Democratic Belonging as Informed Citizenry - Empowering Faculty to Empower Learners via Information Literacy

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Democratic Belonging as Informed Citizenry
Empowering Faculty to Empower Learners via Information Literacy

Anna Santucci
Amanda Izenstark
Mary C. MacDonald

University of Rhode Island

January 19, 2022
AAC&U Annual Meeting Pre-Meeting Workshop
Presented by: POD Network (Professional Organizational Development)
Welcome!
Today’s workshop

1. Roadmap: Introductions, Institutional Contexts, & Information Literacy Definitions (45 min)

2. Mini-tour of the Researching Across Disciplines High Impact Teaching Seminar @URI (60 min)

3. Impact @ URI + Next Steps: How Might I Do This? (45 min)
Ready…
Set…
Go!

Have it?
➔ Device
➔ Writing Tools

Materials will be shared!

Photo by Sam Owoyemi on Unsplash
Who are we?

● Anna Santucci, Faculty Development Specialist

Working with:

● Amanda Izenstark, Reference & Instructional Design Librarian
● Mary C. MacDonald, Information Literacy Librarian
About you & your role:

● How large is your institution - how many students?
  ○ <1000 / 1000-5000 / 5000-10000 / 10000

● What is your main role?

● Do you have other role(s)?

● Is there an information literacy initiative on your campus?
Meet Each Other!

- Name, position, your institution

Then: Go back in the time machine of your life. What was your research experience when you started doing college-level research? Discuss with your partner:

- Did your background encourage a strong academic inclination?
- How did you find information as an undergrad?
- What did you know about scholarly information and the expectations your professors had for your research?
Back to the present!

Now think about today’s students, society, and our information environment…

● Why do you think informed citizenship matters?
● What does it mean to you?

Please share at tinyurl.com/aacutoday
Today’s workshop

1. Roadmap: Introductions, Institutional Contexts, & Information Literacy Definitions

2. Mini-tour of the Researching Across Disciplines High Impact Teaching Seminar @URI

3. Impact @ URI + Next Steps: How Might I Do This?
“Information literacy is the set of integrated abilities encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning.”

If responsible citizens need the agility to navigate a changing information landscape…

Intentionally designing learning experiences that integrate accessible Information Literacy (IL) skills for all students is a crucial step towards educational justice, a paramount responsibility in the democratic mission of our institutions.
Where are these skills addressed in our curricula, and how?
Our background and context

Amanda and Mary (who are not here today), are instruction librarians and run the Information Literacy program at URI, with the wonderful support of our colleagues in our department.

Anna is a Faculty Development Specialist in URI’s Office for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning; she is a passionate Educational Developer and believes in the importance of supporting teachers’ success to enhance learners’ success. Teaching & Learning!
An Educational Development vision - the POD Network

- Internationality and Collegiality
- Value + support + reward for educators, scholars, and leaders in Higher Ed
- Teaching as a core scholarly activity
- Informed by research and reflection
- Resulting in success for ALL learners & teachers

See POD Network: Vision, Mission & Values
HIGH IMPACT TEACHING SEMINARS

Learning Principles: a Baking Metaphor*

- Start from individual instructors’ concerns
- Apply principles of learning to our context
- Explore concrete strategies based on SoTL
- Identify practical principles for teaching
- Practice creating significant learning experiences
- Develop an Action Plan

URI, Advancement of Teaching & Learning

*G. Smith, Why College Faculty Need to Know the Research about Learning, InSight A Journal of Scholarly Teaching 10 (2015)
YOU ARE IN THE LEAD!

From: Teaching for Learning HIT seminar

Photo Credit: Faculty Innovation Center, The University of Texas

Photo Credit: Marine Biology Program, University of Rhode Island

Photo Credit: Office for Teaching & Learning, Wayne State University
INTENTIONAL CRITICALLY REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

- Seminar applicants selected
- Learning community with iterative practice
- Commitment via action planning
- Implementation consultation
- Peer-mentoring
- URI Teaching & Learning Showcase
- Implementation report
- Supported assessment & data collection
Researching Across Disciplines (RAD)
High Impact Teaching Seminar
web.uri.edu/atl/researching-across-the-disciplines-hit-seminar/

● Create an environment where faculty could build learning experiences that would create a way of thinking and mindset to empower students to go beyond preconceived notions of how to approach a problem and information.

