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Libraries and General Education: New Strategies to Enhance Freshman Orientation, Faculty Collaboration, and Curriculum Development

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Abstract: My research will attempt to re-evaluate the academic library's role in supporting a general education program. The emphasis will focus on student centeredness, faculty collaboration, outreach and curriculum support. In the short time that I have worked in academic libraries I have learned that quality customer service and reference desk work is far from the list of priorities in some settings. Coming from the public library I found this to be unacceptable. We are service providers and the way in which we communicate with students and faculty is important. As professionals we should do more in the way of making the transition to college as seamless as possible for freshmen and continuing education students. It is imperative of us to adapt to the changing ways in which students interpret, process, and evaluate information. This involves embracing Web 2.0 and the social networking tools that students are using. Libraries will increasingly need to work ahead of the information curve if we are to be an essential resource for today's college freshmen.

Keywords: General Education, Academic Libraries, Faculty Collaboration, Library Outreach, Student Centered Libraries, Information Literacy, Curriculum Support

THE FIRST SEMESTER of college can be an overwhelming experience for freshman students. They are thrown into a world where time management, critical thinking, and studying are important. One way in which libraries can help freshman with the transition to college is by working with the freshman year program. Medgar Evers College has a Freshman Seminar program that requires students to attend at least one library orientation class in their first semester. The session lasts for 70 minutes and gives the freshmen some exposure to the resources available in the library. This is not enough time to absorb all of what the library has to offer in terms of how it supports what will be required of them throughout their academic careers. Freshman are more likely to succeed academically if they are required to take a for credit Information Literacy class early in their academic career where they can gain exposure to the research methods they will need in their academic careers. Moreover, Librarians can work directly with new students to establish themselves as a resource students can refer to throughout college.

What else can librarians do to make the transition to college more seamless for freshmen? First, reach out to high school librarians in local school districts whenever possible. This can give us an idea of where students are regarding information literacy. The New York City Department of Education's Office of Library Services has constructed the Information Fluency Continuum, a comprehensive tool, librarians can use to prepare a scaffold for core curriculum courses to help grade school librarians and teachers align their curriculums with Information

Literacy standards. The 249-page document offers detailed, discipline specific, library supporting rubrics, for each grade. Freshmen need to demonstrate their knowledge of the ACRL Information Literacy Standards in their work. There are five ACRL Information Literacy standards. While the language in the Information Fluency Continuum is more suitable for grade school students, the learning objectives and performance indicators are similar. Another difference is that instead of five standards there are only three: 1. Using inquiry to build understanding and create new knowledge; 2. Pursuing personal and aesthetic growth; and 3. Demonstrating social responsibility. The continuum contains learning and performance indicators for grades K through 12. However, the focus here is grade 12. The first standard, the “inquiry phase” has similarities to the ACRL standards. We won’t use words like “connect” and “wonder” at the college level. The more appropriate expressions are “prior knowledge”, “essential ideas”, and “diverse opinions”.

What does this have to do with student-centered libraries? As many in the college library world know, these standards challenge students to think critically about the information they acquire. Information Literacy skills are not just useful for college, they are lifelong skills that students will need once they enter the professional world. If we can assume the ideal situation: where school librarians work with teachers in the K-12 environment, help them incorporate information fluency standards into lessons, reach out to the K-12 community to share information about the ACRL standards and how to best prepare high school seniors for college level research, and collaborative efforts are strong then when freshman arrive on campus, they will make the connection that critical thinking and learning outcomes in the Information Fluency Continuum are the same as the ACRL IL standards. Thus, freshmen will be better prepared when it’s time to conduct research. This is student centeredness.

According to the NYCDOE Office of Library Services Information Fluency Continuum; “Effective libraries help students explore content deeply, pursue their own academic interest, and engage in inquiry, all of which support the development of high level literacy skills.” (NYCDOE Office of Library Services Information Fluency Continuum, 2010) Much of this is missing in college. To adopt these characteristics there must be collaboration between the library and the freshman seminar program. The freshman seminar program is a direct link to the department responsible for recruiting freshman students, an opportunity that most academic libraries overlook. The transition to college would be easier for freshmen if libraries met them at their level, so they could see college libraries share similar ideas to high school ones. (See table 1)

College librarians are realizing the benefit of reaching out to the high school libraries to enhance services for freshmen. At Saddleback Community College in Mission Viejo California, the librarians have developed a program called Life Skills 2000.

Librarians and teachers are working together to incorporate information literacy into their curriculums in elementary and secondary schools, as well as community colleges and universities across California, but change has been slow. Although the majority of current students are at least minimally literate, they often do not understand even the basics about college libraries and library services. In many cases, they do not know how to ask the questions that will elicit the desired answers or that they should ask such questions of librarians.

Librarians at community colleges throughout California increasingly encounter students that have little or no basic knowledge of how libraries work. With an enrollment of 22,000, Saddleback Community College is a growing institution located in an upper-middle class area of affluent South Orange County, California. While this prosperous setting would appear to attract the brightest and the best, and certainly those with home access to personal computers, the majority of students that librarians encounter are both misinformed and bewildered by the college library. (Wassmann, C. E., 2000)

If freshmen from affluent communities are struggling, imagine what it must be like for disadvantaged students who are told to visit the library with very little knowledge of its purpose, other than to lend books. The Life Skills 2000 program focuses on more than just academics; the librarians know that library anxiety is an issue; they understand why it is important to communicate with high school seniors before they graduate. Even if the students plan on attending other colleges, they gain exposure to libraries at the college level. “Life Skills 2000 was designed to decrease this anxiety by establishing four goals: (1) make the college library more accessible to high school seniors; (2) promote the role of the college library as a research/information center; (3) ease the transition for students from high school to college; and (4) encourage the use of the library’s resources.” (Wassmann, C. E., 2000) Setting these goals is a step in the right direction in creating a library that is student-centered. The outreach work that librarians do is key as is exploring ways to enhance services to freshman.

