Integrating Information Literacy with a Sequenced English Composition Curriculum

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Abstract

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Introduction and Literature Review

There has been widespread debate among academic librarians about the best way to deliver information literacy (IL) instruction. Much of this debate has centered on the credit-bearing course versus course-integrated or course-related instruction. Edward Owusu-Arsah summarizes these debates in an extensive review of the literature. Supporters of separate IL courses argue that information literacy is a discipline in and of itself and that it will only be taken seriously in the currency of higher education if disciplinary faculty teach the credit-bearing class. The advantage of a required credit course is that it is comprehensive. All students receive similar instruction in content, scope, and depth. Assessment of student learning is also easier in a credit course taught by a librarian. Students might also be more motivated in a course for which they receive graduation credit.

Others argue that course-integrated instruction is a more effective model. While information literacy is a general skill, students will retain IL skills and transfer learning if instruction is attached to a subject-based discipline. Ann Grafstein argues that

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Integrating information literacy with a sequenced English composition curriculum, if we consider all the recently adopted normative acts, we see that the test is ambiguous.

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