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# How do YOU Measure Student Learning? SAILS, ILCC, & RGR at GVSU

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# How do **YOU** Measure Student Learning? SAILS, ILCC, & RGR at GVSU

MLA Annual Conference

*Liaison Librarians, GVSU University Libraries*

Pete Coco

Emily Frigo

Hazel McClure

Debbie Morrow



Wednesday, 26 October 2011, 9-10 am

# Discussion questions

- *What are your institution's curricular goals and objectives? How does your library's work dovetail with those goals?*
- *What skills would you like to see further integrated into the curriculum?*
- *How would you advocate for that integration amongst your colleagues?*
- *What kind of tools could you use in that effort?*

# SAILS: Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills

Debbie Morrow

Liaison Librarian: Engineering, Computing &  
Information Systems, Mathematics, Statistics

# Why do Librarians Assess?

1. Direct application of assessment data to increase student learning
2. Respond to calls for accountability
3. Improve library instruction programs

# How do Librarians Assess?

Options include ...

surveys

interviews

focus groups

portfolios

concept maps

classroom assessment techniques

tests

performance assessments

rubrics

*more ...*

How to choose??

# Choosing an Assessment Approach

"Guiding Questions for Assessing Information Literacy in Higher Education" (Oakleaf & Kaske, 2009)

Six questions can aid librarians in selecting a best assessment approach for a given context:

- Are we ready to conduct an information literacy assessment?
- Why are we conducting this assessment?
- What are the stakeholder needs?
- Will the assessment tell us what we want to know?
- What are the costs of this assessment?
- What are the institutional implications of this assessment?



- Developed at Kent State University, beginning in 2002
- Funding from IMLS, Ohio Board of Regents Technology Initiative Grant, & ARL partnership
- Based on ACRL's [Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education](#) (2000)
- Pilot project included 6-7 ARLs, 2002-2005
- Valid and reliable, considered standardized
- Used by at least 96 institutions, AA through Doctoral
- **Conducted twice so far at Grand Valley:**
  - 2006-07: 304 First-Year, 102 Fourth-Year
  - 2009-10: 204 First-Year, 283 Fourth-Year





## Are we ready to conduct an information literacy assessment?

- Two necessary elements for grounding assessment:
  - Desired learning outcomes are defined
  - Opportunity for implementing improvement exists
- 2005: First GVSU Dean of University Libraries, re-conceiving the mission and vision of GVSU's library services
- Ready? maybe not, but ...



Why are we conducting this assessment?  
and is our purpose formative,  
or summative?

- Institution has adopted assessment and continuous improvement as a university-wide expectation
- By 2006-07 the Provost's Office was strongly encouraging the Libraries to begin benchmarking with a nationally standardized tool such as SAILS
- Libraries' use of SAILS could be formative for the Library Faculty in designing an information literacy program for the future



What are the stakeholder needs? (and who are the stakeholders?)

- GVSU stakeholders in regard to IL:
  - Dean of University Libraries
  - Library Faculty
  - GVSU Faculty
  - GVSU General Education Program
  - GVSU students
- Using SAILS we could
  - demonstrate participation in assessment of the unit's impact on student learning
  - benchmark our students externally and internally
  - feed into a larger unit conversation about the shape and nature of library contributions to student learning in a changing future



Will the assessment tell us what we want to know?

"What do we want to know?" -- perhaps THE key question that we didn't ask before we administered SAILS.

What we *were* able to learn:

- how GVSU students compare in IL skills to college students nationwide (baseline, external comparison): **as well as, or better than, most comparable participating institutions**
- if GVSU students improve their IL skills during the course of their college education (longitudinal, internal comparison): **YES, somewhat**
- if UL information literacy programs contribute to student learning and information literacy: **by indirect inference, we could be more effective ...**



What are the costs of this assessment?  
-- time, financial, personnel?  
initial and continuing?

- participation cost for one year -- \$2000
- marketing to participants, including incentives -- \$500?
- staff time -- primarily, small committee work to analyze and report
- conduct perhaps every 3rd or 4th year
- **TOTAL: ~\$2000-\$3000, pretty modest cost, really**



What are the institutional implications of this assessment?

What does SAILS really measure?

- What does it tell us? What DIDN'T it tell us?
- Does information gleaned from this assessment help inform campus discussions about the impact of the University Libraries on student learning at GVSU? or do we need to explore other tools and avenues of assessment?

Results and reports from the 2006-07 and 2008-09 iterations of SAILS at Grand Valley:

- On the ['About'](http://www.gvsu.edu/library/about-188.htm) page on the GVSU Libraries web site ([www.gvsu.edu/library/about-188.htm](http://www.gvsu.edu/library/about-188.htm))



## Our conclusions regarding SAILS:

- Doing SAILS isn't enough. More SAILS isn't the right answer.
- Administering SAILS **has** been valuable:
  - GVSU students are competitive with their peers at other institutions in IL skills;
  - Conducting SAILS and analyzing the data has been a great "conversation starter" among the Library faculty about what it is that we **really** want to measure, and how we can attempt to do it.



