

Information Literacy 2011: A Selection of 2011's Literature on IL

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Abstract

Information literacy is near and dear to many librarians' hearts. It forms the foundation of many of the services and programs that reference and instructional librarians develop. In order to meet the changing needs of users and adjust to rapidly progress technology, as well as the expectations of faculty and administrators, it is crucial to remain abreast of new and changing perspectives on IL. Furthermore, discovering novel and useful techniques, assignments, and approaches can help keep IL programming from becoming stagnant and outdated. This annotated bibliography looks at 16 articles from 2011 that purport to examine IL.

Information Literacy 2011: A Selection of 2011's Literature on IL

In keeping with the over-arching theme of this special issue of *Codex*, this issue's annotated bibliography looks at a collection of articles pertaining to information literacy research published in 2011. Several of these articles contain a variety of practical surveys and studies undertaken at several universities worldwide; some are a little more theoretical in nature and examine shifting meanings and frameworks that can be applied to IL, such as technology and Web 2.0.

Most of these articles were produced by academic librarians focusing on academic issues, with academic contexts and concerns, which may suggest that this bibliography is geared exclusively toward academic librarians. This is not the case. Information literacy cannot start soon enough; consequently, some of the approaches, concerns, and frameworks examined in these articles would be of interest to K-12 librarians, particularly those in secondary education. Public librarians as well will find useful tools and perspectives, particularly with regard to technologies and obtaining feedback from users.

It's worth mentioning again that these articles represent both practical and theoretical approaches, because information literacy isn't simply about how best to teach students how to develop skills. It's also about understanding how and why information literacy should be emphasized so that we can communicate that importance to teaching faculty and teachers, to administrators and managers, in a way that makes them eager to become collaborators. Frankly, collaboration only makes everybody's lives easier, and everybody involved – from librarians to teachers to administrators to students (most

importantly) – benefits.

It's also worth mentioning again that these articles represent a global perspective, too. The first entry in the bibliography comes from a university in Pakistan. Three hail from the United Kingdom. Canada is also represented in two articles. Another comes from Jordan. One comes from Hungary. Australia is represented as well. Nine of the sixteen articles are from abroad, leaving the remaining seven from around the United States.

These sixteen articles were obtained by doing a search in Ebscohost. A variety of databases were selected. **Academic Search Complete** and **MAS Ultra** provided a multidisciplinary approach. Ebscohost's **eBook Collection** would help locate books, of course. Library science and communication studies share a lot of theoretical underpinnings, so **Communication and Mass Media Complete** was selected. **ERIC, Professional Development,** and **Teacher Reference Center** provided an education framework and ensured that K-12 endeavors wouldn't be overlooked, as they may offer new perspectives or unusual approaches. **Information Science & Technology Abstracts** covered the information technology side of things, while **Library, Information Science, & Technology Abstracts with Full Text** rounded things out appropriately by providing the all-important library science aspect of the issue.

The limiters applied to the search included full-text availability; scholarly (peer-reviewed); references available; and dates of December 2010 – November 2011. The search terms used were "*information literacy*" and *academic*.

Arif, Muhammad, and Khalid Mahmood. "Allama Iqbal Open University Library Services to Teachers: A Survey." *Pakistan Library & Information Science Journal* 41, no. 4 (December 2010): 10-18.

The authors of this article surveyed their teaching faculty in an effort to evaluate the location, physical set-up, collection, resources, and services of their central library. Of 100 faculty surveyed, 87% responded. 54 of the respondents emphasized the need for an information literacy program, in addition to several other suggestions and complaints regarding the availability and access of resources, services, and facilities.

Over all, the article was well-organized and ended with an enumerated list of recommendations based on the data the researchers gathered. This list reflects self-awareness on the part of the researchers and is more practical than a simple summation or conclusion usually is and is deeply appreciated.

While the motivation that prompted the study is admirable, the article itself has several problems, the most obvious being the writing. It's unclear whether the authors of the article wrote the article in English themselves – bearing in mind that this was conducted by researchers at a university in Pakistan – or if it was translated into English. Either way, the writing is often clumsy, with awkward sentence structure, misspellings, and seemingly random punctuation, which sometimes served as a barrier to the content.

