Appalachian State University’ <http://wac.appstate.edu/writing-disciplines-0>.
of First Year Seminar courses have already incorporated this information literacy unit. Incorporating information literacy units in the four-year vertical writing model courses\textsuperscript{8} is logical because writing instruction and information literacy instruction are compatible and neither writing instruction nor information literacy instruction ought to operate on an inoculation model. Under this scheme, faculty teaching in the Composition Program (English 1000 and English 2001) and in the Writing in the Disciplines (WID) courses (at the junior and, where appropriate, at the senior level) would partner with librarians from the University Library and Writing Across the Curriculum consultants. All players, represented by volunteers, would first develop and then pilot information literacy instruction initiatives. After trial runs and evaluation, these initiatives would then be implemented on a broader scale. General Education will provide summer money and/or buy-outs for teachers, librarians, and consultants in developing these pilot sections. Enrollments should be kept low (a maximum of 16) for pilot sections of these First Year Seminar and Composition classes.

**Goals and Outcomes**

As defined by the Association of College and Research Libraries, information literate students recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information.

Our framework for goals and outcomes is based on the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards. ASU students will be able to

1. Determine the nature and extent of information needed;
2. Access the needed information effectively and efficiently;
3. Evaluate information and its sources critically and incorporate selected information into [their] knowledge base and value system;
4. Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose; and
5. Understand many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally.\textsuperscript{9}

**Faculty Development**

Successful Information Literacy efforts are faculty driven; therefore, one of the keys to implementing a program at Appalachian is a comprehensive faculty development component based on the information literacy learning outcomes of the academic disciplines. The faculty development effort we envision would be based on the following assumptions:

- Upper-level instruction will be discipline faculty driven: library faculty will play an active but supportive leadership role.
- Content in the upper-level units must be based on skills and knowledge students need in order to find, assess and apply information within specific academic disciplines.

\textsuperscript{8} ‘Vertical Model for Writing Skills. Appalachian State University.’
\textsuperscript{9} Association of College and Research Libraries.

The focus will be on higher order, critical thinking skills. Reflection and clear communication will be emphasized. Research will be a focus of both undergraduate and graduate education. Student research will be situated in the academic disciplines. The research process is complex, frustrating and recursive for both faculty and students. While the immediate goal of faculty development efforts is to increase information literacy learning to enhance graduate and undergraduate education, the ultimate goal must be seen as creating life-long, independent and interdependent learners.

With these core assumptions in mind, a number of formats for staff development activity can be considered, such as the following:

- A university wide information literacy committee that would collaborate with the Hubbard Center for Faculty Development,
- A “kickoff” university-wide symposium on information literacy,
- Ongoing information literacy retreats and symposia,
- Beginning of the year/semester orientations for new faculty and teaching assistants
- Summer workshops,
- Stipends and grants for faculty to experiment with alternative delivery models
- Workshops on specific topics (i.e., assessment, new software, innovative instructional techniques),
- Assistance with assessment issues related to information technology,
- A “peer tutoring” model that aims at developing a cadre of expert students as a resource for both students and faculty, and
- Information literacy faculty fellows.

The following principles should guide the implementation of staff development activities:

- Begin with a small, core faculty group from multiple disciplines.
- All faculty development activities must be viewed as immediately useful.
- Initial activities should be modest in scope.
- All activities should be determined according to faculty needs.
- Whenever possible, embed information literacy activities within existing faculty development activities and structures.

**Triangulated Assessment—Performance-Based, Knowledge-Based, and Self-Reported**

*Course-Level Assessment*
Students’ knowledge of and competence in applying progressively more sophisticated skills for obtaining, evaluating, and using information effectively and ethically will be measured primarily by performance-based and knowledge-based evidence in the sequence of courses containing information literacy units. Evidence of student learning will be evaluated in numerous ways, including but not limited to the assessment of “essays, tests, seminars, portfolios, journals,
projects, reports, performances, theses, professional experiences, and observations.” The purpose of assessment will be to measure student learning and performance of course-defined information literacy learning outcomes and to improve the quality of the information literacy teaching program.

Lupton lists four best practices for assessing information literacy:

1. Information literacy is included in the objectives and learning outcomes of units of study and assessment tasks.
2. Information literacy assessment is designed to structure and sequence a complex task, e.g., the staged essay with an annotated bibliography, peer reviewed essay draft, final essay and reflections on how the essay could have been improved.
3. Information literacy assessment is planned and sequenced throughout the entire degree providing a developmental framework.
4. A variety of methods of assessment for information literacy learning are used. A fifth best practice includes library faculty as consultants and collaborators in the design of information literacy outcomes, assignments, and assessments during the planning stages of course syllabuses.