*To be continued ...*

# Information Literacy Core Competencies (ILCC) document

Emily Frigo

Liaison Librarian: Art & Design, Italian,  
Writing 098 & 150 Library Coordinator



# Information Literacy Core Competencies (ILCC) document

-Emily Frigo

Intended to be a multifaceted tool inclusive of the library, General Education program, and broader academic community

Within the library:

- undergird our Instruction Program
- define standards we embrace professionally as librarians
- provide a tool and shared language for outreach

Larger University:

- information literacy is a component of every general education class
- create a shared understanding of the breadth of skills information literacy encompasses

## Grand Valley State University Libraries

### Information Literacy Core Competencies

Sarah Beaubien, Emily Frigo, Mary O'Kelly, Kim Ranger, Jodi Tyron

Information Literacy is a set of skills which includes finding information effectively, thinking critically about resources, synthesizing & incorporating information into one's knowledge base, creatively expressing & effectively communicating new knowledge, using information ethically, and using knowledge to better society.

Although the term Information Literacy is most prevalent in the context of libraries, its philosophy is embedded in all environments of learning. This document is an attempt to clarify these concepts in a manner that would include the broader academic community. To that end, information literacy concepts defined in this document were mapped wherever possible to General Education Program outcomes. Every effort was made to use inclusive language and to make concepts applicable to any academic discipline. A scaffolding hierarchy was used throughout this document; skills goal outcomes are intended to build upon one another.

Skills Goals	Outcomes
<p><b>I. Construct a question or problem statement</b> Able to articulate need for existing information and literature and develop a research question.</p>	<p><i>General Education and Basic Skills Courses:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Define the topic and the information needed</li><li>▪ Seek information beyond course materials as necessary</li><li>▪ Develop a manageable focus appropriate to criteria of assignment</li></ul> <p><i>Major Program:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Actively and independently seek sources beyond course materials</li><li>▪ Articulate research question within confines/context of discipline</li><li>▪ Use discipline-specific terminology</li></ul> <p><i>Graduate Programs:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Develop an original research question which contributes to the body of knowledge in the field</li></ul>

# Information Literacy Core Competencies (ILCC) document

Faculty focus groups chosen to get feedback

- awareness of information literacy
- gauge receptivity to document
- whether there was a need for the document
- language in document was inclusive of various disciplines
- if more supporting practice documents or related tools were needed

# Information Literacy Core Competencies (ILCC) document

Focus group findings:

- many ways to describe information literacy

# Definition of Information Literacy

**Figure 1: How teaching faculty talk about information literacy.**

<i>How faculty talk about information literacy:</i>	
critical thinking sense making communicating paraphrasing citing consumer of research defining a question constructing logical arguments supporting logical arguments managing sources	organizing information synthesizing information evaluating information finding information searching for information ethically using information understanding information gauging applicability of information obtaining information critiquing information
<i>Note. From focus group transcripts, June 10-11, 2009.</i>	

# Information Literacy Core Competencies (ILCC) document

## More findings:

- clarification of language in document
- desire for supporting documentation
- addition of new objectives
- **ASSESSMENT**

## Results:

- [new iteration of the document](#)
  - ([www.gvsu.edu/library/ilcc](http://www.gvsu.edu/library/ilcc))
- addition of preamble
- creation of supporting documentation

# Information Literacy Core Competencies (ILCC) document

## Where are we at now?

- Changes to General Education Program are coming
- We are creating an information literacy assessment document and updating the ILCC document accordingly
- Growth of our Instruction Program and upcoming new library

=

New opportunities and renewed focus on the University Libraries!

# The Research Guidance Rubric (RGR)

Pete Coco

Liaison Librarian: English,  
Environmental Studies, Writing  
&

Hazel McClure

Liaison Librarian: Health Administration,  
Public & Nonprofit Administration, Social Work



# What is the Research Guidance Rubric?

[\[link\]](#)\*

- an assessment tool for research assignment prompts
- a tool for collaboration

**"Assigning Inquiry: How Handouts for Research Assignments Guide Today's College Students,"** Alison J. Head and Michael B. Eisenberg, Project Information Literacy Progress Report, University of Washington's Information School, July 13, 2010

\*<http://gvsu.edu/library/research-guidance-rubric-for-assignment-design-175.htm>

# What skills does the RGR integrate into the curriculum?

- GVSU's Information Literacy Core Competencies
  - Skills Goals are complimented & supported by guided research assignments
  - Ex: Skills Goal II: Locating & Gathering Info
- AACU's Information Literacy VALUE Rubrics

# How does the RGR integrate these skills into the curriculum?

- reaching faculty through:
  - campus partners
  - library liaisons

# References

Oakleaf, M., & Kaske, N. (2009). Guiding Questions for Assessing Information Literacy in Higher Education. *portal: Libraries and the Academy*, 9(2), 273-286.

Tyron, J., Frigo, E., & O'Kelly, M. (2010). Using Faculty Focus Groups to Assess Information Literacy Core Competencies at a University Level. *Journal of Information Literacy*, 4(2), 62-77.

# Discussion & Conclusion

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