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Wilson College John Stewart Memorial Library
Information Literacy Plan 2021-2024

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Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of the John Stewart Memorial Library's Information Literacy program is to support the teaching and learning process by providing students with the necessary information literacy skills to be effective critical thinkers and lifelong learners. The teaching of information literacy skills helps to support the mission of Wilson College as the mission seeks to encourage students "to be confident and critical thinkers, creative visionaries, effective communicators, honorable leaders, and agents of justice" (Wilson College Mission Statement). The following information literacy plan serves as a guide for encouraging and strengthening faculty and librarian collaboration, developing student research and information evaluation skills, and preparing students to be responsible and valuable members of their communities.

The library's information literacy plan is guided by the following information literacy standards as well as the college's required liberal arts curriculum:

Association of College and Research Libraries Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education (2000)

- Standard One: The information literate student determines the nature and extent of the information needed.
- Standard Two: The information literate student accesses needed information effectively and efficiently.
- Standard Three: The information literate student evaluates information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system.
- Standard Four: The information literate student, individually or as a member of a group, uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.
- Standard Five: The information literate student understands many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally.

Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education (2015)

ACRL is a division of the American Library Association whose primary mission is to support and enhance the work of librarians in higher education. The Framework was developed to meet the needs of the changing landscape of information in higher education. Instead of focusing on standards, goals, and learning outcomes, this document outlines the core concepts that faculty

and librarians need to insert into their curriculum and assignments. The organization of the 6 frames gives faculty, librarians, and other campus partners the flexibility to teach these concepts in ways that meet specific institution and student needs.

Authority is Constructed and Contextual
- Information resources reflect their creators' expertise and credibility, and are evaluated based on the information need and the context in which the information will be used. Authority is constructed in that various communities may recognize different types of authority. It is contextual in that the information need may help to determine the level of authority required.

Information Creation as a Process
- Information in any format is produced to convey a message and is shared via a selected delivery method. The iterative processes of researching, creating, revising, and disseminating information vary, and the resulting product reflects these differences.

Information Has Value
- Information possesses several dimensions of value as a commodity, as a means of education, as a means to influence, and as means of negotiating and understanding the world. Legal and socioeconomic interests influence information production and dissemination.

Research as Inquiry
- Research is iterative and depends upon asking increasingly complex or new questions whose answers in turn develop additional questions or lines of inquiry in any field.

Scholarship as Conversation
- Communities of scholars, researchers, or professionals engage in sustained discourse with new insights and discoveries occurring over time as a result of varied perspectives and interpretations.

·Searching as Strategic Exploration
- Searching for information is often nonlinear and iterative, requiring the evaluation of a range of information sources and the mental flexibility to pursue alternative avenues as new understanding develops.

Wilson College Liberal Arts Curriculum (Overview)

I. Foundations
- A. First-Year Seminar
- B. Writing Skills
- C. Quantitative Skills

II. Liberal Studies Requirements
Courses are required in the following categories:
- A. Communication
- B. Critical and Creative Thinking
- C. Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary
- D. Ethical Awareness

E. Engaging Diversity

III. Major Area of Study
    A. Major Area of Study
    B. Minor (optional)
    C. Synthesis of the Liberal Arts with the Major

An Important Note About the ACRL Standards

The library staff believes that both the 2000 Information Literacy Standards for Higher Education and the 2015 Framework for Information Literacy serve a valuable purpose in the development of information literacy skills as well as the critical pursuit of lifelong learning. The early standards illustrate the specific information literacy skills we want to impart to our students; while the more recent framework demonstrates how specific information literacy concepts relate to today's complicated and ever-changing world of information.

Information Literacy Program

The goal of the library staff is to teach students how to effectively and ethically gather, evaluate, use, and disseminate information. To become information literate, students must recognize the need for information, be able to search for relevant and appropriate sources to satisfy specific information needs, and effectively evaluate the quality and credibility of their collected sources. The teaching and learning of information literacy concepts will promote student academic performance, prepare students for successful careers, and encourage years of lifelong learning.

The librarians are committed to consulting and collaborating with the faculty to create a meaningful and valuable information literacy program for our students. We will continually work with faculty to incorporate information literacy skills into a variety of courses and to promote and expand the integration of these concepts into all academic levels and disciplines.

Information Literacy Program: Curriculum Initiatives

The librarians are committed to integrating information literacy instruction into the following courses, which serve as foundational programs for Wilson College's liberal arts education.

First Year Seminar (FYS)

The First Year Seminar Information Literacy Program includes the following elements:

Information Literacy Instruction Sessions

Early in each semester, personal librarians deliver an introduction to the library and research process presentation to all sections of First Year Seminar. This orientation serves as the initial contact between the students and their personal librarian.