Furthermore, though the authors described the survey tool, and the questions were sort of reproduced in the results section, the tool itself was not included in the article. The tool was described as having seven close-ended questions plus demographic questions and utilized a five-point Likert scale. (Incidentally, "Likert" was misspelled frequently

throughout the article.) Being primarily a satisfaction survey, this makes sense, but it would have been better had the survey tool itself been reproduced alone in the article.

Another complaint regarding the article is how the results were shared. The authors used descriptive statistics, relating the statistics in terms of mean-wise rank. This muddied the waters for this reader and removed some of the significance or meaningfulness from the data. Being a satisfaction survey, the data is going to be rather subjective to begin with, and to try to present qualitative data in a quantitative way reduces the coherency and usefulness of the data. There also seemed to be an unnecessary focus on parsing the gender data gathered and how it related to satisfaction and comments.

Over all, this article offered not much in the way of new information with regard to information literacy. However, its significance to the IL discussion is that the teaching faculty themselves emphatically requested an IL program be developed and implemented, demonstrating that some faculty *do* realize the value of IL, which is encouraging.

Beck, Daniel. "The Role of Information Literacy in the Provision of Virtual Reference Services at the Enquiry Desk." *Journal of Information Literacy* 4, no. 2 (December 2010): 91-94.

This article examined information literacy in the context of virtual reference services. The author examined three synchronous virtual reference (VR) tools – chat software, co-browsing, and Second Life – and their possibilities with regard to information literacy. Library members of the Society of College, National and University

Libraries (in the United Kingdom), of which there are 166 members, were surveyed, producing 49 replies. These 49 were followed up and identified as using the aforementioned VR tools. They were furthermore interviewed regarding their uses of the VR tools.

Chat was the most widely used tool and was identified by the respondents as being excellent for incorporating information literacy into reference enquiries, particularly with developing search strategies. Chat also had few technical problems, and most respondents said they would continue using chat for VR. Co-browsing was less widely used and offered IL potential because of the collaborative nature of the software. However, co-browsing presented a variety of technical difficulties, though there were ways to diminish the impact of these difficulties. Most users of co-browsing said they would continue using it, and the author felt that with improved technology, co-browsing might see more use in the VR setting. Second Life was also not widely used, though the author felt that it had a great deal of potential with regard to IL. However, again, a variety of technical issues are present, and concerns with regard to time management are also present. Most users said it was not likely that they would use Second Life in the VR environment.

VR is a growing arena of study and interest, especially in academic libraries where librarians undoubtedly deal not only with distance learning but also the increasing number of online users – users who are not necessarily “distant” but still prefer the online environment. The author’s examination of three means of VR is appreciated. However, while the author remarks on the IL usefulness of each tool, he does so briefly, providing one or two examples, without really delving deep into the examples themselves, before

moving on to how the respondents rated the tools. More examples and suggested applications (even real world examples from the literature!) would have been appreciated.

Overall, this article was very short and could have been better rounded out with more in-depth looks at the IL applications of the tools themselves. Even a literature review covering the IL potential of VR tools would have been appreciated, but was not included.

Brown, Jeanne M., and Carrie Gaxiola. "Why Would They Try? Motivation and Motivating in Low-Stakes Information Skills Testing." *Journal of Information Literacy* 4, no. 2 (December 2010): 23-36.

In the spring and autumn of 2008, the University of Nevada Las Vegas University Libraries piloted the Educational Testing Service's iSkills test. Motivational strategies were studied as part of the experience, particularly those relating to feedback on test performance, highlighting the test's value for the individual student, and appealing to the student's ability to enhance the overall performance of the school. The authors looked at ways in which they could motivate students to participate in the pilot *and* to motivate those students to do their best. Beyond detailing the libraries' strategies to motivate students, the article also includes the feedback provided by the student test-takers on why they were motivated to perform well on the test.

One of the best parts of this excellent article was the literature review. There does not seem to be a lot of literature on the topic of motivation as it relates to the arena of the library and information literacy, but the review for this article highlights some very useful

research on the topic of student motivation and the library.

The presentation of data in this article – primarily statistics regarding comparisons of spring versus autumn test-takers and honors program test-takers versus library student worker test-takers – was clearly presented and straight forward, making it meaningful. The researchers encouraged participants to comment, and those comments are included, enhancing the numerical data. Particularly appreciated is the enumerated list of intended areas of future study in the limitations section.