**Self-Report Survey**

Longitudinal testing of students randomly selected across the disciplines, using a variety of instruments and methodologies, will be a university-wide goal. Reliable standardized assessment instruments that provide evidence of program accountability and benchmarking are still in development. Four tests are currently emerging as possibilities.

1. Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS), developed at Kent State University in 2001, is a multiple choice, knowledge-based test. Cost: $3 per test with a cap of $2,000. [https://www.projectssails.org/](https://www.projectssails.org/)
2. Information Literacy Test (ILT) developed by JMU Center for Assessment and Research Studies (CARS) and JMU Libraries and licensed to Madison Assessment in February 2010 is also a multiple-choice test of knowledge. Cost: $7 per test. [http://www.madisonassessment.com/assessment-testing/information-literacy-test/](http://www.madisonassessment.com/assessment-testing/information-literacy-test/)
4. Information Skills Survey developed by the Council of Australian Universities (CAUL) gathers student perceptions of their information literacy abilities. It is designed primarily

---


11 Lupton, 27.

The committee proposes using the Council of Australian Universities Information Skills Survey for University-wide longitudinal assessment and benchmarking. This survey, “designed for use within Higher Education Institutions as part of the procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of policies aimed at ensuring that students are information literate,”\textsuperscript{12} is a cost effective self-report questionnaire that would complement a variety of course-level assessments in the information literacy sequence and the recent adoption of ePortfolios tied to the vertical writing model.

The permitted uses of the Information Skills Survey include assessing Information Literacy skills across a program before and after intervention, and to compare performance with like students in cooperating institutions. Normally the ISS will be used in conjunction with other data such as program based assessments of student learning, analysis of curriculum and assessment documents, or interviews with groups of students, so that findings are triangulated.\textsuperscript{13}

**Student Portfolios**
A third component of assessment--reading portfolios of student writing--provides direct performance-based evidence for student skill and sophistication in the program as a whole. Randomly-selected portfolios which are reserved and evaluated by trained readers reveal real-world successes and target areas of weakness in the application of information literacy among students at periodic stages across all four years of their instruction.

**Objectives of Using Student Portfolios:**
- Satisfy key General Education outcomes to measure and improve information literacy ability among Appalachian’s students
- Derive measures in a direct, valid, reliable format, for both quantitative and qualitative assessment
- Provide the least obtrusive way for students to participate
- Involve faculty in information literacy instruction and the assessment process
- Institute an on-going procedure, with the potential for longitudinal data
- Keep expense to a minimum

**Benefits of Using Student Portfolios:**
- Tap into the portfolio expectation already in place in Composition assessment, soon to be in upper division course work as well
- Employ the “Lasso” system already in place to gather up student portfolios/student artifacts


\textsuperscript{13} Catts, 2.
Derive measures from real research situations
Provide direct recursive impact on faculty development, classroom instruction, and curriculum reform
Choose variable measures possible with the same artifacts

Disadvantages of using student portfolios
Training competent scorers takes time
Scoring takes time

Expenses
Copying of sample portfolios and score sheets (although diminished due to Lasso)
Stipends for readers to be trained and to score
Refreshments for readers

Procedures
See Appendix B for an example of procedures for assessing student portfolios.
Appendix A
Selected Information Literacy Programs

Faculty development

James Madison University
“The library supports faculty integration of information literacy into courses by offering an annual workshop on designing information literacy assignments.”
http://www.lib.jmu.edu/instruction/#faculty

Gustavus Augustus
“Though not every faculty member at Gustavus has been involved in information literacy-focused faculty development, every department has been involved in one or more workshops that provided them with financial incentives and ongoing support.”
See the narrative from their request for a National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.
http://gustavus.edu/academics/library/Pubs/GrantNarrative.html

Miami University
“The purpose of this community is to provide a forum for collaboration among librarians and faculty across several disciplines to discuss concepts and applications for integration of information literacy into the curriculum. ... Each participant has available up to $1,000 to support his or her efforts, for example, purchase of hardware or software, travel to conferences, on-line courses, etc.”
http://www.units.muohio.edu/celt/faculty/flcs/miami/older/flc-literacy04-05.php