● Incorporated a series of activities that faculty would participate in to understand the threshold concepts, but also that they could directly use in their courses.
University of Rhode Island’s General Education Program

- A four-year program across disciplines.
- Added Information Literacy as a required student learning outcome in 2015.
- Used an IL Rubric designed to assess this learning outcome, based on the ACRL IL Standards and the AAC&U VALUE IL Rubric.
- Seminar goals: Support faculty who teach IL approved courses + Expand the reach of the IL outcome beyond Gen Ed and into the wider curriculum.

RAD Seminar 2018-2021 at URI supported by Davis Educational Foundation Project: Initiative to Impact: Delivering an Exceptional General Education
Our textbook:

*Teaching Information Literacy Threshold Concepts: Lesson Plans for Librarians*

edited by Patricia Bravender, Hazel McClure, and Gayle Schaub

[tinyurl.com/radtext](tinyurl.com/radtext)
Practical lesson plans & activities well suited for subject faculty to adapt and use on their own

Some lesson plans include:

- “Mapping Scholarly Conversation”
- “Evaluating Information Sources”
- “Using Sources to Support a Claim”
- “Context through Citation”
- “Ethical Use of Information in Presentations”
Seminar Structure

Iterated opportunities for practice

Course implementation project

Individual support

First implementation by **Eric Kaldor & Mary MacDonald, 2018**: Cohort meetings Tuesday afternoons every two weeks over the course of the semester

Current implementation (2019-present): 4 days, summer intensive

- Orientation session
- Three full days (one threshold concept in the AM, one in the PM)
- Half day poster session
Iterated Practice

When engaging with each framework, participants explore the lessons plans in the chapter and complete an Activity Adaptation Worksheet.

Upon completion of the seminar, they submit an Action Plan for course implementation.
Integration Challenge - Avoiding the Busywork Trap

Implications for Course Design:

- Mapping learning outcomes to discrete steps in assignments is often efficient.
- Elements need to be assessable so students see the value of their effort.
- Students see many assignments as busy work or hoops to jump through.
- Students may lose sight of the whole and become less likely to care about individual assignments or integrating learning.
Modeling ACTIVE Learning

Photo by Christin Hume on Unsplash
Interactivity

While we are doing this via Padlet today, in the seminar, we used Padlet as well as paper/whiteboards, Google Slides, and Google Docs for the interactive elements.

Modeling active learning and showcasing accessible tools - This can be adapted to what is available to you at your institution!
Key element: Transparency

Modeled and meta-highlighted throughout
Transparency in Learning and Teaching (TILT Higher Ed)

- About TILT; 15-minute video overview on Using a Transparent Framework to Remove Barriers To College Students Success

- Transparent Teaching Methods summary

- TILT Project's Research findings (full research article here: A Teaching Intervention that Increases Underserved College Student's Success)

- Transparent Assignment Template

- Checklist for Designing Transparent Assignments

- Example assignments grouped by discipline

- Here's also an interactive guide created by CCRI on understanding and applying the TILT Higher Ed Transparency Framework
TRANSPARENCY IN LEARNING & TEACHING

Overview of TILT Project Key points:

AAC&U study: Students who received more transparent instruction reported gains in three areas that are important predictors of students’ success:

1) academic confidence

2) sense of belonging

3) awareness of their mastery of skills employers value most
TRANSPARENCY IN LEARNING & TEACHING

Overview of TILT Project Key Points (2)

- UNLV study: Full-time, first-year students in primarily transparent courses in Fall 2016 retained at a rate higher than the rest of their cohort.

- In both studies: Benefits for all students were statistically significant, and greater for first-generation, low-income and underrepresented students.
TILT Framework: Transparent Assignment Design

**Purpose (WHY?)**

- Specific knowledge and skills:
  - linked to the larger course context
  - relevant and useful to students’ lives beyond
- Increase segmentation and sequencing?