The real value of this article, however, as it pertains to IL is how appealing to a student's motivations may enhance their information skills learning and strategies for engaging students. The authors noted that high motivation does not necessarily produce higher scores, though low motivation *can* produce low scores, and this is worth noting in the process of teaching and testing information literacy.

Bury, Sophie. "Faculty attitudes, perceptions and experiences of information literacy: a study across multiple disciplines at York University, Canada." *Journal of Information Literacy* 5, no. 1 (June 2011): 45-64.

Using a web-based survey, York University Libraries, Canada, investigated the information literacy practices, attitudes, and perceptions of the teaching faculty at York University. The article's introduction served as a makeshift literature review, highlighting how important collaboration is between library and teaching faculty in the pursuit of information literacy, yet underscoring how the literature fails to examine how teaching faculty actually apprehend IL.

Aside from the obligatory demographical data, the first significant section of data related to faculty perceptions of their students' information literacy competencies, which the authors summed up as being of concern, more so for undergraduate students than graduate students. The next significant section pertained to faculty perceptions regarding the value of information literacy instruction. Faculty were asked to rank individual literacy competencies with regard to importance to student learning. The authors developed twelve broad sets of competencies, drawn from the ACRL's *Information Literacy Standards for Higher Education*. Without exception, all twelve competencies were ranked at as "extremely important" (7 on a scale of 1-7, with 1 being "not important at all"). Next, the authors inquired as to whose role it should be to teach IL.

The authors also inquired about the instructors' own inclusion or teaching of IL competencies in their courses. The authors note that the results of this section reveal "a stark contrast between York faculty's beliefs about the importance of IL instruction for students and the actual situation."

The next major inquiry related the faculty's views of the impact of IL instruction. This question was asked of faculty who had scheduled IL sessions with librarians. Should IL instruction be optional or required was studied by the authors, and the majority of respondents – 81.7% - reported that it should be required. Furthermore, the optimal delivery of IL was determined to be a multi-method approach, incorporating "two or more of the following approaches: offering instruction in-class, outside class time, or online" and should include assignments or hands-on applications of the skills taught.

This is admittedly a long article, but its merits with regard to IL seems self-evident: hard and fast data on and from classroom faculty. Studies like this help librarians

fill in the gaps regarding faculty engagement with IL, in addition to giving faculty a chance to express concerns and contribute input. As has been noted before – in this study, in the introduction to this bibliography, in other articles in this bibliography – collaboration is essential to successful IL, and giving faculty the chance to respond and contribute is collaborative. The data itself – not to mention the vast amount of literature efficiently and meaningfully incorporated into the discussion of the results – is also of great value, particularly since the research was done in the context of ACRL standards. The conclusions, implications for practice, and implications for research sections are also a wealth of clearly-stated concerns and applications for the data itself. This reviewer's only complaint is that the tool used was not included in the article so that researchers could see the tool as it was administered.

Fielden, Ned, and Mira Foster. "Crossing the Rubricon: Evaluating the Information Literacy Instructor." *Journal of Information Literacy* 4, no. 2 (December 2010): 78-90.

In order to maintain an effective, dynamic information literacy program, assessment is necessary. Assessment can identify problems and weaknesses, as well as suggest solutions to these issues. It can also highlight strengths and best practices. The authors of this article focus on assessment as it relates to IL instructor evaluation and offer a potential rubric instrument for peer review observation, as they rightfully observe that effective instruction can only come from effective instructors.

The thorough literature review highlights that most rubrics in the library science

literature focus on evaluating students' work, though they do point to studies that examine librarian peer review. The lit review also examines the rubric concept and focuses on the benefits of different kinds of rubrics.

The authors of the article explain that they were concerned not only about improving performance but also with fulfilling “the terms of the employment contract and provide objective information from inside the institution to external reviewers.” This motivated them to develop a tool that would produce meaningful data for both their personal goals and for objective needs (tenure, promotion, and other such assessment). This meant employing both formative and summative evaluation approaches. Furthermore, the authors hoped the rubric would promote information literacy innovations on their campus.

The rubric itself utilizes a five-point Likert scale and includes four broad categories: preparation; teaching method and organization; communication and classroom management; and content, with each category containing 5-7 additional subsections, with a total of 25 distinct aspects. The authors include the actual rubric in the appendix of the article, which is heartily approved by this reviewer. Implementation of the rubric at the authors' library meant adding it to an existing formal evaluation process.

