

“We partner with faculty to produce graduates with the information literacy skills to foster lifelong learning.”

The Need:

- According to a recent report done for the Association of Colleges and Universities, 72% of employers surveyed called for colleges to *place more emphasis on “the location, organization, and evaluation of information from multiple sources.”*¹
- Nationwide, adjectives students describe their feelings about research assignments with words such as: fear, angst, tired, dread, excited, anxious, annoyed, stressed, disgusted, intrigued, confused and overwhelmed.²
- In recommending that the current Standards for Information Literacy (2000) be revised, the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards Review Task Force noted that “Today’s college students are tasked with navigating a much wider world of information than ever before—online and in print. Students are not only information users, they are information creators, contributing online content that lives outside the print format, and may take the shape of videos, podcasts or other online multimedia works. Helping students become information literate is more critical than ever before.”³

The Good News:

- At St. Olaf, research techniques are taught by professors and librarians through coursework, and several college-wide, high-impact practices revolve around student research (e.g. DUR, CURI, IR/IS).
- Librarians deliver approximately 240 information literacy classes a year which teach research strategies at the request of individual professors and they post more than that many library guides a year. The online guides were accessed 113,320 times this academic year.
- In addition, reference interactions and consultations still occur with reliable frequency -- in the fall of 2013, approximately 136 questions were asked per week.
- According to data from the Research Practices Survey administered by HEDS, St. Olaf students demonstrate a steady growth in knowledge of effective [library-based] search practices throughout their years in college.⁴
- In addition, 48.8% of graduating students report enjoying research “quite a bit” or “very much”,⁵ in contrast to the Project Information Literacy findings above.

¹ Hart Research Associates. 2013. *It takes more than a major: Employer priorities for college learning and student success; An online survey among employers conducted on behalf of: The Association of American Colleges and Universities*, p. 8 [italics ours].

² Project Information Literacy. 2014, April 25. *Project Information Literacy* [Poster]. <http://projectinfoilit.org/about>. Accessed 29 April 2014.

³ ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards Review Task Force. 2012, 2 June. Recommendations [concerning revision of the current information literacy standards]. Memo to the ACRL Information Literacy Standards Committee. p. 2. Accessed 30 April 2014
http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/standards/iils_recomm.pdf

⁴ St. Olaf College, Office of Institutional Research and Evaluation. 2013, May 16. Research Proficiencies at St. Olaf: A Synthesis of College-Wide Evidence. p. 16. Accessed 30 April 2014.
<http://wp.stolaf.edu/ir-e/files/2013/07/ResearchProficiencies2012-13.pdf>

⁵ St. Olaf College, Office of Institutional Research and Evaluation. 2013, May 16. Research Proficiencies at St. Olaf: A Synthesis of College-Wide Evidence. p. 25. Accessed 30 April 2014.
<http://wp.stolaf.edu/ir-e/files/2013/07/ResearchProficiencies2012-13.pdf>

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- Finally, alumni speak of the impact of the college on their information literacy skills in positive terms. Between 44% and 58% of respondents from the Classes of 2007 through 2010 indicated the college contributed considerably to the development of their information literacy skills.⁶

Identified Tasks:

1. The fundamental precepts of our field are changing to a focus on “threshold concepts” for teaching information literacy (guidelines due to be released later in 2014). We need to thoroughly discuss what they mean for us and then hold discussions with faculty to see how that will change (or not change) what we do in their classes.
2. Our Intentional Learning Outcomes for the First Year Writing Courses were written many years ago and need to be revised.
3. We are in year three of a six year assessment effort -- we need to take the time to review the data and shape what we do with the results in mind; in addition an assessment of one department ILO is due to IR&E by October 1.
4. We are relying on students to cover the reference desk a greater number of hours. A thorough training program should be devised and funded so that the training is consistent and in-depth, and expand this training to include circulation student workers if a combined service point is instituted.
5. Rebranding ourselves (as Research and Instruction Librarians) and what we do for current students (while working at the Research Center) has been identified as a top priority.
6. We need to consider the appropriateness of an appointment system for the Research Desk (ala the Writing Tutors) and implement if so. Su Smallen has offered to add us to their tutor appointment software. We would also reach out to faculty about recommending/requiring students to set up appointments, especially for non-majors in their seminars.
7. We (continually) need to revitalize relationships with faculty and think deeply how we can work with them on teaching research strategies to their students.
8. On the basis of student feedback about our sessions, we need to train ourselves formally in assignment design and timing and find ways to work with our faculty colleagues to improve same in concert with number 6, above.
9. Springshare, the vendor for our LibGuides software, will release a substantively revised software package in the next year. We will need to overhaul course guides, discipline-based subject guides, and the more specialized explanatory guides. And always, we need to consider the problem of “spoonfeeding” libguides engender and make sure we are producing graduates who can apply concepts widely, not just return to the familiar libguide from a prior class.
10. We need to build substantively on our initial work with the Piper Center to foster lifelong learning post-graduation.

