

ARTICULATING INFORMATION LITERACY IN INTRODUCTORY WRITING

SARA DAVIDSON SQUIBB, HEATHER DEVRICK, ELIZABETH MCMUNN-TETANGCO, AND SUSAN MILLER

Poster design by Breanna Wright

Question

What does information literacy look like in introductory writing (Writing 1)?

Collaboration Begins

- UC Merced Librarians and Merritt Writing Program (MWP) faculty received a faculty fellowship grant from our Center for Engaged Teaching & Learning (CETL).
- This grant funded a 2017 project called Promoting Academic Thinking and Habits (PATH).

Participants

14 MWP faculty and two librarians.



Goals

Writing faculty

More clearly articulate information literacy priorities for Writing 1.

Librarians

Understand how to better support information literacy in Writing 1.

Project Overview

- A PATH planning team designed a curriculum framework and a learning community implemented the framework in fall 2017.
- Librarians provided resources and lessons for use with Writing 1.
- PATH participants and librarians met three times during the semester to discuss experiences with the curriculum.
- Librarians and two planning team members conducted end-of-semester assessment interviews with participants.

Curriculum Framework

Three cover letters each with an overview, assignment goals, information literacy outcomes, and reading and writing assignment samples.

- 1 Expository Writing, Practicing Summary & Analysis
- 2 Writing in a Mode: Choosing and Integrating Sources
- 3 Writing an Argument and Ethically Using Sources

Library Contributions

Provided four resources for MWP faculty use, including three lesson plans and an online tutorial.

WHAT WE LEARNED

MWP faculty had high levels of agreement around three areas of information literacy that should be a strong focus of Writing 1. However, three other areas did not have the same level of consensus.

High Level of Agreement

Critical Reading & Synthesis

Students will be able to read critically and closely to successfully synthesize source materials.

Source Integration & Analysis

Students will be able to effectively and ethically integrate sources through summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting.

Information Sources

Faculty primarily used popular sources rather than scholarly sources with their students.

Mixed Level of Agreement

MLA Style Expectations

Faculty expected students to use MLA properly but not perfectly. Yet, they did not necessarily expect students to use MLA with the same level of independence.

Source Evaluation

Most faculty focused on working with students to evaluate sources by considering rhetorical context and purpose while some also asked students to consider basic indicators of authority to evaluate information.

Low Level of Agreement

Information Finding

Some faculty wanted students to find limited information independently; for others this was not feasible due to the time and attention needed for critical reading, synthesis, source integration and analysis.

What Comes Next?

Partner with MWP to follow through on recommendations and fully accomplish original goals.

Recommendations

- Identify and create the highest priority resources to support information literacy in Writing 1.
- Revisit and renew the information literacy course learning outcome for Writing 1.
- Update curricular framework to clearly articulate and formalize Writing 1 guidelines.

Future Challenge

Determine sustainable and effective library support for information literacy areas that accommodates diverse faculty approaches to Writing 1.

Future Opportunity

Work with colleagues to continue refining information literacy priorities and support for basic writers.

Thanks to the rest of the PATH Team

Matt Synder, Kris Van Bebber, Michael Elkins, Justin Gautreau, Pam Gingold, Edward Kennedy, Heather Lanser, Tessa McIntire, De Ette Silbaugh, Jane Wilson, Angela Winek, and Anne Zanzucchi.