At the conclusion, the authors indicated the need for more research, and that though the rubric works, it is only one possible tool, and other, more effective tools may be available.

This article's worth is self-evident and manifold. The tool which they created and presented in their research could be immediately utilized and/or easily adapted, and data easily gathered. The authors did a great job of assessing the value of different kinds of

rubrics in the literature review. Their goals and purposes are simply and concisely presented. The article is short, but only because the authors got right to the point in the presentation of the material and in their commentary and conclusions.

Henderson, Flor, Nelson Nunez-Rodriguez, and William Casari. "Enhancing Research Skills and Information Literacy in Community College Science Students." *American Biology Teacher* 73, no. 5 (May 2011): 270-275.

Thus far, the articles in this bibliography have addressed four-year institutions. This article provides a look at information literacy at the community college level, specifically amongst science students. The authors assert that the "ability to think and act creatively is required in today's higher education system" but that many students enter higher education unprepared to do so. Furthermore, new pedagogical approaches are required to keep up with faster technology, online information resources, and the "exponential growth of information. Towards those ends, the authors examined a "learner-oriented collaborative assignment" in the context of a biology course sequence, in conjunction with a "methodical information-literacy approach" with a goal of focusing on general education principles like "global citizenship, scientific reasoning, communication skills, and information literacy while connecting course content with current global events."

The assignment itself used the topic "effects of climate change on living organisms." This was used across all the courses participating in the study. Within the courses themselves, the assignment was executed via groups, including the selection of a

research topic in the context of the main topic; two bibliographic instruction sessions imparting information literacy skills; a course-related workshop; a final narrative and research log; and an oral presentation. The authors employed pre- and post-surveys to assess the effectiveness of the assignment design. They also highlighted the importance of collaboration between librarians and teaching faculty in the success of skill acquisition.

The results of the study address the students' experiences with regard to course content and current global events; information literacy; critical thinking and research skills; and acquired and retained skills. Unfortunately the authors did not reproduce the complete survey tools in the article. From the information literacy section of results, it appears that the authors inquired about confidence levels regard IL skills, which increased according to the post-tests. There was also an increase in the usage of peer-reviewed materials used. The authors also highlighted "progress" in the students' familiarity with library resources.

In conclusion, the authors felt that the results indicated that students required more than one semester to "acquire and retain" general education skills. They also noted that the quality of work increased by the end of the course sequence, which was encouraging. The authors reinforced the idea that information literacy needs to be taught across disciplines.

Though this study was completed in the context of a community college, its assignment could easily be applied at a four-year institution, with even more results (and perhaps more meaningful data). The emphasis on IL in conjunction with general education skills was appreciated and perhaps something that ought to be born in mind

more often when creating such assignments – killing two birds with one stone! The fact that this study was run in a biology series was appreciated, since most often research is thought of in context with composition and other traditionally writing-heavy courses, as well as first-year experience courses. This reviewer’s main complaint is the absence of the survey tools. Examples of narratives and research logs produced by the students would also have been appreciated, to see how the assignment should look or might look when executed.

Gadd, Elizabeth, Andrew Baldwin, and Michael Norris. "The Citation Behaviour of Civil Engineering Students." *Journal of Information Literacy* 4, no. 2 (December 2010): 37-49.

The authors of this article studied citation behavior of civil engineering students, both undergraduate and graduate, and how that behavior serves as an assessment of information literacy skills. They describe citation behavior as “culmination of the information seeking and handling process” which “provides an indicator of the success (or otherwise) of the process,” which this reviewer can hardly disagree with. Citation behavior may be the most objective element scholars can examine when determining the efficacy of information literacy instruction, since the process of information-seeking is not so easy to observe.

The authors studied the final-year projects of 24 Master’s students and 23 Bachelor’s studies. These projects are assigned during the students’ last year and focus on a topic of the students’ choosing. The requirements and assessments of the projects are

very similar. The number, age, type, print versus electronic, domains of URLs, and citation accuracy were examined. Comparisons between the marks received for the literature review sections of the project and the projects overall were examined.

Though both groups received the same information literacy training, the disparity in the performances of both groups was greater than expected. And the frequency of mistakes in the reference lists was significant and troubling to the researchers. They felt that these findings indicate a “need for further IL training and support” specifically with regard to including dates in citations.

The researchers concluded that their IL program needed to include more focus on improving citation practice as well as more strongly emphasizing those IL skills commonly used to generate literature reviews.