St. John’s University
“St. John’s vision of empowering “diverse learners with quality education for life” has recently taken on new vigor with a 1.5 million dollar grant from the United States Department of Education under its Strengthening Institutions Title III program. The University’s project, called T^3 - Transforming Teaching with Technology ... will provide interested faculty with opportunities to explore the use of technology and information literacy in their teaching as well as the use of critical thinking and active learning strategies. The focus will be on core curriculum courses and initially on the Scientific Inquiry course.”
http://www.stjohns.edu/academics/provost/resources/T3

Trinity University
“The Information Literacy Committee invites grant proposals for both Fall 2009 and Spring 2010 from faculty teaching any first year, lower-division, or common curriculum course to receive a stipend for revising existing courses or creating new courses. If funds permit, the committee will also consider course grants for courses in the major.”

---

University of Central Florida
“Information Literacy Online Modules are developed jointly by the UCF Library and Course Development & Web Services as supplemental resources for use by faculty to help students learn information literacy skills.” [http://infolit.ucf.edu/faculty/](http://infolit.ucf.edu/faculty/)

West Virginia University
“The Information Literacy Course Enhancement Program, a collaborative effort between the WVU Libraries and the Provost’s Office, is focused on fulfilling the University’s 2010 Plan for information literacy to become a curriculum component across all disciplines.” [http://wvutoday.wvu.edu/n/2010/04/30/wvu-libraries-select-information-literacy-participants](http://wvutoday.wvu.edu/n/2010/04/30/wvu-libraries-select-information-literacy-participants)

Collaboration with Writing Program

UNC - Wilmington.
“Information Literacy … This component of the University Studies program is designed to foster the development of students’ information literacy skills by requiring three information literacy intensive courses: The First Year Experience and two additional information literacy intensive courses, with at least one in the major field of study.” [http://www.uncw.edu/universitystudies/documents/InfoLitdescription11202009.pdf](http://www.uncw.edu/universitystudies/documents/InfoLitdescription11202009.pdf)

“The following are the Common Student Learning Outcomes for Composition courses. … CMP 3. Employ a writing process that includes finding, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing appropriate primary and secondary sources, and successfully integrating personal knowledge with source material.”¹⁵

UNC – Wilmington uses the American Association of Colleges and Universities’ (AAC&U) “Information Literacy Metarubric” as an assessment tool.¹⁶

West Virginia University
“By the end of English 102, students should: … Engage information literacy, find and interpret resource material appropriately.” [http://english.wvu.edu/writing_at_wvu/cwe/teaching_resources/102outcomes](http://english.wvu.edu/writing_at_wvu/cwe/teaching_resources/102outcomes)

ePortfolios

La Guardia Community College
“Now in its fourth implementation year, the ePortfolio project has more than doubled in size, with more than 5,000 students building ePortfolios in the 2005-6 school year. The Academy program continues to introduce students to ePortfolio in their first semester at LaGuardia. … Rubrics were completed for Oral Communication and Information Literacy.” [http://www.eportfolio.lagcc.cuny.edu/history.html](http://www.eportfolio.lagcc.cuny.edu/history.html)

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities
See an example of a student entry form for an e-portfolio information literacy assignment.
http://victoriaquinatoa.pccc.efolioworld.com/index.asp?Type=WORKSAMP&SEC={2BD4C097-C3D0-4708-A862-1EAA9430A689}

Three Rivers Community College
“The librarian was invited to create a library component for the ePortfolios used by the students. The library research project required Nursing 108 students to find information on the TRCC’s research themes, such as ‘health and metamorphosis’, "nursing and water issues", or "health and connections." The faculty member and the librarian designed a library ePortfolio, one of the ePortfolios that Nursing 108 students were required to create and provide for evaluation.”17

Virginia Tech
Select “Academic Achievement” to see an example of a student’s reflection on an information literacy assignment.
https://scholar.vt.edu/access/content/group/97b91a99-7258-44a2-8002-9b7c83a84bd5/WebDev/Website/Gallery/EnglishGallery/ePGalleryAlexOH/index-1.html

Assessment

James Madison University
“All students enrolled in General Education Cluster One are required to pass the Information-Seeking Skills Test (ISST) during the freshman year.”
http://www.jmu.edu/gened/info лит general.shtml

New Jersey Institute of Technology
“Recent calls for strengthening information literacy provided the occasion for a collaborative effort undertaken by colleagues from New Jersey Institute of Technology's Robert W. Van Houten Library, the Department of Humanities, and the Office of Institutional Research and Planning. Unlike other models that use student self-assessment or process assessment through the evaluation of student information seeking behaviors, our method focuses on the examination of evidence of information literacy in student work product. Using an established sampling plan designed to yield a high confidence interval, research papers were selected from the writing portfolios of students taking first-year composition or senior capstone seminars in the Humanities.”