Today’s freshman are sometimes referred to as Generation Y or Millennials; born between the mid-1970s up to the early 2000s. They are known for their familiarity and use of communication and digital media devices. In an article written in 2002: “Teaching Information Literacy to Generation Y,” author Kate Manual presents Information Literacy teaching strategies that college librarians can use. Manual implies that Generation Y students have a unique learning style that we should adapt to, “Prominent among their preferences are visual and kinesthetic learning styles. They have incredibly positive views of technologies’ potentialities and their own abilities with technologies. Like all students, they learn more effectively when taught in accordance with their learning style preferences and when their worldviews are acknowledged” (Manual, K., 2002) This speaks to the importance of making learning meaningful. We have to adapt and modify traditional teaching styles when it comes to information literacy. Many students are visual learners who frown upon reading long, linear text; they want information to be right to the point.

Students want their information fast and delivered efficiently. Indeed, some speculate that the Web with its hyperlinks has already begun to transform the way in which humans process textual information: “What happens when you follow these links? You react with an itchy mouse finger, but not with your mind. Instead of finishing the paragraph you are reading, you’re already off to another server to get more information. Your eyes are attracted by underlined text because it stands out—it’s different, and must somehow be more important than the plain text that surrounds it . . . Our minds are becoming more and more dispersed by these reflexes . . .” (Manual, K., 2002) This is how freshman process information. Incorporate current events and issues that they can relate to. Keeping the presentation interesting and meaningful is crucial. “Because materials must be made meaningful to learners in order to be comprehensible by them, the “crucial element in all good teaching/learning experiences” becomes the learners themselves—what they know, what their interests are, how they learn. The real focus of the changes to teaching methods and materials described herein is structuring

the learning experience to (attempt to) guarantee the success of the learners.” (Manual, K., 2002) Librarians should study the way Millennials learn to make research more intriguing. “Good teaching has thus long recognized that the tempo and pacing of instruction, as well as the instructional strategies used, need to vary to keep students’ interest.” (Manual, K., 2002)

In another article: “Curiosity and Creativity as Attributes of Information Literacy” published in *Reference & User Services Quarterly* Fall 2004, the authors discuss developing information literacy lessons that incorporate creativity and invoke curiosity. “Creativity must also be encouraged for learning to occur successfully. In fact, the fostering of creative ways could easily be considered a major goal of education as a whole. Information-literacy instructors can incorporate curiosity and creativity into reference work and classroom teaching practically in many different ways.” (Hensley, Arp, & Woodard, 2004) Inquiry based learning keeps learners engaged. Information literacy assignments should include inquiries that students can relate to. The topics should be relevant to the curriculum and promote inquiry. Authors Hensley, Arp & Woodward make reference to the inquiry method of teaching. “...characterized as a process in which individuals formulate questions, investigate widely, and then create new knowledge.” (Hensley, Arp, & Woodard, 2004) They also note how students should “...construct a personal understanding from incompatible and inconsistent information...” and that this ability is developed through engaging in a question-based way of learning” (Hensley, Arp, & Woodard, 2004) When students are able to make this connection their curiosity is piqued. The authors make a valid point about the classroom, or in our case, the library, being an environment that promotes inquiry.

As a librarian in K-12, I posted various questions on the walls, such as, what temperature does water turn to gas at Fahrenheit? What is the capital city of Uganda? Name all of the states in the U.S. that touch the Pacific Ocean. Visitors would read their way through the library. I would cite the title of the source along with the call number so students could locate the answers. There was something to learn, ask or think about in every direction.

Visuals with thought provoking questions will encourage students to seek answers, and when they do, they learn just how to use the library. I display inquiries that challenge the students to think critically about issues they will deal with once they enter the professional world. “The inquiry method of teaching in the classroom is generally accepted by experts and has been discussed in depth in the literature. A classroom that emphasizes inquiry method is a classroom that stresses problem solving.” (Hensley, Arp, & Woodard, 2004) Hensley, Arp & Woodward also cite a 1993 article: “Promoting Active Learning: Strategies for the College Classroom by Chet Meyers and Thomas B. Jones where they quote them referring to an ideal learning environment: “...provides opportunities for students to talk and listen, read, write, and reflect as they approach course content through problem-solving exercises, informal small groups, simulations, case studies, role playing, and other activities—all of which require students to apply what they are learning.” (Meyers & Jones, 1993)

Libraries can reach out to students by starting a Facebook page for the library and posting a new research question daily. It’s fun, and it keeps us in tune with the way Generation Y students retrieve information. Mobile devices are terrific mediums for reference. “Mobile devices are becoming difficult for libraries to ignore. In 2009, one-third of all Americans accessed the web through a cell phone or smart phone and 4.1 billion text messages were sent daily. The statistics are even higher in academia, with more than half of all undergraduates owning a mobile device that can access the internet and 94% sending and receiving text

messages. In 2008, the Pew Internet and American Life Project estimated that by 2020, people will primarily connect to the internet through mobile devices.” (Farkas, M., 2010) Reaching out to freshmen via a mobile device will revolutionize libraries and transform the way information literacy is taught. However, this trend is still in its infant stage.