The strength of this article’s contribution to the IL discussion is that it provides some real world data on the finished product students generate AFTER they’ve had IL instruction. It’s not enough to say – as some articles do – that students showed improved skill in this or that area of IL; this article actually demonstrated both the strengths AND the weaknesses of IL instruction. This particular cohort of students clearly had some problems in certain areas of citation practice, and the authors felt that their IL program needed tweaking to address that issue. It would be interesting to see a follow-up article studying this kind of cohort that’s received the adjusted IL.

It would have been more meaningful, of course, if the authors had been more explicit about the IL instruction the cohorts received prior to generating their projects. It would have also been interesting to see examples of the flawed reference citations. This reviewer also felt that comparing the two cohorts might not have been appropriate, as one

presumes that graduates students have had more exposure to research and IL instruction. But overall, a very well-written article, with a very serviceable and useful literature review.

Holderied, Anthony C. "Instructional design for the active: Employing interactive technologies and active learning exercises to enhance information literacy." *Journal of Information Literacy* 5, no. 1 (June 2011): 23-32.

The authors of this article examined the use of interactive technologies in the context of information literacy at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. They utilized clickers, interactive whiteboards, wireless slates, and digital cameras “in conjunction with active learning environments” to examine the impact these technologies had on student learning outcomes. The primary focus of the article, however, was on the use of clickers in IL as compared to a control group that received essentially the same instruction but without clickers, in an English composition course. While it was clear that the clickers group was more engaged and did perform better on post-tests compared to pre-tests than the control, the authors feel more research is needed with regard to interactive technologies with active learning in the context of information literacy instruction.

This article gets high marks from this reviewer for including the test questions the authors used in the testing; moreover, the questions themselves are simple and straightforward and appropriate for the kind research composition students would be doing. The article also admits that clicker technology itself is not sufficient to “foster

achievement in learning outcomes,” which is refreshing in a time of articles touting the superiority of technology in teaching.

This reviewer also appreciates the inclusion of other technologies coupled with active learning strategies in the article, as a comparison to the clickers experiment. No data is included regarding the pre- and post-surveys from these experiments (data is still being analyzed, according to the article), so the authors only comment on the impact the technologies have had with regard to student engagement. Of course, this is anecdotal evidence, but it’s still important to consider.

The cautious tone the authors employ in their summations – commenting that it is not clear what the long-term impact of these technologies will be on information literacy skills in students – is also appreciated. They are enthusiastic regarding the combination of pedagogical shift towards active learning with interactive technology, but they do not herald it as THE answer to improving student learning outcomes. With pressure on faculty to focus on student learning outcomes, the temptation to locate a quick fix, or a universally-applicable technique, is significant, and it’s good to see that these researchers did not assert that their findings point to the BEST practice one might use in IL instruction.

Madray, Amrita, and Amy Catalano. "The Curriculum Material Center's Vital Link to Play and Learning: What's the Connection?" *Education Libraries* 33, no. 2 (Winter2010 2010): 11-17.

This article purports to discuss the “valuable connections between children’s play

and learning” from the authors’ views as academic librarians “responsible for information literacy” and liaison responsibilities to education and curriculum, specifically the “instructional component” in their Curriculum Materials Center (CMC). The article indeed focuses a great deal on those connections between play and learning, as well as identifying ideal games and manipulatives for a variety of disciplines and contexts, such as time restraints or space. The authors also articulate the CMC librarian’s role in these frameworks and how CMC librarians can collaborate with education teaching faculty.

What is missing from this article – at least to this reviewer’s mind – is how this all relates to information literacy. It makes sense that the authors would be engaged in their liaison responsibilities with the aforementioned selection of games and manipulatives, and the overall development of the CMC’s collection, but it is not clear how this contributes to information literacy. Though the authors mention promoting the collection through workshops where the games and manipulatives are demonstrated, that seems more like outreach than information literacy. All in all, this article is not useful with regards to IL.

Jacobs, Warren N. "Embedded Librarianship is a Winning Proposition."

Education Libraries 33, no. 2 (Winter2010 2010): 3-10.