**Task (WHAT?)**

- Clarity of steps
- Focus time efficiently
- Opportunities for pre-task practice?

**Criteria (HOW?)**

- Checklist to use while working on assignment
- Characteristics of high-quality work with multiple examples discussed/annotated collaboratively
- Rubric with appropriate amount of info?
TRANSPARENT TEACHING METHODS

Overview of methods emerging in TILT (ongoing):

✓ discuss learning goals and design rationale w students
✓ invite students to participate in planning
✓ gauge understanding during class
✓ explicitly connect “how people learn” info with course activities at difficult points
✓ engage students in applying the grading criteria
✓ debrief graded assignments in class
✓ offer running commentary on class discussions
A Closer Look At Equity & Justice: Transparency vs Gatekeeping
Coming up after our break:

1. Roadmap: Introductions, Institutional Contexts, & Information Literacy Definitions

2. Mini-tour of the Researching Across Disciplines High Impact Teaching Seminar @URI

3. Impact @ URI + Next Steps: How Might I Do This?
Pre-reading for Orientation

Todd Wiebe: The Information Literacy Imperative in Higher Education

ACRL Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education

Access ACRL Framework reading during your break!

Here: https://tinyurl.com/ACRL-ILHE
Time for...  
10 minute break!

Photo by Kalen Emsley on Unsplash
Welcome Back!

1. Roadmap: Introductions, Institutional Contexts, & Information Literacy Definitions

2. Mini-tour of the Researching Across Disciplines High Impact Teaching Seminar @URI

3. Impact @ URI + Next Steps: How Might I Do This?
From: Researching Across the Disciplines, 2021

Amanda Izenstark, MLIS
Mary MacDonald, MLIS
University Libraries

Anna Santucci, PhD
Faculty Development
Office for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning
You & Research
Think about one of your own current research endeavours. Share in the slide deck where you see your name:
- Something you feel confident about
- One question/concern you have about how to move forward
Where are our students?

Imagine: you are now one of your students!

It’s mid-Spring 2021; think about a research assignment for one of your courses. Share on your slide:

- Something you feel confident about
- One question/concern you have about how to move forward
Students have their own expertise and experiences to contribute!
A moment for time travel...

Go back in the time machine of your life. What was your research experience when you started doing college-level research? Discuss with your partner:

- Did your background encourage a strong academic inclination?
- How did you find information as an undergrad?
- What did you know about scholarly information and the expectations your professors had for your research?
Stevens, C. (2011, July 26). *What your students don’t know about research is kind of a lot* [Video]. YouTube. [https://youtu.be/epd7qYquFew](https://youtu.be/epd7qYquFew)
What are your expectations for students in your courses, in terms of finding and evaluating information?

tinyurl.com/aacucollege
Expectations

Considering our expectations for students in our courses, in terms of finding and evaluating information...

● “virtual post-it” board
RAD 2021 Expectations for Finding and Evaluating Information

Please share: What are your expectations for students in your courses, in terms of finding and evaluating information?

Citations
understand WHY it matters to reference others’ work appropriately, feel invested in the importance to do so

Expectations
Be willing to risk challenging your current ideas
Be enthusiastic
Try to trust me

Expectations
Be forever questioning, exploring, and challenging what they find, digging deeper than what someone else has told them

Expectations
I expect that students will leave my course with the toolset to be able to examine articles (be it news or scholarly work) and critically evaluate it to understand whether it is rooted in previous research, opinion, or facts.

Expectations
I expect students to use reliable sources when finding information. I also hope they use critical thinking to evaluate the information they use in their work.

Expectations
I’m mostly interested, in my courses, in opening students to the idea that ideas MUST be found and evaluated. To state it another way, it’s less content and more concept. I’m hoping to help by providing models of the PRAXIS of actively engaging with our information ecosystems (blargh sometimes I need to impose a ban on overused terms like: ecosystems, praxis, engaging, etc.)

Expectations
I expect my students to be able to distinguish between scholarly and lay publications; to be able to cite sources appropriately and summarize/synthesize that information to make a cogent argument

Expectations
When students arrive in a class I expect them to be very limited – maybe just using Google in a lower level course, maybe also reading primary literature at a superficial level in upper level courses (and probably not evaluating it well). In my courses I'd like to help them make progress in evaluating both primary and secondary literature and making connections between readings.