While mobile device ownership is a major trend in American society, few libraries and educational institutions have developed resources and services for mobile users. According to Educause, over 50% of schools had done nothing as of 2009 to adapt their web-based services for handheld devices. This is starting to change as schools and libraries begin creating versions of their websites for mobile users and designing services for mobile devices.

In addition to creating a mobile website or application, there are many other resources and services libraries can mobilize for their users, including reference services, instructional content, and the catalog. Some newer and upcoming features of mobile devices also hold great promise for creating interesting location-based library services. With the mainstreaming of mobile devices, libraries can no longer ignore this important trend. By mobilizing our library resources and services, we make ourselves accessible to patrons wherever they are, from a device that fits in their pocket. (Farkas, M., 2010)

Another service oriented trend is virtual reference; many libraries have incorporated virtual reference into their plan of service and even instruction. Virtual reference involves libraries taking advantage of Web 2.0, chat, *QuestionPoint*, and text messaging. Students and faculty submit reference queries and have them answered 24 hours per day. At one library in Charleston, South Carolina, the librarians have implemented virtual reference and according to Steven K. Profit, Assistant professor and Virtual Reference Services Librarian at the Marlene and Nathan Addlestone Library of the College of Charleston: “Instant messaging found ready acceptance on both ends of the reference transaction. All members of the reference staff adapted smoothly to providing this new service and to incorporating it into the roster of desk duties. Even more so, the students took to it like candy. It is a joy to see all the requests we get to be added to students’ buddy lists. I’ve observed that we receive many repeat patrons, which indicates a high level of user satisfaction. The instant messaging reference service recorded 164 transactions from late August through the end of the year. In 2007, there were 474 IM reference queries, surpassing 24/7 chat and e-mail.” (Profit, 2009)

Another issue to consider is culture. As Mundava & Gray (2008) point out: “Some of the barriers that can hinder student centeredness are: language/communication, general cultural adjustments, loneliness, technological barriers, adjusting to different educational systems, different library systems”. I have seen this first hand at Medgar Evers College. The majority of our students hail from the Caribbean and are adjusting to life in a new country. Although we are there to serve their academic needs, some students are reluctant to ask for help, “Often freshmen do not have adequate computer or library skills and will not seek help for fear of appearing uninformed. Many students are bewildered by the size and complexity of both the library building and the collection, and are apt to feel anxious while conducting research.” (Wassmann, C. E., 2000) Approaching a student and asking if their research is going okay opens the door to other research questions and I have communicated to the student that I’m a resource for them.

The most effective way librarians can reach out to freshman is collaboration. “Academic librarians are reaching out to freshmen seminar programs, first-year orientations, Introduction to College courses and English composition courses to integrate instruction into the curriculum of these programs. They are working collaboratively with faculty to create customized course-related library sessions and faculty now play a major role in evaluating the effectiveness of library instruction for their classes.” (Boyd-Byrnes, M., & McDermott, D., 2006) Freshman should see that we are all on the same page when it comes to supporting their academic goals. Creating a customized course-related library session is a good strategy to implement. One strategy that I use is preparing a list of resources available in the library that faculty can post onto Blackboard. Once the list has been posted to Blackboard students can access it from anywhere. During Freshman Seminar, students are required to take Speech, English Composition, Communications, Music, and Art. Faculty from any one of these disciplines will meet with me in advance or email what they want the students to obtain from the library orientation. In a best case scenario, faculty will forward their course syllabus.

The method used to implement library instruction is crucial; don’t overwhelm them with dull research tasks they don’t care about. Make the lessons as relevant and real-world based as possible. Information scavenger hunts are fantastic ways to engage freshman. Browse the reference section of your library for resources that can be used. Students can locate the answers to questions relevant to English, Speech, Music, Sociology, Psychology, and even Foreign Language. I’ve used this strategy with K-12 students; I’d randomly select print reference sources and find trivial information for students to locate the answers to. The same can be applied using electronic resources.

Using Facebook is a bit risky when it comes to library outreach. A great deal is at stake when it comes to using this medium for the purposes of promoting the library. However, if it’s approached thoughtfully, Facebook can be a great tool for outreach; it can also be used as an instructional utility. In a study conducted at Valparaiso University in Indiana, a select number of students were surveyed on their opinions about Facebook and Myspace “Because many students seem receptive to the idea of a library presence on social network sites, librarians should consider creating profiles for marketing and publicity purposes. One advertising technique that has worked well for some has been word of mouth through library instruction sessions, freshman orientations, blogs, and the library website. When mentioning the profile, librarians can invite students to friend them and ask questions through the social network platform. Thus, students will know the option is there but not be pressured by the more obtrusive friend request.” (Connell, R, 2009)

If we teach students about using information legally and ethically, we must set an example. “Librarians who have social network connections with students must be aware that the method of communication within Facebook also matters. If a student asks a reference question via a personal message, it is not appropriate to respond by posting a response to that student’s wall. The wall is a public means of communication and, therefore, is not an appropriate medium for private messages such as reference question responses.” (Connell, R, 2009) Even with Facebook, freshman are concerned about asking a “dumb question”. They fear their peers will ask: “How could you not know that?” On another note, some librarians may feel that we should not communicate with students on Facebook. If the questions are related to library science or research; I will address it. If it’s something non-academic just disregard the question.