University of Maryland University College
“Information Literacy and Writing Assessment Project: Tutorial for Developing and Evaluating Assignments”
http://www.umuc.edu/library/tutorials/information_literacy/intro.shtml

Information literacy framework

Philadelphia University. The Information Literacy Project. "Envisioned is a “tiered” instructional program, introducing increasingly advanced concepts and resources, as needed by the students at the time they need it, as they move from one year to the next. As the students progress, they will execute several re-iterations of the basics of information literacy. With each successive year, there would be a higher level of expectation that the end products created by the students will be increasingly sophisticated. In terms of resources used, complexity of concepts researched, the depth and scope of their treatment, and the overall mechanics of the writing, (if the assignment is a written one), instructors can expect to see students demonstrate increased proficiency in terms of information literacy performance indicators and outcomes.”
http://www.philau.edu/infolit/ILRevisions031906Framework.pdf
See also the “History of Project.” http://www.philau.edu/infolit/index.htm

Queensland University of Technology
“The QUT Information Literacy Framework & Syllabus (ILF&S) provides models and strategies for developing and evaluating information literacy initiatives in terms of quality student learning outcomes, curriculum development and assessment.”
http://www.library.qut.edu.au/services/teaching/infolit/framework.jsp
Appendix B

Example of Procedures for Assessing Student Portfolios

1. Investigators would select outcomes to assess, starting with one or two and eventually including as many as four criteria for a single reading of an entire portfolio (i.e., accuracy of citations, appropriate use of sources, competent integration of resources, evidence of research, evidence of synthesis or critical thought, etc.), developing a trial rubric with three levels of achievement for each criterion, plus an overall score.

2. Student portfolios would be gathered at the end of a semester from which a statistically-relevant number would be randomly chosen and reserved. Each portfolio would be cleared of identifying names or course instructors and numbered. Of these, the chief investigators should read twenty portfolios to select ten to fifteen to be copied and used as samples for training readers, with a variety of levels of achievement.

3. Readers would be trained together with several sample artifacts to test the rubric, and adjust it by consensus.

4. Once the rubric is defined and the scoring normed, the readers would spend a reasonable amount of time reading and scoring together, two readers for each portfolio. If the scores show a disparity, a third reader would adjudicate that portfolio.

5. The findings would be aggregated and discussed among the instructor stake holders to identify weaker areas and design instruction and assignments to address them.

6. The aggregate data would be reported to the General Education Council, the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, and the Provost, with attending requests, if needed, for additional resources, including for faculty workshops, new faculty lines, and other financial investments for improvement.

Training for Scorers

Sound training should be undertaken to concentrate on the targeted criteria for one to two hours with at least ten sample portfolios duplicated for each reader that have been identified as demonstrating three levels of achievement. Once everyone has read the same sample, scores for each criterion are shared and discussed. The longer the norming process, the more correlated the reading variables will be.

Another aspect of training is to put the focus on what truly shows the criterion under scrutiny. For example, in some institutions, the evidence of proper citation is not strict about punctuation exactness but rather that the student shows clearly where the source could be found and what value the source provides, and knows the differences between types of sources. The point is that a reader has enough information to find the source if necessary and that the source is being used ethically. This holistic reading of a portfolio supplies more concrete evidence of a student’s abilities than a multiple choice test where choices are out of any context of research writing.
The Reading
The ideal location for the actual reading of artifacts is a room with a large conference table with sufficient space for the four to six readers to read comfortably. Each reader would pick up portfolios randomly from the Unread pile in the center of the table, place them in the Read Once pile, then the Completed pile, sorting afterward to check for disparities and a possible third reader. If the Lasso system is used, readers would be in a computer lab together at individual screens for retrieval and scoring. The system would automatically keep track of scores and disparities for a third reader.

Ideally the norming session is followed by the reading session. If not, the reading session should include a half hour of norming. When the scores fall consistently, the live reading may begin.

Scoring and Analysis
Examples of an “Information Literacy Scoring Sheet” and an analysis of senior portfolio scores showing correlations between their portfolios scores for the Composition Program, the Information Literacy scores, the students’ final course grades or GPA, and so on are available in an article by Davida Scharf, et al.18

---