⁶ St. Olaf College, Office of Institutional Research and Evaluation. 2013, May 16. Research Proficiencies at St. Olaf: A Synthesis of College-Wide Evidence. p. 3 Accessed 29 April 2014. <http://wp.stolaf.edu/ir-e/files/2013/07/ResearchProficiencies2012-13.pdf>

11. We need to reflect on how new initiatives like Digital Humanities and our traditionally core work of research/instruction fit together and blend in order to make sure we balance our time and efforts well. Currently 5.5 FTE reference/instruction librarians offer classes, create library guides, provide one-on-one instruction at the reference desk and by appointment, train and mentor student research tutors, manage 2 branch libraries, maintain a deep involvement in the Digital Humanities program, work on committees and task forces to ensure discoverability and usability, and keep current with, and participate in, a rapidly changing field.
12. We need to begin to offer reference service on a limited basis in the SSS/Trio and the Multicultural/International student lounges.

II. Summary of Plan

Our charge focuses on the statement “We partner with faculty to produce graduates with the information literacy skills to foster lifelong learning.” The literature on lifelong learning (and the related literature on self-directed learning) is very rich. We have focused our perspective for this report and define it as the ability to apply information literacy skills honed during the undergraduate years (critical thinking, effective research strategies, evaluative abilities and application to “real world” situations) over the course of a lifespan, in both vocational and personal realms. Thus, the report focuses on both information literacy efforts for students both before and after graduation. The following would be in addition to the teaching and programmatic activities we are already undertaking:

Year One:

- Continue the rebranding of the Research/Instruction Department with visible indicators to students of where we are and what we can do for them. This will be initiated during the summer of 2014 when we try out different location scenarios. Consider appointment system for Research Desk and implement if positive.
- In early September, review the three years of data gathered in the first cycle of program assessment in light of the ILOs for the department. [One ILO needs to be formally assessed by October 1 for IR&E.] Adjust current program and this plan accordingly.
- Build on 2013/2014 initial efforts with Piper Center and IR&E (alumni survey data) to identify needs for graduating seniors and how we can contribute, both for students continuing to graduate school as well as those pursuing other career paths.⁷ Develop an implementation plan for years 1-3.

⁷ Ideas currently include expanding libguide on researching a company to include nonprofits and others and the guide on using libraries after St. Olaf, workshops on your rights as an author, copyright, open access, sponsoring a panel on newly minted PhDs talking about their graduate school information needs and answers; offering a session during reunion weekend on similar topics,

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- In January, overhaul all currently used library guides to take advantage of revised software.
- Over the year, develop an in-depth training program for Research Tutors to be implemented during Week One of year two. This probably will be in collaboration with Access Services (depending on how the 2014 summer experiments go).
- Collaborate with CURI and Instructional Technologies to identify resources for assignment design (workshops/readings) and send one R/I librarian for training in same. [student generated suggestion]⁸

Year Two:

- Host a workshop on the new Information Literacy Framework and threshold concepts for MnObe R/I librarians and invite Trudy Jacobson (ACRL Framework TaskForce) or Barbara Fister [currently has grant to discuss threshold concepts with faculty] to lead it. Second day have TJ do a workshop for faculty with R&I librarians leading discussion groups, etc. Third day St. O R&I librarians meet to plan how to implement all the changes recommended.
- Hold a late May meeting/workshop (day-long, 2 day?) with Diane LeBlanc and WRIT 107, 110 and 111 instructors, and representatives from Great Con and American Con to review place of information literacy in those classes, and to rewrite the ILOs for research instruction in same.
- Hold a second meeting with representatives from WRIT, Bio 150, Religion 121, FY History Seminars, Intro Soc/Anthro courses, and any other identified first-year-only courses to review place of information literacy in those classes and plan for integrated approaches to delivering same.
- Collaborate with CILA and the Associate Deans to sponsor a summer faculty workshop on assignment design, with an emphasis on library-based research and instructional technologies.

Year Three:

- Continue to work with CILA to develop formal workshop/learning community ties with faculty by offering workshops, lunch discussions, learning communities, speakers, book/article discussion groups, meet with faculty individually, summer sessions with stipends. Ideas:

⁸ Note: an initial scan of google entries on assignment design workshops indicated that most are run by librarians for their own university faculty. It may be that informal networking and time to research are the best option.