Expectations
I expect that students will know where to look if I ask them to find an article, but I don't always expect them to understand the different weight (authoritative, etc) to attribute to a given source (e.g., assuming an op-ed or NYTimes sponsored blog post is the same as an article). As a result, I've skewed toward a lot of very detailed, maybe even patronizing, instructions (cite this, not that) in assignment descriptions that may or may not be helpful.

Expectations
I expect my students will understand the research process phases and how to properly apply the techniques to formulate their research (on broad terms). Similarly, I wish my students will gain the specific lexicon for their area of studies to communicate their research findings, orally and in written form, on an adequate way to join the larger scientific community conversation. I wish more but if I can reach these two, it will be an excellent step forward.

Expectations
I expect that students will be able to understand that they engage in inquiry on a daily basis. I also expect that students will be able
Are students meeting our expectations? And if not, why?

- Threshold concepts
- Participants read the introduction in preparation for orientation, and share on how the frame(s) inform their reflections on their students’ current projects
- Then we dive in, a chapter for each seminar session
Information Literacy Threshold Concepts

“...those ideas in any discipline that are passageways or portals to enlarged understanding or ways of thinking and practicing within that discipline.”

Information Literacy Threshold Concepts

- Authority is Constructed and Contextual
- Information Creation as a Process
- Information Has Value
- Research as Inquiry
- Scholarship as Conversation
- Searching as Strategic Exploration

Let’s Dive In!

Photo by Pranav Nahata on Unsplash
Scholarship as Conversation
Levels & layers of the scholarly conversation

Scholar to scholar

Research

Article

We read the article

Article gets shared, cited, etc.

We share it with our students.

Credits: “Conversation” icon by Abdo; “Research” icon by Nhor; “Article” icon by mark; “Pencil” icon by Thomas Le Bas; “Retweet” icon by Muhamad Ulum; “Follow” icon by Flatart; “Read” icon by ahmad; “Reader” icon by corpus delicti; Arrow by SELicon. All from the Noun Project.
Students may only see this.

We share it with our students.
Levels & layers of the scholarly conversation

At this point, students are entering the scholarly conversation.

Credits: “Conversation” icon by Abdo; “Research” icon by Nhor; “Article” icon by mark; “Pencil” icon by Thomas Le Bas; “Retweet” icon by Muhamad Ulum; “Follow” icon by Flatart; “Read” icon by ahmad; “Reader” icon by corpus delicti; Arrow by SELicon. All from the Noun Project.
Discuss:

What do students already view as an information generating conversation?

How can we help them see the similarities between their familiar conversations and scholarly conversations?

tinyurl.com/aacuschol
Taking it further:
Participating in the scholarly conversation as a gateway to educational justice
Information Creation as Process
Activity: How is information created in your discipline?

Using markers and paper, illustrate how the main form of information in your discipline moves from its origin to its accessible form, e.g. articles, books, etc.
Old White Guy Theorists/Philosophers

How do we explain? Do prevention?

Criminal Justice

Criminology (how theorists view researchers)

Data Collection

Testing application

What's going on?

What's happened next?

How do we pay for it?

All of this is useless

How Biological Anthropology Gets Made
Reflection:

How/when/where did you learn about this process?
What were the key factors?
Information Creation as Process: how intentional are we in identifying these learning outcomes for our students?

- Knowledge \((\textit{what?} \text{ Things we know} \ about)\)
- Skills \((\textit{how?} \text{ Tasks we are} \ able \ to \ do)\)
- Attitudes \((\textit{why?} \text{ Perspectives, interests, dispositions} - \text{ ways of} \ being \ we \ \textit{value})\)

An example: Deardorff (2006) on Intercultural Competence
Learning goals, outcomes, objectives…

Where have I seen these terms?
How have I used them?
What do they mean to me?
What do they mean to my students?