Required Meeting with Personal Librarians

All FYS students are required to meet individually with their personal librarian at least once during their First Year Seminar experience. In these meetings, librarians show students how to navigate the library's website as well as provide an introduction to using the library databases to find books and articles for their FYS research assignments.

Research Assignment

All FYS students are required to complete a research assignment using the assignment guidelines provided by individual FYS instructors. This assignment gives students the opportunity to develop and practice their information literacy skills.

Library Information Literacy Skills Assessment

Students will complete an information literacy skills assessment which will be administered by the instructors during the last week of class. The assessment takes 10-15 minutes to complete.

Introductory English Courses

A brief overview of both library services and Academic Success Center services is included in all English 108, 115, and 185 courses. While it is not required, there are occasional requests for this presentation in 200 level courses. These presentations, dubbed promotional outreach visits, are given jointly by a member of the library and the Academic Success Center staff. These presentations are designed to show students that the research and writing processes contain multiple steps and are very interconnected. Additionally, they serve as another point of contact to encourage students to take advantage of these services. These visits occur in the first month of each semester and take about 20 minutes per class session. A typical presentation includes:

- Information about the personal librarian program. This provides an important opportunity to present this information to students who may not have made contact with their personal librarian such as adult students and transfer students. These students are not typically enrolled in First Year Seminar.
- Information about library spaces and other services provided in the library such as the technology help desk. This also provides a natural segue into the writing and tutoring services provided by the Academic Success Senter.
- Tips for success such as using library databases for college-level research assignments and the importance of getting an early start to research projects.
- Brief overview of helpful links on the library's website and the personal librarian page in Canvas.
- Information about the Academic Success Center's writing lab services.

- Brief information about the writing process as well as tips on how to get the most out of an appointment with a writing tutor.
- Demonstration of the Academic Success Center's appointment platform.

Introduction to Computer Science (CS 110)

A library presentation or library module (depending on the modality of the course) is included in all sections of CS110 each semester. Since this is a computer science course, the library presentation encourages students to learn and use various library databases just as they learn how to effectively use other technology tools in the course. Additionally, the presentation includes information on evaluating websites and the differences between library databases and Google. During the in-person class sessions, students are placed into groups where they spend a few minutes learning how to use their assigned library database and then demonstrate what they learned to the rest of the students in the class. Students also complete a library assignment, which asks them specific questions about the information they learned during the library presentation. The assignment is graded by the librarian and reported to the course instructor. In the online course, students watch a video version of the library presentation, take a few minutes to learn how to use a couple of library databases, and complete the library assignment.

Senior Experiences

To ensure that Wilson College students graduate with the skills they need to pursue their work and life goals, the librarians meet with students who are currently working on the culminating project for their specific majors. The librarians consistently work with the Physical and Life Sciences departments as well as the Psychology department to provide information literacy instruction to students completing the research portion of the three-semester project requirement for graduation. Additionally, the librarians meet with students who are completing their senior thesis or capstone project. Students typically complete these assignments in an independent study environment with a faculty advisor.

Information Literacy Program: Curriculum Objectives

Librarians understand that students come to Wilson College from a variety of backgrounds. Some students have previous research experience and basic knowledge about libraries from high school, while other students may not have gotten the chance to practice their research skills. Some students are coming to college after being out of school for many years; others are returning to college to pursue a different career path. Regardless of the level of prior knowledge and previous student experience, the librarians are committed to encouraging personal growth and promoting the academic success of all students. To encourage success and growth as students complete the coursework in their specific majors, the librarians incorporate the following information literacy talking points into each course level:

100 level courses:

- The importance of understanding assignment guidelines
- A basic understanding of the steps of the research process
- Ideas for choosing topics and selecting appropriate search terms
- The value of doing background research on a topic
- The importance of going beyond Google and using library resources
- The ability to perform basic searches in OneSearch
- Using limiting options in OneSearch
- A brief discussion about different types of information sources
- A brief discussion about citation styles and citation help guides
- Evaluating websites and determining credibility of sources
- A discussion of discipline-specific research techniques and types of sources needed for discipline-specific research assignments
- The importance of getting an early start on research assignments and contacting personal librarians for individual help when needed

200/300 level courses:
- A discussion of the peer review process and the differences between popular and scholarly sources
- Demonstration of more advanced search techniques in OneSearch such as Boolean operators and subject heading searches
- The introduction of subject specific databases for finding information and the limiters that are specific to certain disciplines
- A demonstration of specialized thesauri for finding more appropriate search terms
- An understanding that there is more than one citation style and the importance of consistently citing sources in the preferred style for each course

300/400/500 courses (senior experience courses and graduate courses)