This article describes the author’s foray into embedded librarianship in the College of Education (COE) at his university. When the author’s library required him to relocate to another office on campus during a renovation project, the author took the opportunity to pilot an embedded librarian project. The literature review is an excellent

collection of recent resources that clearly highlight the benefits of embedded librarians as well as best practices for embedded librarianship. The author relates his experiences in the COE, including how he made contact with and maintained communication with faculty and students. Once the renovation project was completed, and he returned to the library facility, he continued his embedded activities (with his dean's permission) because of the interest and encouragement from COE faculty.

The author also related the challenges and opportunities he encountered, not the least of which seemed to be the concerns of his own colleagues about the viability of the project and how it might interfere with the fulfillment of his regular duties. The author described how he allayed his colleagues' fears by letting them know he planned to maintain his regular workload and staying longer hours (which he indicated were "well worth the effort"). He also detailed the types of duties he performed while in the COE, namely creating instructional materials, and how he determined how to schedule his time in the COE. The author positively reported an increase in his instructional workload, as well as in his research consultations. As a result of these successes, the author decided to continue his embedded experiment, scheduling office hours in the COE and encouraging COE faculty to consider embedding a librarian within Blackboard courses. The author also related faculty and student success stories; he concludes that embedded librarianship is a "win-win" situation with several benefits worth the investment of time and resources.

The primary usefulness of this article to the information literacy discussion is that it demonstrates – in a mostly anecdotal manner, admittedly – the benefits of embedded librarianship and how it can promote increased collaboration with teaching faculty AND help librarians make more meaningful contact with their constituents. Though there is no

detailed account of the author's instructional sessions or his information literacy approach, the fact that embedded librarianship contributed to increased requests for instruction is encouraging. This suggests that embedded librarianship is an excellent means to making contact with teaching faculty and getting into their classrooms, facilitating information literacy skills teaching.

Kavanagh, Allison. "The evolution of an embedded information literacy module: Using student feedback and the research literature to improve student performance." *Journal of Information Literacy* 5, no. 1 (June 2011): 5-22.

Following its development and evolution over a three-year period, this article looks at an embedded information literacy module for first year Marketing students in a Bachelor's program at the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT). In 2007 a project was begun to "design a generic, adaptable, IL pilot module to be marketed for inclusion in academic programmes in each faculty." These modules were developed and conducting in a variety of disciplines; this article focuses on the one piloted in marketing. A reflective approach was selected for the delivery of the course; as a consequence, the library team actively sought feedback from student participants at the end of the pilot sequence and the subsequent years (2007-8, 2008-9, 2009-10).

The authors detail the assignments and approaches utilized in each year, highlighting significant issues – those identified by the library team AND those identified by the students – and how those issues were addressed in the following year. Assessment was also a major consideration in the design of the modules – that is, how student

learning outcomes were measured. Assessment also changed as a result of student feedback. The authors carefully relate the impact that adjustments made year to year affected the success of the module.

The authors conclude that a combination of studying the research literature, gathering and responding to student feedback, and making changes based on the literature and feedback is valuable in the process of developing and delivering meaningful information literacy instruction.

Because this whole article actually covers a three-year cycle and therefore is able to demonstrate issues and their resolutions over a longer period, it is decidedly useful, particularly for libraries who wish to develop similar modules OR who are looking for ways to improve the IL programs. The article is very explicit in what steps are taken and the rationale for those steps. The authors also include the marking sheet they used to grade assignments, as well as the assessment tool they used, and the research strategy template. This reviewer heartily approves of the inclusion of such resources – they are invaluable. Overall, this is a profoundly useful article with regard to information literacy programming, and therefore profoundly useful with regard to IL at large.

Kenedy, Robert, and Vivienne Monty. "Faculty-Librarian Collaboration and the Development of Critical Skills through Dynamic Purposeful Learning." *Libri: International Journal of Libraries & Information Services* 61, no. 2 (June 2011): 116-124.

The authors of this article developed a 3-step pedagogical technique they've

dubbed *Dynamic Purposeful Learning* (DPL). The article describes how they developed the technique and how DPL facilitates information literacy. In this instance, DPL is applied in collaboration between a librarian and faculty member. Specifically, the process is applied to a multi-stage sociological research methods assignment. The authors aver that DPL provides assistance to the students at all stages of the research process.