How do Information Literacy outcomes *transfer* across courses?
Research as Inquiry
Using this news story, write a research question that intersects with your discipline:

Virginia family gets keys to Habitat for Humanity's first 3D-printed home in the US
tinyurl.com/va3dhome
Share your Questions
From RAD 2021 - Consider this news story


1. Develop a research question based on your discipline that touches in some way on this story

2. Write it on the Padlet - and we’ll also come back to this tomorrow.
The point?

● Making connections between topics and their disciplines - *Research as Inquiry*

● Builds on the work of others - *Scholarship as Conversation*

● Plus…
Expert Blindspot Analysis

What kinds of questions do experts in your discipline value?

What kinds of questions do they avoid?
Designing a research assignment

Considering this diversity of possible research questions - what components might a transparent assignment handout have?

Think about your representation of Information Creation as Process - in your discipline:

- What are the genres available?
- Who is the audience?
- What type of claim is expected?
- What counts as evidence?
Searching as Strategic Exploration
Effective searchers are...
Effective searchers are… - *from Summer 2021*

- Patient
- Persistent
- Curious people
- Open to new ideas
- Thorough
- Trusting the process
- Able to navigate a wide array of information
- Effective searchers show up and keep searching

- Critical thinker
- Explorers
- Methodical
- Systematic
- Creative (x2)
- Focused
- Driven
Seminar Activity:
Can you find an article on research methods in your discipline to share with the group? (5 minutes)
How did your process go? Were you successful? What challenges did you face?

*Debriefing processes together throughout the seminar*
We want students to learn that research…

- Is an iterative process that leads to new questions
- Has to be credible to an audience at a distance

When students search, they often forget these two aspects.

Students often…

- Want to use first sources found.
- Assume all sources in databases are credible.
- Do not perform iterative searches with different keywords/parameters.

Consider the “paradox of choice” - (term used by Barry Schwartz)

See also James Zull’s Art of Changing the Brain: Enriching the Practice of Teaching by Exploring the Biology of Learning.
Possible Activity: How would you search for more information on the research question you came up with?

- What keywords would you use to find more on the topic?
- What research tools or databases would you use?
- How would you adjust your searching if your original terms didn’t provide relevant results?
- Which resources did you *discard* in the process?
Goal:

- Encourage students to explore and adapt
- Help students see the “mud” of research: the parts that didn’t work but that eventually helped them find the buried gems
- Unpack these processes transparently
Authority is Constructed and Contextual
What is an area that you have a lot of knowledge in that is not in your academic discipline?

Where does this expertise matter and to whom?

How did you develop this expertise?
What is the gold standard for authority in your discipline that establishes expertise & credible claims?
What is the gold standard for authority in your discipline that establishes expertise & credible claims? From Summer 2021

- Publications
- Impact factor
- Training (and w whom)
- Top X journals
- Editors
- Which schools
- Invited talks/pieces
- Getting cited
- mentor/mentee relationships (eg if one's students are successful)
- Networks
- Residences (eg artists)
- Conference presentations (& level)

- What constitutes success???
  Questioning/disrupting/questioning standard/traditional/normative notions of authority, expertise & hierarchies??
- Longevity - does “quality” persists over time?
- Gatekeeping - often intersecting identities may mean extra labor; changing the gatekeepers vs eliminating the gates?? (Equity & justice)
- What are we going to do about vetting then?
- Can we we, ought we??, how do we de-colonize “authority”??
A Closer Look At Equity & Justice: Transparency vs Gatekeeping
Help students realize...

● Expertise is often specific to a problem
● Experts can be wrong
● Experts disagree
● Experts write in different genres
● Non-experts can synthesize expert knowledge
● Credible sources share process for creating information and rationale for conclusions
● Trust of sources is based on purpose and process of creation of information
Prompts to help bridge the gap…

What are the most common authoritative sources in students’ lives (outside school)?
What are the most common authoritative sources in students’ lives (outside school)? *From Summer 2021*

- Twitter/social media
- Influencers
- Celebrities
- NYTimes/Chrissy Teigen
- Teachers
- Parents/Family
- Sports coaches
- Bosses!

- Informal networks (eg group texts)
- Wikipedia
- Random online webs
- Religious groups
- Peers
- Community members (eg interest groups, mutual aid, activists, sororities/fraternities, all of it! :D)

- What does “social media” mean/entail? (context of why I’m looking, expertise, bias,...)
What are the most common authoritative sources in students’ lives (outside school)?