- The importance of developing a research plan for more in-depth research assignments
- The importance of scheduling more appointments with personal librarians as needed
- A demonstration of more advanced features in library databases
- The use of email alerts and RSS feeds to get access to more articles for long range research projects
- A discussion about citation mining - using works cited lists and times cited/cited references options when available
- An explanation of the concept of scholarly conversation and a discussion of how student research fits into that conversation
- A discussion about authority - what types of sources are appropriate for specific disciplines and whose expertise is considered valuable and trustworthy in those fields
- A discussion about using Google to search for more information such as curriculum vitae for experts in the field. Students can use this information to find more articles as scholars tend to focus on specific areas of research

Information Literacy Program: Course-Integrated Instruction

In addition to specific curriculum initiatives, the librarians encourage the integration of information literacy instruction into both undergraduate and graduate courses in all disciplines wherever possible. This gives librarians and faculty the opportunity to work together to build a library instruction session that contains appropriate information literacy skills as well as introduces students to the relevant library resources for a particular assignment. Librarians are committed to promoting student success by collaborating with faculty to help students reach assignment goals.

Instruction Methods

- Traditional library instruction. These instruction sessions take place during class time and can be tailored to the time allotted. Instruction sessions are usually designed around a specific research assignment or information literacy skill. Librarians will work with faculty to make sure that instruction session lesson plans reflect assignment goals and adhere to assignment guidelines.
- Guided instruction. These instruction sessions do not have to include formal instruction. The idea with this type of instruction is that students can get started on their research with a librarian in the room to help as needed.
- Research paper consultations. These consultations are designed to take place outside of class time. In these meetings librarians will work with students individually on their research topics. Librarians can work with faculty to set up "librarian office hours" or have students contact them for appointments. Appointments can be conducted via Zoom for distance learning students as well as for students who prefer the convenience of connecting virtually.
- Online information literacy instruction. Librarians can provide both synchronous and asynchronous instruction. They are able to offer library instruction in real time via Zoom. For asynchronous courses, librarians are able to create videos that demonstrate relevant information literacy skills and show students appropriate library resources for their specific research assignments. Links will be provided so that videos can be directly uploaded in Canvas courses.

Personal Librarian Program

The personal librarian program is a unique, college-wide service provided to all students at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Each student is assigned a librarian to serve as their personal librarian for the entire time they are enrolled at Wilson College. Many first-year students are introduced to their personal librarian through their First Year Seminar course. Students not required to take FYS are assigned a personal librarian by their last name or, for graduate students, by their discipline. Additionally, all students are enrolled in the Personal Librarian course in Canvas. This course provides easy access for students to information about the personal librarian program, links to help guides and information literacy tutorials, and other

Commented [GU1]: Not just 'distance learning students' but anyone who finds connecting virtually to be convenient.

pertinent library information. The librarians recommend students check in with their personal librarian early and often. Personal librarians provide support to students at all stages of the research process. The personal librarian program gives librarians the opportunity to get to know students individually and help them be successful in their academic endeavors. One of the strengths of a small college is the ability to provide individualized attention to students and this program speaks directly to that strength.

Next Steps and Future Strategic Objectives

The ultimate goal of the Wilson College Information Literacy Program is to develop a program that is integrated into the curriculum, fully supported by the campus community, and prepares students to become life-long learners. Librarians will market the information literacy program and continue to pursue ways of engaging and collaborating with the faculty. The information literacy plan will be periodically updated to reflect changes in the college's curriculum and needs of students. As current trends and best practices emerge, librarians will incorporate them into the Information Literacy program.

Librarians need to increase their efforts to include transfer students, adult students, and other non-traditional students in the personal librarian program. We need to increase collaboration with various departments on campus who work directly with these students such as Admissions, Registrar's Office, and One-Stop Student Services, so that we consistently get the names of these students. That way we can encourage them to reach out to their personal librarian as well as add them to the Personal Librarians course in Canvas.

There is more work to be done with the Senior Experience curriculum initiative. At this point, the librarians are dependent on either the students or the faculty advisors contacting them for research help. The librarians are not consistently provided with the names of students working on culminating research projects. While the librarians do make contact with many of these students, it is likely that some are inadvertently overlooked. The librarians will continue to work with the Registrar and faculty advisors to identify students in this category. Additionally, librarians will continue to pursue opportunities to integrate information literacy instruction into upper-level seminar courses in applicable disciplines, similar to what is currently included in PLS 398 and PSY 341 courses.

Librarians need to formulate a plan to better reach graduate students as well as courses in the college's graduate programs. We need to increase awareness of the information literacy program among the faculty teaching in these programs. More effort is needed in this area as many of the courses in these programs are taught by adjuncts. Sometimes these adjuncts do not even have Wilson email addresses. Additionally, many courses and programs are taught off-site to students who are not within driving distance to the college. Given these challenges, librarians must seek out more opportunities to reach graduate students and search for more ways to incorporate information literacy instruction into the curriculum of the college's graduate programs.