“Library and librarian profiles on social network sites would be welcomed by many students and, therefore, should be strongly considered. In recent years, Facebook has been the social network Web site of choice for college students, and this study supported that site’s prevalence. Academic libraries considering experimenting with social network sites might have better success with Facebook than MySpace because of the former site’s popularity with students. When creating Facebook profiles, libraries must exercise caution and let students set the parameters of the social network relationship. If students contact the library via Facebook, by all means, the library should respond in the same fashion. Mass friending should be avoided because it is a technique that may repel more students than it attracts.” (Connell, R, 2009) The issue of social networking ethics is evolving as we speak. As information professionals in academic settings we can’t dismiss utilizing social networking for reference completely. If your library has a technology committee, consider establishing policies for your library’s Facebook page.

A Word on Collaboration

The idea of having to develop ideas on how to implement collaboration strategies between librarians and faculty alarms me. In the information rich culture of today, Library Science is more important than ever. General Education/core curriculum faculty must become familiar with the Information Literacy standards developed by ACRL to enhance instruction. The best way for this to happen is by collaboration. “Collaboration between academic librarians and teaching faculty is the key to a successful library instruction program. However, the great variety in campuses and institutional cultures means that no one strategy will be successful in all libraries, and what works well on one campus may not be successful elsewhere.” (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001) Library collaboration initiatives that are successful on one college campus may not do well on another. “Another aspect of collaboration is when things do not go as planned. Everyone who tries anything new also experiences disappointing results at times, but wisdom is gained from those projects that do not work as well as from those that do.” (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001) Librarians should be prepared for failure when it comes to our outreach and collaboration efforts. This doesn’t mean giving up; it opens the door to alternative methods, be prepared to experiment with new ideas. When developing a plan to enhance collaboration, be willing to mold to the needs of the school’s populous, “...an approach that works well with one professor or department may be unproductive in the department down the hall at the same university.” (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001) This can be challenging, especially where bureaucratic policies determine how the library communicates with the rest of the college.

An important question to ask is: how do our colleagues see us? Librarians have to establish themselves as academic peers. “One recurring condition for effective collaborative projects is that librarians are accepted as peers of the disciplinary faculty as well as integral (and interested) participants in university life; this is the case whether they have academic faculty status or not.” (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001)

Librarians Patricia Mileham (Instructional Librarian at Valparaiso University), Joan Ruelle (Coordinator of User Education at the University of Virginia), and Susan Sykes Berry (Instructional Librarian at the University of Missouri-Kansas City) published an article in the journal *Collection Management* in 2001: “Playing Well with Others: Increasing Your Library-Campus Partnerships”. In their research they refer to “Projects to Write Home About,” which

is a list of ideas that librarians can refer to for collaboration ideas. Some of the projects listed go beyond collaboration, yet they speak to several aspects of librarianship that are useful. See Table 2 for a few that I thought were especially intriguing.

Another great resource for collaboration ideas is in a book entitled: *The Collaborative imperative: Librarians and Faculty Working Together in the Information Universe* by Dick Raspa of Wayne State University and Dane Wardof of Central Michigan University. One particular chapter of note: “The Librarian as Networker: Setting the Standard for Higher Education” by Shellie Jefferies of Wayne State University. Jefferies lists ten collaborative suggestions that on the surface may seem obvious, but they remind us of what makes librarians so special, people skills. See Table 3.

Curriculum Support

A research paper organizer is an excellent tool to help students organize their thoughts. Librarians at the St. Andrews Episcopal School library in Austin Texas have developed an organizer called the *Big6 Research Paper Organizer*. Although this too may seem somewhat juvenile for some of my colleagues, every time I introduce the organizer to faculty or students, the response is positive. The *Big6* organizer combines Information Literacy with English composition along with inquiry based planning and organizing. Since students are required to write in their core curriculum classes, the organizer is the perfect resource; it can be used for most Social Science and Humanities courses. The *Big6* organizer is divided into 6 parts, hence the name the *Big6*, they are: 1) Task Definition, 2) Information Seeking Strategies, 3) Location & Access, 4) Use of Information, 5) Synthesis, and 6) Evaluation. In each section, students are presented with Information Literacy questions related to the research they are doing. The *Big6* idea was conceived by Michael Eisenberg, one of the founding Deans of the University of Washington’s Information School. (See Table 4)