How does that authority get constructed?

What limits the credibility of these sources?
What are the most common authoritative sources in students’ lives (outside school)? *From Summer 2021*

**How does that authority get constructed?**

- Success (whatever that looks like contextually) - example: stock market advice from different sources who are successful to a good degree
- Social media - number of followers
- Because an instructor encouraged students to use a particular expert/source - but taking the time to unpack that for themselves (eg group exercise to determine the parameters for credibility) = metacognition, agency, ownership, responsibility!
- Authority may be constructed by language/jargon

**What limits the credibility of these sources?**

- Racism, ageism, and sexism have a lot to do with the assumed/constructed credibility of sources
- “Who gets called professor/doctor/Mrs”
- Authenticity and embodied knowledge
We’re all engaged in academia, and we value research. But who else in our areas might have expertise that might be valuable?

What would make a non-academic an expert in a field?
Helping learners understand authority/expertise

One way is through “lateral reading” generally described as searching for information about a source while reading the source.

- Even if a source is scholarly, has the author remained in good stead since the source was published?
- Does the publication platform (journal, website, etc.) have a good reputation?
- What additional information exists to corroborate or refute the source?

More detailed information is available from Stanford’s Civic Online Reasoning project.

Another example: The SIFT Method, developed by Mike Caulfield, Washington State University Vancouver.
Information has Value
Why should students care about the ability to cite a source?
What is important for students to be able to do in relation to the value of information?

i.e. learning goals - *their* “WHY”!!

How will we know students are able to do this?

i.e. assessment - the WHAT and HOW
Students have gotten the plagiarism talk in so many classes…
Getting *real* as a cohort of instructors -
Among key elements for a successful seminar

Prompt: Can you think of any time one of your students plagiarized? In relation to what threshold concept(s) have their previous learning experiences likely lacked support?

*Participants write independently, then share as comfortable*
(Re)framing our expectations

How can we explicitly connect these learning outcomes to our students’ personal and professional goals?

The big “why”... *But WHY should I care?*
Across the Disciplines, Throughout the Curriculum @ URI

URI’s Information Literacy Rubric

Link:

B4. Information Literacy General Education Rubric

Context - URI’s Information Literacy Rubric is based on the IL Standards, not the Framework.
ACRL Information Literacy

**IL Standards**
- List of basic competencies
- Checklist to complete
- Less about knowledge and concepts
- Missing emphasis on context
- Encourages use of low hanging fruit

**IL Framework**
- Fundamental threshold concepts
- Support student learning of the concepts
- Holistic view of information landscape
- Highlighting context
- Thinking critically, developing knowledge
ACRL Information Literacy

**IL Standards**

1. Determines the Extent of Information Needed
2. Accesses the Needed Information
3. Critically Evaluates Information and its Sources
4. Uses Information Effectively to Accomplish a Specific Purpose
5. Uses Information Ethically and Legally

**IL Framework**

1. Scholarship as Conversation
2. Research as Inquiry
3. Authority is Constructed and Contextual
4. Information Creation as Process
5. Searching as Strategic Exploration
6. Information has Value
Mapping the curriculum - URI Gen Ed

Connecting course learning outcomes to Information Literacy rubric

Reflect on the content of this week, while reviewing the IL rubric, consider your class research assignment or activity.

What connections can you make from the rubric to your research assignment?

Is your course already a B4 course? Which rubric elements match your goals?

If your course is not a B4 course, where do Information Literacy concepts overlap with your current course goals?
Mapping the curriculum - my program

Connecting course learning outcomes to Information Literacy rubric

Reflect on the content of this week, while reviewing the IL rubric, consider your class research assignment or activity.

Where does my course fit in my program?

How are we as a department fostering the literacy development (aka think like an X!) of our students in our discipline?
Last Day: Virtual Poster Presentation

Peer Feedback!
Please include:

1. The course learning outcome
2. How it connects to outcome(s) from the [Information Literacy Rubric](#)
3. How will you measure progress of student learning in the outcome area: how will it be assessed?
4. What learning activity/ies will you design to help them get there?
5. What concerns and challenges do you see/anticipate?