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- Consider having a course or other opportunity for first years to learn what a discipline is and what do they do (ala' AS275). Pick up on the idea of threshold concepts. [Student generated suggestion]
 - Suggest ideas for collaborative research days with back-up from a research librarian. Encourage students to collaborate more with their research (e.g. individual topics but sharing if they run across something someone else might be interested in) [Student generated suggestion]
 - How to help students contribute to a scholarly conversation (even if only within their own class) to get out of the "produce product" mentality [student generated suggestion]
 - Senior seminars: Enhance efforts to offer information literacy sessions in upper level courses but using the opportunity for reminding them about what they know vs teaching the basics; joint research sessions in a lab -- students discuss topics, share resources, librarian and prof chime in as needed. Where are you in the process; what are you doing that's working well or not? Organized basis or individuals working and consulting as desired. [student generated suggestion]
 - Present RPS data and our data to springboard discussion on what our students are capable of, where they are weak, our goals and objectives, faculty goals and objectives; what is happening in the research process?
 - [New] Mellon Grant faculty development money to fund programmatic long-term discussions with faculty; open workshops
 - Working with CILA to focus on pedagogical discussions and teaching/learning opportunities
- Conduct formal review of research/instruction librarians' job descriptions in light of the three year focus on partnering with faculty and lifelong learning⁹.

⁹ It would be helpful to consider what is/should be in the job descriptions of research/instruction librarians concerning partnering with faculty: Currently they read, "Develop and teach sessions on research for St. Olaf courses in the assigned disciplines. Work closely with the liaison faculty to deliver optimal research instruction in their disciplines."

BUDGET:

For sections with dollar costs beyond personnel time, summer work study hours, etc.

Total Budget Request: \$11,395

Year One Budget:

- Continue the rebranding of the Research/Instruction Department
Budget implications: Signage, trading cards, appointment system software (or add on to ASC's TutorTrac software)
- Over the year, develop an in-depth training program for Research Tutors to be implemented during Week One of year two. This probably will be in collaboration with Access Services (depending on how the 2014 summer experiments go).
Budget implications: Summer work hours to cover two days of training for 6 students. (Dorms open and food plans start for students on Labor Day).
- Collaborate with CURI and Instructional Technologies to identify resources for assignment design (workshops/readings) and send one R/I librarian for training in same. [student generated suggestion]¹⁰
Budget implications: Funding for workshop attendance if one can be identified: approximate numbers:
Flight: \$600
Hotel: \$250
Food: \$120
Registration: \$150
Total: \$1120

Year Two:

- Host a workshop on the new Information Literacy Framework and threshold concepts for MnObe R/I librarians and invite Trudy Jacobson (ACRL Framework TaskForce) or Barbara Fister [currently has grant to discuss threshold concepts with faculty] to lead it. Second day have TJ do a workshop for faculty with R&I librarians leading discussion groups, etc. Third day St. O R&I librarians meet to plan how to implement all the changes recommended.
Budget implications for 40 attendees:
Honorarium: \$1000
Travel and expenses: \$1500 if Jacobson; local travel and stay for BF (St. Peter)
Faculty stipends for second day: 25 faculty x \$50= \$1250

¹⁰ Note: an initial scan of google entries on assignment design workshops indicated that most are run by librarians for their own university faculty. It may be that informal networking and time to research are the best option.

Lunches and coffee breaks:

Lunches for 40 = ~\$500 x 3 days = \$1500

Coffee Breaks for 40 = ~\$100 x 3 days x 2 breaks = \$600

Total for full budgeting = \$5850

- Hold a late May meeting/workshop (day-long, 2 day?) with Diane LeBlanc and WRIT 107, 110 and 111 instructors, and representatives from Great Con and American Con to review place of information literacy in those classes, and to rewrite the ILOs for research instruction in same.

Budget implications for 15 faculty, 5 librarians:

Stipends for 15 faculty x 2 days @\$50/person = \$1500

Funding for 2 lunches for 20 people x \$12.50/person = ~\$500

Coffee Breaks for 40 = ~\$100 x 2 days x 2 breaks = \$400

Total \$2400

- Hold a second meeting with representatives from WRIT, Bio 150, Religion 121, FY History Seminars, Intro Soc/Anthro courses, and any other identified first-year-only courses to review place of information literacy in those classes and plan for integrated approaches to delivering same.

Budget implications for 20 faculty and 5 librarians

Stipends for faculty attendees 20 x \$50 = \$1000

Two lunches x 25 people x \$12.50/person = ~\$625

Coffee Breaks for 40 = ~\$100 x 2 days x 2 breaks = \$400

Total: \$2025

Activities

Core Group: Kris MacPherson, Convenor; Kasia Gonnerman, Grace Atkins (alum), Derek Waller (current student), Rachel Weiss, Sarah Beth Weeks, Ken Johnson

Visitors: Dolores Peters, Becca Richards, Iris Jastram (Carleton), Barbara Fister (Gustavus), Jason Paul, Charles Priore, Beth Christensen

Activities:

October 9: Webinar on ACRL Task Force on Revising the Information Literacy Standards (Kris)