In the article, the authors emphasize the importance of collaboration in the success of information literacy endeavors. They also note that DPL was developed over a ten-year collaborative process between the two of them. In those years of development, the authors determined that staged assignments were the best method for student learning, and one of the reasons for that is that the system involves feedback for the students, which is highly beneficial. In the literature review, however, the authors assert that there is “limited literature” about faculty-librarian collaborations, which this particular reviewer finds to be ridiculous, having done research on that very topic for conference presentations and professional development workshops. Further in the review, however, the authors highlight active learning and its benefits; “active learning” has indeed become a buzzword in education at large and needs to remain on our radar.

Though the article’s abstract highlights the use of DPL in the sociological methods assignment, the bulk of the article is actually about the DPL’s development, which is interesting but contains a great deal of rather common sense commentary on the nature of information literacy. There are also several bulleted and numbered lists throughout the article detailing various points and steps which after a while become distracting and confusing.

Over all, this reviewer found this article to be rather poorly organized and

disappointing. The authors' DPL is interesting but unremarkable; it seems like they've taken a rather standard approach to teaching information literacy and given it a fancy name. The article does not contain significant data on the DPL's application in the sociological research methods assignment which is disappointing, because that would be a better way of judging the DPL's usefulness, rather than just relying on the authors' claims that it's an effective means of delivering IL. Though the article focuses on IL and delivery of IL, its weaknesses do not recommend it as a strong resource for the IL discussion.

Klaib, Fadel Jamil. "Users' ratings on the improved library orientation programme at Zarqa Private University: a comparative study." *Malaysian Journal of Library & Information Science* 16, no. 1 (July 2011): 63-72.

In 2008 a study was conducted on the library orientation program at Zarqa Private University, Jordan; the results of that study determined that the program focused more on "theoretical rather than the practical aspects" of information literacy. As a result, changes were made to the program to address this issue and make the program more practical. Consequently, another study was conducted in which the students' ratings of their "perceived achievement" following instruction in both programs (the more theoretical versus the more practical) were compared. The study found that the more practical program resulted in higher ratings of achievement. The authors determined that though there was obviously an increase in ratings, increased focus on practical aspects of instruction were crucial to successful IL programs.

This article is quite useful to the IL discussion because it highlights the need for a more practical focus in terms of instruction. While this reviewer agrees that it's important for students to understand why we teach them the skills we do (the theoretical approach), it's more important that the students be able to effectively *use* those skills. It's not enough to simply provide the skillset; we have to help them learn to use it, too, and demonstrate how the set should and could be used in meaningful, relevant ways.

The fact that the author sought the students' feedback on the issue is also appreciated. Since they are the ones most affected by the acquisition of these skills, it's important to make sure that their instructional needs are being met. That they had a voice in the conversation, so to speak, also gave them a certain vested interest, which seems to encourage participation and valuing of the IL process. Furthermore, the author reproduced the ratings tool administered to the students in the study, which this reviewer appreciates. This is a great resource for assessment-minded librarians who wish to gauge the effectiveness of their IL programs. Overall, this article is excellent for the IL discussion.

Koltay, Tibor. "Library 2.0, information and digital literacies in the light of the contradictory nature of Web 2.0." *Webology* 7, no. 3 (December 2010): 1-12.

This article describes itself as being an "opinion paper based on desk research" which proposes "to prove the hypothesis" that it is crucial to raise "awareness of differences between professional content" and amateur content, which is primarily produced by Web 2.0 users. The article focuses on the differences of these two types of

content and their appropriateness in certain contexts.

The author asserts that understanding the differences is essential and should be addressed in both IL and digital literacy (DL) education. The author points to the enthusiasm of libraries and librarians with regard to “adapting new technologies into their work” but suggests that this is not always appropriate or recommended. Furthermore, the author makes some strong distinctions between the users of public libraries (for whom the author indicates amateur content is directed and acceptable for use) and the users of academic libraries (for whom professional content is directed and acceptable for use). The author concludes that literacies require “constant updating of concepts and competencies in accordance with the changing ... information environment,” with which this reviewer couldn’t agree more.

While there are many good points in this article, there are some troubling points as well. The author asserts that the literature of information science does not adequately consider criticisms of Web 2.0, which this reviewer has not found to be the case. Furthermore, the author appears highly biased against Web 2.0 in general, and this bias undermines not only the credibility of the argument at hand but also the assertions the author makes regarding the appropriateness of Web 2.0 and amateur content.