Many of my colleagues don’t think library instruction is necessary for a well-rounded and complete education. “...many faculty persist in the belief that assignments alone, without formal bibliographic instruction, are enough to help students develop research skills.” (Ulmer & Fawley, 2009) If faculty and school administrators are convinced to think of information literacy as a Liberal Art instead of just an academic utility, academic librarians would have more support. “Understanding IL as a liberal art will help faculty gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between information literacy, the goals of library instruction and the value of a college education.” (Ulmer & Fawley, 2009) One of the best tools a librarian can use to support a core curriculum is an rubric. “Academic librarians throughout higher education add value to the teaching and learning missions of their institutions though information literacy instruction. To demonstrate the full impact of librarians on students in higher education, librarians need comprehensive information literacy assessment plans, composed of instructional program-level and outcome-level components, that summarize the purpose of information literacy assessment, emphasize the theoretical basis of their assessment efforts, articulate specific information literacy goals and outcomes, describe the major assessment methods and tools used to capture evidence of student learning, report assessment results, and highlight improvements made as a consequence of learning assessment.” (Oakleaf, M., 2009) A librarian colleague and friend of mine, Leslin Charles, Associate Director/Coordinator of Information Literacy Instruction at Berkeley College, developed an Information Literacy rubric divided into eight sections, which encompass all of the performance indicators outlined in

the five ACRL Information Literacy Standards. They are: Developing a research strategy, Selecting finding tools, Searching, Using finding tool features, Retrieving sources, Evaluating sources, Documenting sources, and Understanding economic, legal, and Social issues. When I introduce this rubric to faculty, they respond positively. An information literacy rubric provides a clear picture of our discipline and it justifies the value of library science; something our colleagues need to see. (See Table 5)

This rubric has been designed to assess the extent to which students are able to demonstrate competency in information literacy. The rubric is based upon information literacy competency standards developed for higher education by the Association of College and Research Libraries. The rubric utilizes a generic design that allows faculty the freedom to determine the type of work product that best fits their discipline. The feature that I find most appealing about this rubric is 1. It can be modified to meet the unique instructional outcomes of any Liberal Arts or General Education course and 2. The way it helps faculty understand information literacy. I've discovered that for many Gen Ed. Faculty, information literacy is a relatively new concept. This rubric can help instructors understand that critical thinking is required for research in college and even in the professional world.

Conclusion

As the role of the academic library continues to change librarians need to discover ways to keep the profession relevant. What do students expect from their library? Imagine your library in 10 years. A library that places emphasis on customer service and student-centeredness will employ professionals who have a genuine passion for the job and who are open to change. They will have exceptional interpersonal communications skills. Students should not be intimidated to approach them for help. Librarians who are good at collaborating and networking are good at marketing, compromising, and negotiating. As far as curriculum support, be open to creativity and utilize the library's resources to create instructional tools.

Table 1

<p>1. The information literate student determines the nature and extent of the information needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identifies appropriate investigative methods (e.g., laboratory experiment, simulation, fieldwork) b. Investigates benefits and applicability of various investigative methods c. Investigates the scope, content, and organization of information retrieval systems d. Selects efficient and effective approaches for accessing the information needed from the investigative method or information retrieval system <p>2. The information literate student accesses needed information effectively and efficiently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develops a research plan appropriate to the investigative method b. Identifies keywords, synonyms and related terms for the information needed c. Selects controlled vocabulary specific to the discipline or information retrieval source d. Constructs a search strategy using appropriate commands for the information retrieval system selected (e.g., Boolean operators, truncation, and proximity for search engines; internal organizers such as indexes for books) e. Implements the search strategy in various information retrieval systems using different user interfaces and search engines, with different command languages, protocols, and search parameters f. Implements the search using investigative protocols appropriate to the discipline 	<p>1. Using Inquiry to Build Understanding and Create New Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Connect</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores problems or questions for which there are multiple answers or no “best” answer. • <i>Wonder</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses prior knowledge, understanding of essential ideas and questions, and comprehensive background information to make predictions about specific information needed to answer questions and about the effectiveness of potential sources. • <i>Investigate</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks sources with diverse opinions and points of view and evaluates them carefully, particularly on controversial, historical or culturally based topics. • Counters the effect of bias on the accuracy and reliability of information by actively pursuing a balanced perspective. • Challenges ideas in text and makes notes of questions to pursue in additional sources. • Independently recognizes gaps in information (based on complexity of the problem or question). • Extends search beyond readily available sources to ensure accuracy and comprehensiveness. • Maintains an open attitude about new areas of the subject that were previously unknown or overlooked.
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<p>3. The information literate student evaluates information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system.</p> <p>a. Uses various search systems to retrieve information in a variety of formats</p> <p>b. Uses various classification schemes and other systems (e.g., call number systems or indexes) to locate information resources within the library or to identify specific sites for physical exploration</p> <p>c. Uses specialized online or in person services available at the institution to retrieve information needed (e.g., inter-library loan/document delivery, professional associations, institutional research offices, community resources, experts and practitioners)</p> <p>d. Uses surveys, letters, interviews, and other forms of inquiry to retrieve primary information</p> <p>4. The information literate student, individually or as a member of a group, uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.</p> <p>a. Assesses the quantity, quality, and relevance of the search results to determine whether alternative information retrieval systems or investigative methods should be utilized</p> <p>b. Identifies gaps in the information retrieved and determines if the search strategy should be revised</p> <p>c. Repeats the search using the revised strategy as necessary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Construct</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds a conceptual framework by synthesizing ideas from multiple sources. • Changes own ideas based on the ideas of others. • Develops own point of view and supports with evidence. • <i>Express</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates new understandings through designing, inventing, composing, transplanting and constructing. • Evaluates own product and process throughout the work and uses self-assessment, teacher feedback, and peer feedback to make revisions when necessary. • <i>Reflect</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks, “What about this topic is personally interesting to me and important?” “What about this topic do I want to pursue when I have an opportunity?” “Does this topic have implications for future career or college choices?”
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<p>5. 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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Selects among various technologies the most appropriate one for the task of extracting the needed information (e.g., copy/paste software functions, photocopier, scanner, audio/visual equipment, or exploratory instruments)b. Creates a system for organizing the informationc. Differentiates between the types of sources cited and understands the elements and correct syntax of a citation for a wide range of resourcesd. Records all pertinent citation information for future referencee. Uses various technologies to manage the information selected and organized <p>Association of College & Research Libraries: A Division of the American Library Association http://www.acrl.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/standards/informationliteracycompetency.cfm</p>	<p>2. Pursuing Personal and Aesthetic Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reader/Viewer Response and expression, Personal Exploration, Motivated/Independent Learning <p>3. Demonstrating Social Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Importance of Information to a Democratic Society, Effective Social Interaction to Broaden Understanding, Ethical Behavior in Use of Information <p>New York City Department of Education—Office of Library Services Information Fluency Continuum, Benchmark Skills for Grades K-12 Assessment http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/27A1E84E-65EB-4A54-80DF-51E28D34BF4F/0/InformationFluencyContinuum.pdf</p>
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Table 2