(Please use the slide with your name on it and replace the prompts with your answers.)
Time for...
10 minute break!

Photo by Kalen Emsley on Unsplash
Welcome Back!

1. Roadmap: Introductions, Institutional Contexts, & Information Literacy Definitions
2. Mini-tour of the Researching Across Disciplines High Impact Teaching Seminar @URI
3. Impact @ URI + Next Steps: How Might I Do This?
Impact at URI
Stephanie Forschner-Dancause

Lecturer, Director of the Certificate Program in Cannabis Studies

https://web.uri.edu/pharmacy/meet/stephanie-forschner-dancause/
Course Context

BPS 206: Foundations of Cannabis Studies (new course) - Gateway course in new program; Challenge: “Industry [is] new and under-researched, much of the information out there is from non-scholarly sources. I’m concerned about the student’s ability to discern credible information from misinformation.”

Notes: Because this was a new course, Stephanie was able to build from the ground up.
Critically evaluate information and its sources

1. Overview of threaded assignment

2. Topic 1: Establishing and applying evaluation criteria
   a. Assignment 1: Interview (to begin to evaluate information informally)
   b. Discussion 2: Misconceptions and Misinformation discovered through interview
   c. Discussion 3: What are some characteristics of good or ‘reliable’ information?
   d. Assignment 2: Applying evaluation criteria to various information sources

3. Topic 2: Using Infographics to teach the value of information and authority
   a. Discussion 4: Evaluate a cannabis infographic
   b. Assignment 3: State Regulations Infographic

4. Topic 3: Developing a Research questions: Topic Selection
   a. Discussion 6: What are you thinking of working on and why?
   b. Assignment 4: Pro/Con table for Modes of Administration
   c. Discussion 7: Refined topic including Mode of Administration

5. Reinforce of Authority is constructed and contextual and Information has value
   a. Assignment 5: Mini paper on molecular target of your product
   b. Assignment 6: Create a diagram of the mechanism of action for your product
   c. Threaded Assignment Introduction: ties assignments 3, 4, 5, and 6 together into Introduction to Cannabis Product
Activities

Included a number of scaffolded and connected projects including these:

(1) Have students use the online forums to establish criteria for evaluation of sources, and then apply the criteria to potential sources.

(2) Infographic that requires students to locate, decipher, and graphically represent the cannabis regulations in their home state (with citations).

(3) “explain the endocannabinoid system and its potential functions in human physiology” by creating a diagram to show its mechanism of action (with citations.)
Outcomes (among others)

Power of the citation for students

- Aid in evaluating the credibility of the source
- Fewer author-less citations
- Higher quality sources
- Use to build their own credibility
- Prove the value of their own work
- Number of citations increases
- Plagiarism decreased
URI faculty example 2

Megan Echevarria

Professor of Spanish

https://web.uri.edu/languages/meet/megan-echevarria/
Course Context

SPA 471: Topics in Latin American Literature and Culture (existing course) - “analyze the beauty, joy, ugliness and sadness of soccer in the contemporary Spanish-speaking world: (key topics include: money & power, sports industry & globalization, sport & politics, sport & psychology, hooligan mentalities and fanaticism, etc.)”
Activities / Changes

Main problem: students’ inappropriate use of others’ intellectual property.

Hypothesis: Inappropriate uses might be grounded in low or underdeveloped ethical self-esteem or low or underdeveloped intellectual self-esteem.

Overarching goal to “feed students’ ethical and intellectual self-esteem”:

- changing the way that they thought about research, research integrity and academic integrity
- framing those ideas in terms of fairness, fair play, equity and power

How: created structured assignments that divided two different research projects into manageable step-by-step processes that served to connect the frameworks of information literacy to course content
Results

Allocated more weeks to the preparation of the first project.