The author makes an (obviously) good point regarding how different literacies work for different user groups. However, much of his discussion in that regard is the recitation of common sense differences – the average public library user does not have the same needs and skills that the professional academic library user does. There are many such common sense assertions throughout the article which do not really add to the discussion of professional versus amateur content. Nor are there explicit examples of how

to address these different literacy needs in an instructional context.

Overall, though there is a reasonably decent discussion of professional versus amateur content, and some fine distinctions made regarding Web 2.0's usefulness, this reviewer found this article to be very severe in tone and rather weak. Yes, this is an opinion-based paper; however, there are some generalizations being made regarding users and content at large that are troubling. Its contribution to the IL discussion can primarily be found in the fine distinctions made about content and context.

Salisbury, Fiona, and Sharon Karasmanis. "Are They Ready? Exploring Student Information Literacy Skills in the Transition from Secondary to Tertiary Education." *Australian Academic & Research Libraries* 42, no. 1 (March 2011): 43-58.

The authors of this article wondered how literate the "Google generation" is and (rightly) point out that understanding students' prior literacy skillset is essential to the development of appropriate learning activities during their first year of university. In response to the application of a new pedagogical model being used in the health sciences, La Trobe University Library surveyed the information literacy skills of first year health science students. The authors were able to gather 1,029 responses during the first week of semester one of 2009 to a 20-question survey tool (which is happily included in the article) and is based on the Mittermeyer survey tool.

The results of the survey are methodically and concisely reported in the article and discussed in a very meaningful and straightforward way, without too much overload on numerical data or statistics. Furthermore, the authors chose to compare their findings

with the findings of the university where the Mittermeyer tool was first used (in 2003, at a Canadian university). The authors conclude that lack of understanding of students' prior knowledge and skills can undermine the efforts of university libraries to adequately meet the IL needs of their students, a sentiment this reviewer heartily agrees with.

Overall, this is an excellent article – it features a great and pointed literature review, some very excellent commentary on the role of prior knowledge and how it can be used in developing new skills, and how libraries can use prior knowledge to develop more effective IL programs. This article – especially because it includes the survey tool – is an excellent contribution to the IL discussion.

Tyron, Jodi, Emily Elizabeth Frigo, and Mary Kathleen O'Kelly. "Using teaching faculty focus groups to assess information literacy core competencies at university level." *Journal of Information Literacy* 4, no. 2 (December 2010): 62-77.

In order to assess a new information literacy core student competencies document created to support their developing IL program, the librarians at Grand Valley State University conducted teaching faculty focus groups. The document though based on known information literacy guidelines and standards, the document was intended to address the particular culture and curriculum of Grand Valley State University. Two teaching faculty focus groups composed of various disciplines were formed and interviewed; the authors applied a content analysis approach to the groups' transcripts. The authors were able to determine their teaching faculty's perceptions regarding the IL document, and using the faculty members' comments and perceptions made adjustments

to the IL document that would make the document more meaningful and useful to the teaching faculty and bring it even more in line with the university's culture and curricula.

Highly detailed and methodical in its presentation, this article does a fantastic job of incorporating the literature at every step of the process, from the development of the document, the rationale for the focus group method, its relationship to and expression of information literacy, to the adjustments made in response to faculty feedback. Though they don't include copies of the transcripts themselves, the authors did include extractions from the transcripts in the form of a list of terms that faculty used in the discussion of information literacy. Furthermore, the authors also included an example of how the document itself changed. The reproduced one of the goals in the article then showed how it changed after the focus group discussions.

The authors also note that the focus groups produced a wealth of useful information beyond the scope of this study that the authors readily admit require further consideration and application.

Over all, this study is an excellent example of a librarian-faculty collaboration in pursuit of the creation of the best possible IL program for the needs and considerations of a particular campus. The authors seemed hesitant to use universally-applicable resources already in existence, which, at first, threw this reviewer off. However, upon reading the authors' rationales, it became clear that the authors appreciated how difficult it can be to apply or adapt so-called "best practices" and that they were seeking the ideal solution for their university's particular needs. Their focus group method demonstrates a pro-active approach to collaborating with faculty AND provided the librarians with insight into their teaching counterparts' perceptions regarding IL, which is profoundly

useful when developing assignments and approaches for IL.

This article's contribution to the IL discussion is two-fold: it clearly demonstrates how fundamentally important it is to include teaching in the IL process, and it also provides an excellent template for the development of unique IL documents and programs that truly address a particular institution's needs.