<p>Librarians encourage exhibits of faculty work in the library on a rotating basis. (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001)</p>	<p>Many libraries don't put the faculty's published work on display. If your library doesn't do this, start. This will show the faculty that the library values the work they have done. This is also a good way to align the library's instructional efforts with their ideas.</p>
<p>The library's special collections and campus history departments collaborate on an assigned student research project that involves the students' use of the library's special collections and follows the project all the way through the "process of funding" aspect of the assignment. (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001)</p>	<p>This idea has great potential, it reminds me of the unique situation here at Medgar Evers College; the majority of our students hail from the Caribbean. Medgar Evers College is located in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, New York. Crown Heights has the strongest number of people of Caribbean descent than any other part of the United States. Our library's Archives and Special Collections include materials on and about the Caribbean. This is an opportunity to develop pathfinders that support Caribbean history, literature, education and other and academic interests. Find out what is unique about your library's collection; you will be surprised at what you discover.</p>
<p>A librarian reaches out to the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered (LGBT) student organization on campus through their "Bridges Program," providing them with ways to access information outside the context of classroom assignments. (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001)</p>	<p>Diversity is always a popular topic. Our Social Work and Psychology departments will often request resources on working with LGBT youth. Freshmen students, when asked to select a topic that interest them, will often say "LGBT". Reach out to the LGBT organization at your school, you'll be surprised at how much it can strengthen your existing collection and enhance collaboration.</p>
<p>The library presents two sessions for parents during "Freshmen Parents Weekend" about the Internet and the electronic resources available to students. The event informs parents about students' options for electronic research on campus and for accessing resources while away from campus, while teaching parents a little about using the resources and the Internet for their own needs. (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001)</p>	<p>Collaboration doesn't always have to mean library/faculty; it also recognizes parents as peers in the education process. Academic librarians should encourage parental involvement whenever possible.</p>

<p>When faculty meet with librarians to schedule course instruction, the librarian offers to make a web page to correspond with the course's research assignment, including library-owned resources, Internet resources, and databases that might prove useful. (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001)</p>	<p>Something like this should already be in place at your library; it speaks to the idea of becoming a personal librarian for the faculty member. This demonstrates to the students that their instructors, along with the librarian, are working as a team. We get to show the students the importance of thinking out of the box by using technology. Designing Web pages and linking them to the library's main page is the ultimate collaboration activity.</p>
<p>Librarians teamed up with the academic assistance program to provide library instruction to students who used the program's services. (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001)</p>	<p>In general, we are not allowed to assist students when they need help with writing their papers. On the other hand, as librarians, we have so much to offer in regards to helping students academically. If you draft a bibliography of print titles found in your library on grammar and reading, and distribute it in the academic center, you'll be amazed at how fast the books will begin to circulate. This is especially true in colleges with strong populations of English Language Learners.</p>
<p>A librarian collaborated with the core science faculty to teach basic classes on the specific databases that would be used by the students for the class. (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001)</p>	<p>Although I am the Social Work and Sociology liaison I have compiled resources for our nursing department; simply because I know someone (student or faculty) in the department will be able to use it. "If you build it they will come."</p>
<p>The library sponsors or co-sponsors teaching and technology workshops that discuss methods used to enrich scholarship through instructional technology. (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001)</p>	<p>This is an increasingly popular subject and today's academic librarians must be willing to embrace instructional technology. Staying abreast of instructional technology enhances both learning and instruction. College freshman respond well to instruction and are more enthusiastic about learning when we incorporate technology into the curriculum.</p>
<p>Librarians are involved in co-teaching first-year experience courses, coordinated studies, university seminars, and learning communities. (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001)</p>	<p>At first this sounded redundant, but there are too many tenured librarians who don't feel the need to get involved with first-year experience matters. Librarians must embed themselves in all things academic, even if it doesn't appear to be that sophisticated. Not to mention all of the collaboration opportunities that are generated.</p>

