WHAT INFORMATION LITERACY MEANS TO ME: COLLABORATING WITH FACULTY TO UNDERSTAND STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF INFORMATION LITERACY

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MIAMI BASICS

- Public University located in Oxford OH
  - 16000 undergraduate students
  - 2000 graduate students
  - 4 regional campuses/learning centers
  - Focus on undergraduate liberal education
**THE FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITY FOR IMPROVING STUDENT RESEARCH LITERACY**

**HISTORY**
- Began in 2004; 5th group for 08/09
- Year long FLC (academic year)
- Comprised of Faculty and Librarians (2:1 ratio)
- Facilitator is a Librarian
- Partnership between the Library and Center for Enhancement of Learning and Teaching
THE FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITY FOR IMPROVING STUDENT RESEARCH LITERACY

HISTORY

- 45 faculty members
- Most departments on campus (all schools)
- Includes faculty on regional campuses
GENERAL GOALS OF THE FLC

- Share and discuss research and information needs within participants’ courses
- Develop and/or improve research assignments within participants' courses
- Share and discuss ideas and new perspectives on improving information literacy in the curriculum
- Explore and investigate methods of accessing and using information ethically
- Foster collaboration between faculty and librarians across disciplines
- Engage students as active participants in and contributors to the learning environment
- Develop new approaches for weaving technology and information competencies into the classroom
STRUCTURE DURING THE YEAR

- Opening Retreat
  - Community Norms
  - Basic overview of IL

- Meetings
  - 5 to 6 per semester
  - Various topics
  - First semester focused on IL theory
  - Second semester focused on practical aspects
STRUCTURE DURING THE YEAR

- Incentives
  - $1000 professional development
  - Team building meetings with refreshments

- Projects
  - Varies By Year
  - Other open ended projects depending on interests of FLC members
  - Conference presentations on FLC projects
Faculty: Information Literacy

- Value information literacy
- Students lack information literacy skills
- Department/ Discipline play a role

(Gulilkson, 2006; Weetman, 2005; Singh, 2005)
STUDENTS: SEARCHING

- Wait to research (Head & Esenberg, 2009)
- Likely to use Internet (Wang & Artero, 2005; ACRL, n.d.)
- Trust online information (Wang & Artero, 2005)
- Use a source only as a requirement (Wang & Artero, 2005)
- Sometimes or never (ACRL, n.d.)
  - Contact librarians
  - Research in the library
  - Attend library instruction
STUDENTS: CHALLENGES

- Difficulty dealing with amount of information found (Wang & Artero, 2005; Head & Esenberg, 2009)
- Formatting citations (Wang & Artero, 2005)
- Recognizing relevant information (Head & Esenberg, 2009)
- Navigating the library (Head & Esenberg, 2009)
**STUDENTS: STRATEGIES**

- Seek help first from classmates
- Search unsuccessfully for 30 minutes before seeking help
- Try multiple strategies (Kipnis & Frisby, 2006)
THE SURVEY

- Designed for students in courses of FLC members
- Designed by the faculty members (for their interests)
- Questions that gauged student perceptions on:
  - Research habits
  - Resource use
  - Library use
  - Library services
SELECTED QUESTIONS

- What is the difference between a good research experience and bad research experience?
- Describe your process as you search for information.
- (I agree/disagree) that Wikipedia is a scholarly resource.
- (I agree/disagree) that conducting research is just busy work.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OBTAINED

- Number of Research Papers Completed
- Class Standing
- GPA
- Gender
- Internet Access at Permanent Residence
- Completion of Miami EScholar
Administering Survey

- 10-15 minutes for completion
  - Usually administered at beginning of class
  - Completely voluntary
- Human Subjects Approval Required
- Classes surveyed early spring semester
- Approximately 375 students completed
DEMOGRAPHICS

- Gender: 59% female, 39% male, 2% didn’t answer

- Took E-Scholar: 55% didn’t know, 34% no, 6% yes, 5% no answer

- Number of Papers Written: 45% have written at least 15 papers
DEMographics

Class Standing

- Seniors: 31%
- Sophomores: 27%
- Juniors: 31%
- Freshmen: 8%
- Other: 3%


GENERAL TRENDS

• Students overwhelmingly preferred online resources.

• Students didn’t see research as a process. They were much more interested in describing the tools they used.
GENERAL TRENDS FOR GPA

• Students with lower GPA tended to see library as busy work.

• Students with midrange GPA use Google first.

• Students with higher GPA use Google less, use library databases more, and are more inclined to ask a librarian for help.
WHAT FACULTY WANTED TO LEARN

• How and where are students searching for information?

• How prepared are students to perform information research?

• Do students see the information literacy skills as transferable?
What percentage of students used library resources exclusively?

1. 5%
2. 13%
3. 19%
4. 24%
5. 31%
WHERE ARE STUDENTS SEARCHING FOR INFORMATION?

Describe your process as you search for information

- Library or online resources: 31%
- Combination of Google (including Google Scholar) and online library resources: 19%
- Google or Wikipedia: 22%
- Internet resources such as Google first, then the library: 21%
- No answer: 7%

Public Library had no responses
What Portion of Students Are Strongly Confident with their Ability to Locate Library Resources?

1. 23%
2. 42%
3. 54%
4. 77%
How Prepared Are Students?

![Bar chart showing responses to the questions: I am confident in my ability to use technology and I am confident in my ability to use library resources.](chart.png)
Do students agree that information literacy is transferable to job settings?

1. Yes
2. No
Do Students See Information Literacy Skills as Transferable?

Skills Transfer to Job Setting

- Strongly Agree: 5%
- Agree: 49%
- Neutral: 24%
- Other: 18%
- Disagree: 4%

Skills Transfer to Other Classes

- Strongly Agree: 4%
- Agree: 55%
- Disagree: 40%
- Neutral: 1%

Don’t Know and Strongly Disagree had 0 responses.
SELECTION OF OPEN-ENDED ANSWERS

“I get either on Google or Wikipedia. Take the info I want, rephrase it and use it.”

“I used Ebscohost some in high school and other similar programs but I don't think I have access to them anymore.”

“I stop, say ‘Fuck It’, and go to Wikipedia”
“Selection of Open-Ended Answers

“I usually start with Google—just as a jumping off point. I avoid Wikipedia altogether. Depending on what my assignment is - I'll go to online newspapers and magazines mostly.”

“I search online journals, go to the library to search through books and not use Google.”
Selection of Open-Ended Answers

“Bad research experience would be when I cannot find relevant material, or worse when I can find it, but do not have access to it.”

“Bad [research experience]-knowing the information is out there and just not knowing how to find it.”
After the Survey

- Data reported to faculty members
- Integration of results into primary FLC project
  - Syllabus revision to integrate information literacy throughout a course
  - Various methods utilized
    - Embedded librarian
    - Scaffolded assignments
    - Unique assignments
    - Co-instructors
FUTURE SURVEY WORK

- Follow-up with 08/09 FLC members in next academic year
- Administer survey early for 09/10 FLC and utilize results immediately