“What I discovered was that the additional time on the first try gave them the chance to develop that ethical and intellectual self-esteem so that for the second try they felt empowered. When I told them that they had four weeks to prepare the second presentation and said they just needed to follow the same process that they had followed the first time – just more efficiently – they did not even bat an eyelash. It was not stressful and I believe that they really enjoyed their increase sense of self-esteem and efficacy by completing the second one more efficiently, with less time.”
URI faculty example 3

Justin Richard

Assistant Professor,
College of
Environment and
Life Sciences

https://web.uri.edu/favs/justin-richard/
Course Context

AVS 101: Introduction to Animal Science (existing course) -
“Foundational course for Animal Science majors, with approximately 100-120 students enrolled, almost entirely first semester students. This course is a prerequisite for many other courses in AVS. I am currently helping to incorporate scientific literacy learning outcomes into the course, so that students are better prepared to use science effectively in upper level courses, in a broader effort to improve the scientific literacy of the graduates of the program.”
Design a series of assignments that make scientific literacy skills visible to the instructor and the student instead of requiring implied hidden skills.

Assignments revealed the process the student took to gather, evaluate and interpret information, and gradually build toward the application of these skills.

Project design emphasized:

- Scaffolded skill development opportunities with feedback
- Detailed instruction with frequent connections to “real world” applications
- Academic freedom to focus on topic of interest
- Expression of creativity and engagement with peers
The Evidence of the Application of Scientific Literacy Skills assignment enabled a final evaluation of specific skills associated with each SLO. On average, students achieved 3 of the SLOs.

**IMPACT**

Students performed well, earning $82 \pm 13$ points on the project, indicating the instruction was sufficient to allow success.

Points earned correlated with SLOs achieved ($p < 0.001$), indicating the assignments effectively assessed the SLOs.

Only students who submitted the final project in complete form could be assessed ($n = 132$).

Students had good awareness of their own learning, with self-reported SLOs correlating with the number of SLO's evidenced in the final project.
RAD Impact

2021: More than 10,000 enrollment seats of students experienced improved IL instruction in courses taught by RAD participants (2018-21)
Q&A
How Can I Do This at Home?

How Might This Look Like for Me?

Photo by Prateek Katyal on Unsplash
Return to your initial notes:

Where are these skills addressed in our curricula, and how?
Brainstorm - independent writing time:

● What actionable and sustainable next steps can I take to help improve student development as informed citizens?

● What is the current Information Literacy landscape at my institution?
  ○ Which programs/units/disciplines are leaders in this area?
  ○ Which would benefit the most from integration of IL skills and support?
  ○ Which might struggle with integration of these skills?
  ○ What already require IL, but need an extra boost?

● What departments/partners/committees would be the most receptive to leading or participating in a similar endeavor?
Brainstorm - discuss at your table:

- What actionable and sustainable next steps can I take to help improve student development as informed citizens?
- What is the current Information Literacy landscape at my institution?
  - Which programs/units/disciplines are leaders in this area?
  - Which would benefit the most from integration of IL skills and support?
  - Which might struggle with integration of these skills?
  - What already require IL, but need an extra boost?
- What departments/partners/committees would be the most receptive to leading or participating in a similar endeavor?
Find your people!
**Stakeholder Map**

**Quadrat 2**
- **Priority**: medium
- Partners who have useful expertise, but are reluctant to engage with you.
- **Tip**: communicate and underscore your value as a potential partner

**Quadrat 4**
- **Priority**: high
- Partners who have a lot to contribute and are willing to engage with you.
- **Tip**: Engage and partner with them short- and long-term.

**Quadrat 1**
- **Priority**: low
- Partners with relatively little contribution and willingness.
- **Tip**: engage them tactically, otherwise just keep them informed

**Quadrat 3**
- **Priority**: medium
- Partners who really want to engage with you, but bring relatively low contribution.
- **Tip**: communicate and underscore their value as a potential partner

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Ala, K., Tóth, K., & Sebestyén, L. Leveraging our COVID-momentum for cultural change through strategic campus alliances. PPOD Conference 2021.
What actionable and sustainable next steps can I take to help improve student development as informed citizens?
A “jab” of justice! :-)  

Inward & outward
Inoculation against Misinformation


Six word short story: your journey in this session!

How does information literacy help our democratic belonging as responsible citizens?

tinyurl.com/aacusix

Thank you!

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Materials available at
https://tinyurl.com/AACU2022RAD