<p>The library, university relations, and academic computing work with elementary schools in the university's neighborhood to build the skills of K-12 school-age children. (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001)</p>	<p>I will continue to advocate outreach to K-12 libraries. Information Literacy and Fluency is a continuum that must be introduced to learners as early as possible.</p>
<p>Librarians work to require that all new course proposals include the needed materials. Upon receipt of proposals, librarians do an impact assessment. (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001)</p>	<p>Whenever we have an opportunity to make administrative decisions that are related to the courses offered at the college, we must take advantage of this. In a setting like this the administration supports and values the library's input.</p>
<p>Librarians invite new faculty to walk the collection with them, giving guided tours of the discipline-specific subject areas in the library, especially noting new books. (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001)</p>	<p>New adjunct faculty will generally be very responsive to touring the library. In my experience, adjuncts are very receptive and open to partnering with the library. When the opportunity presents itself, invite new and existing faculty for a tour. It's good for them to see what's physically on the shelves. A good idea would be to set all of the new subject area books aside before shelving them; then invite the faculty member to view the books exclusively. This way it looks as if you have gone out of your way just for them.</p>
<p>The library sponsored a two-day faculty retreat emphasizing one-on-one faculty/librarian interaction to build community. Each librarian asked one faculty member, with whom they felt comfortable, to attend. (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001)</p>	<p>If your library has the time and resources to sponsor a faculty retreat be sure to take advantage of it; the benefits can be very rewarding. An event like this will ensure the library's purpose and intent for the college. The ideas that come to mind are limitless; the retreat(s) can have themes that are related to core curriculum disciplines. The relationships you make with faculty are sure to be meaningful when the retreat is over. (Mileham, Ruelle, & Berry, 2001)</p>

Table 3

<p>Be interested in faculty research (Raspa, R., & Ward, D., 2000)</p>	<p>Find out what the instructors are researching themselves. In many instances, students will be conducting research on the same topics that the faculty are researching.</p>
<p>Be friendly (Raspa, R., & Ward, D., 2000)</p>	<p>Librarianship is a social science and without students and faculty we don't have a profession. We must have strong people skills and it doesn't hurt to be approachable.</p>
<p>Be courteous and respectful (Raspa, R., & Ward, D., 2000)</p>	<p>It's been said that librarians can be very condescending and inconsiderate. It's important for us to show that we are genuinely concerned about how well a faculty member's students are doing. Jefferies suggests that when reaching out and collaborating that we treat faculty as we wish to be treated.</p>
<p>Be a promoter of new products, services, and acquisitions (Raspa, R., & Ward, D., 2000)</p>	<p>This is where the discipline specific pathfinders come in handy. As the Social Work liaison, I have developed an ongoing professional relationship with the chairperson of the Social Work department at Medgar Evers College. This also means collaborating with the teaching faculty and doing my part to research what's current in the field of Social Work. One fast way to do this is via <i>Facebook</i>, if your library has a <i>Facebook</i> page use it to post new titles.</p>
<p>Be a personal librarian (Raspa, R., & Ward, D., 2000)</p>	<p>This is not always possible because of time constraints and schedules, but whenever I can, I will develop a collaborative strategy that is unique to a particular professor.</p>
<p>Be willing to attend faculty meetings (Raspa, R., & Ward, D., 2000)</p>	<p>This really should be mandatory, but for many schools, librarians are not mandated to attend departmental meetings. These meetings allow us to be visible and have a say in curriculum matters.</p>
<p>Be committed (Raspa, R., & Ward, D., 2000)</p>	<p>This is something that takes work and dedication, but in the long run, it's worth it. If faculty see you as a reliable source, they will come back or send students.</p>

<p>Be a good listener (Raspa, R., & Ward, D., 2000)</p>	<p>This may sound obvious, but being a good listener means more than just active listening. Jefferies advises that when working with faculty, we should be enthusiastic and be the person on campus that reinvigorates the faculty member.</p>
<p>Be responsive to student needs (Raspa, R., & Ward, D., 2000)</p>	<p>This brings us back to being student-centered, but Jefferies makes another point about this. She suggests that if several students have the same question, we should reach out to the professor to make arrangements to conduct a team-teaching presentation.</p>
<p>Be knowledgeable (Raspa, R., & Ward, D., 2000)</p>	<p>This collaborative tip brings us back to the first in that it means learning as much as you can about the discipline as possible. If I expect to collaborate with nursing professors, then I will do all in my power to learn as much about the profession as possible.</p>

Table 4

<p>Big6 # 1 Task Definition Critical Questions & Guiding Statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine a purpose and need for information—what am I supposed to do? • What information do I need in order to do this? (Consider listing in question form.) <p>In the first section of the organizer, students are challenged to think about the assignment; this is great because they get to brainstorm. This gives me the opportunity to introduce them to the library’s resources that will help them with starting their assignment. Defining their task forces them to look back and re-examine what is required.</p>
<p>Big6 # 2 Information Seeking Strategies Guiding direction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine alternative approaches to acquiring information. List the best sources to find this information. Don’t forget traditional print and human sources as appropriate. <p>In the Information Seeking Strategies section students are challenged to think about the method they will use to locate the resources they need. We guide them to the electronic databases where they will access scholarly and peer reviewed literature. When appropriate, I remind students that they should get into the habit of visiting local organizations to acquire information. I remind students that they should not dismiss traditional</p>

print as being irrelevant. Students are reminded that they should ask who will evaluate Web pages for their accuracy and authenticity. I will let students know that the Internet is a great place to do their research, but unless they are asking the basic Information Literacy questions about each site they visit, they should let us evaluate the Web page for them.

Big6 # 3 Location & Access

Guiding direction and question

- Locate sources and access the information within them.
- Where will I locate these sources?