November 9: TF Meeting; Dolores Peters & Becca Richards, guests

November 22: TF Meeting

December 9: TF Meeting; Iris Jastram, guest

December 17: Meeting: Kris with Beth Christensen

January 7: TF Meeting with Barbara Fister

January 14: TF Meeting

January 28: TF Meeting

February 21: Student focus group led by Derek

February 28: TF Meeting

February 28: Student focus group led by Rachel

March 10: Meeting of all R/I Librarians, Grace and Derek, with Iris Jastram, Carleton, re: ACRL Task Force Preliminary Report

April 9: Kris and Rachel attended Carleton meeting re: response to ACRL Task Force preliminary report; Kasia participated by email

April 17: ACRL webinar on responses to preliminary report (Grace and Rachel)

April 22: Meeting with student government representatives about information literacy at St. Olaf College

May 12: Reference/Instruction Librarians Retreat. Group approval of task list and concepts

May 20: Meeting at Gustavus College re: Threshold Concepts with librarians from Gustavus, Carleton, Hamline, St. Johns/St. Bens and St. Olaf

May 29: Kris and Kasia to finalize task list and concepts

Background Readings (a very brief list!):

ALA ACRL Standards

- <http://www.acrl.ala.org/acrlinsider/archives/7329> blog posting on the group which will revise the standards
- The current standards (written in 2000):
<http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/informationliteracycompetency>
- ACRL Task Force Recommendations (initial – where they think they will “go”)
http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/standards/ils_recomm.pdf

ACRL Task Force Recommended Readings

- Hofer, Amy R., Lori Townsend, and Korey Brunetti. 2012. Troublesome concepts and information literacy: Investigating threshold concepts for IL instruction. *Portal: Libraries and the Academy* 12, no. 4: 387-405 [full text in Library and Information Science Abstracts]
- Mackey, T. P., & Jacobson, T. 2011. Reframing information literacy as a metaliteracy. *College & Research Libraries*, 72(1), 62-78. Retrieved from
<http://crl.acrl.org/content/72/1/62.full.pdf+html>
- UNESCO, Information for All Program. 2013. Media and Information Literacy for Knowledge Societies. Moscow: UNESCO. (PDF included in Google Doc)

From **Iris Jastram**, Ref/Instruction Librarian at Carleton (on cutting edge)

- Lloyd, Annemaree. 2010. “Conceptual Orientation.” In *Information Literacy Landscapes: Information Literacy in Education, Workplace, and Everyday Contexts*, 9–33. Oxford: Chandos Publishing. [Carleton book.]
- Norgaard, Rolf. 2003. “Writing Information Literacy: Contributions to a Concept.” *Reference and User Services Quarterly* 43 (2): 124–130. [full text in Library and Information Science Abstracts]
- Simmons, Michelle Holschuh. 2005. “Librarians as Disciplinary Discourse Mediators: Using Genre Theory to Move Toward Critical Information Literacy.” *Portal: Libraries and the Academy* 5 (3): 297–311. [full text in Library and Information Science Abstracts]

From **Barbara Fister**, Gustavus instruction librarian extraordinaire

Blogs for browsing:

- <http://info-fetishist.org/>
- <http://pegasuslibrarian.com/>
- <http://infomational.wordpress.com/>

Gilbert, Julie K., and Christopher P. Gilbert. 2010. "Assessing Integrated Library Components to Enhance Information Literacy in Political Science." *Collaborative Information Literacy Assessments: Strategies for Evaluating Teaching and Learning*. Eds. Thomas P. Mackey and Trudi E. Jacobson. New York: Neal-Schuman, 57-85. [StO book ZA 3075 .C66 2010]

Gilbert, Julie. 2009. "Using Assessment Data to Inform Library Instruction for First Year Students." *Communications in Information Literacy* 3(2):181-92.

Project Information Literacy (projectinfolit.org):

Head, Alison J. 2013. Project Information Literacy: What can be learned about the information-seeking behavior of today's college students? In ACRL Proceedings, 472-482. Indianapolis: Association of College and Research Libraries.

http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/conferences/confsandpreconfs/2013/papers/Head_Project.pdf

And many other very useful reports available on their website

Other Readings on Threshold Concepts:

Meyer, H.F. and R. Land (2006). *Overcoming Barriers to Student Understanding: Threshold Concepts and Troublesome Knowledge*. London: Routledge.

Chapters:

Meyers, H.F. and R. Land. Threshold concepts and troublesome knowledge: An introduction, pp. 3-18.

Davies, Peter. 2006. Threshold concepts: How do we recognise them?, pp. 70-83.

Land, Ray, Glynis Cousin, Jan H. F. Meyer, and Peter Davies. 2006. Conclusion: Implications of threshold concepts for course design and evaluation, pp. 195-206.