In this section the “Where” and “How” are important. Pointing the student in the direction of the library and telling them to get information on Green Careers is not an effective way to help them start their research. This happens very often when faculty and librarians don’t collaborate. Let students know that the public library is another great source for information. They also learn that many organizations and agencies throughout New York City will have special libraries that they may have access to. I use this section of the organizer to introduce them to *WorldCat*, the database that allows users to search the collections of libraries throughout the city and the world for books, journals, multimedia resources and more. Students are asked to develop keywords relevant to the topic they are researching.

Big6 # 4 Use of Information

Guiding directions and questions

- Use a source to gain information
- How will I record the information that I find?
- How will I give credit to my sources?

The fourth section of the organizer challenges students to think about the way they will record the information they locate. Taking notes by hand during a lecture is something my generation just had to do, unless you had a tape recorder. Many of today’s college freshman struggle with note taking; I often have to instruct them to write down what I am saying during a library lecture. This section also directs students on how to avoid plagiarism by providing a guiding question: “How will I give credit to my sources?”

Big6 # 5 Synthesis

Guiding directions and questions

- Integrate information from a variety of sources
- How will I show my results?
- How will I give credit to my sources in my final product or performance?
- Materials I will need for my presentation or performance (list, separating by commas)

Section five offers guidance on planning, organizing, and working out the logistics for the presentation of the assignment. This can be a real challenge for many students who so often will wait until the last minute to prepare their *PowerPoint* or group presentations. Once

again, the organizer is guiding them to think ahead and to develop a timeline for the assignment. They are also presented with the notion that after their research is complete, they just may need a Smartcart, or a television with a VCR or DVD player, or a film projector. Ideally, the students will read through the entire organizer before they begin their assignment.

Big6 # 6 Evaluation

Guiding directive

- Before turning in my assignment, I need to check off all of these items (on the printed Organizer)

Last and certainly not least is the evaluation section. In this section of the organizer students will be directed to follow up on everything that the initial task called for. This is important because it familiarizes students with the concept of accountability.

For more information about the *Big6* Research Paper Organizer visit the school's library Web page at: <http://library.sasaustin.org/paperOrganizerUS.php>

Table 5: Competency Level

Developing a Research Strategy	Unable to formulate a research question. Unable to define or articulate a need for information.	Explores general information sources to increase familiarity with topic. Uses appropriate key terms to find relevant information.	Identifies the value and differences of potential resources in a variety of formats. Determines whether information satisfies the research or other information need. Revises research strategy as needed.
Selecting Finding Tools	Little or no diversity in selection of finding tools. Unbalanced use of search engines and Wikipedia.	Critically selects appropriate resources, including and outside of Web sources: print, audiovisual, journal articles, and other materials as necessary and appropriate to need.	Awareness and selection of resources in various formats which are specifically pertinent to program of study.
Searching	Little or no evidence of a search strategy. Information acquired lacks relevance and/or quality.	Determines whether the initial query should be revised. Determines the availability of needed information and makes decisions on broadening the information seeking process beyond local resources: interlibrary loan to obtain images, videos, etc.	Uses various search systems to retrieve information in a variety of formats. Seeks information online or in person using a variety of methods. Restates textual concepts in his/her own words and uses these as key terms.
Using Finding Tool Features	Little to no awareness of how to navigate print or electronic resources.	Selects data appropriately. Navigates various tools successfully to extract relevant information.	Implementation of Boolean searching as necessary and suitable to the finding tool. Adept manipulation of features to acquire necessary information.
Retrieving Sources	Finds and uses sources that do not contain enough evident to support the information need/topic under research.	Uses appropriate and varied search systems (databases/search engines) to retrieve information in a variety of formats.	Reviews information retrieval sources used and expands to include others as needed.

Evaluation Sources	Little to no effort made to evaluate information sourced.	Examination/comparison of various information sources to evaluate reliability, accuracy, authority, timeliness, and validity is evident.	Conscious selection of criteria to determine whether information contradicts or verifies that from other sources. Identification of purpose and audience of potential sources. Critical examination of information to detect point of view or bias.
Documenting Sources	Incorrect citation format.	Differentiates between the types of sources cited and understands the elements and correct syntax of a citation for a wide range of resources.	Records all pertinent citation information for future reference. Selects appropriate documentation style and uses it consistently to cite sources.
Understanding Economic Legal, and Social Issues	Little or no credit given to authors/sources of information.	Does not represent work attributable to others as his/her own. Identifies verbatim material that is then appropriately quoted.	Articulates and abides by the concept of intellectual property, copyright and fair use of copyrighted material. Recognizes and articulates issues related to censorship and freedom of speech.

Competency Level

For more information about this rubric, or about Berkeley College contact Leslin Charles, Associate Director of Library Services for Berkeley College at LHC@BERKELEYCOLLEGE.EDU.

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I am currently an Assistant Professor and Librarian for Medgar Evers College, which is part of the City University of New York. I am the Unit Coordinator for the Library's Interlibrary Loan Unit. I am also responsible for reference work, collection development, and Information Literacy instruction. I have worked as a professional librarian in a variety of settings for nearly 13 years, with my start being in the public library. I hold a master's degree in Information & Library Science and a second master's degree in Adolescent Education. My interests are Information Literacy and Education, Curriculum Building, General Education, Serving the Differently Abled and Library Services for Populations with Special Needs.

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