The State of Information Literacy in Louisiana Higher Education

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Overview

- Trends in curricular integration of information literacy
- Background on information literacy requirements in the southern region
- History and results of the newest LALINC information literacy survey
- Implications for the future of information literacy in Louisiana higher education
Establishing an IL Presence

Challenges:

* Curricular integration

* Ample staffing and funding
Establishing an IL Presence

Common Strategies

- Integrating IL into general education courses
- Integrating IL into college/university orientation courses
- Providing instructional workshops
- Assessing IL skills through rubrics, portfolios, and citation analyses
- Semester-long IL courses
One-Shot IL Classes

- Are they effective?
- How to assess?

“Bibliographic Instruction is Dead!” - Mark Ellis

Is he right?
Robert Farrell (2011)

Librarians are dedicating more and more time to information literacy instruction, which reflects an admirable educational impulse.

However, this creates:

“…a tension within libraries between the objective of increasing student learning opportunities and the financial and temporal realities that face our instructional programs, especially in challenging economic times.”
The institution ensures that users have access to regular and timely instruction in the use of the library and other learning/information resources.
“Computer and Informational Literacy - Colleges/universities shall ensure that each degree student has achieved basic computer and informational literacy before graduation. The method for determining whether this standard has been met shall be left to the discretion of the affected institution.”
What do other states do about information literacy?

Southern Regional Educational Board
Information Literacy requirements in General Education is uncommon...

Louisiana and Maryland
Some states have no library instruction policy statements

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<tr>
<th>Arkansas</th>
<th>Policy statements only discuss collections, staffing, and facilities.</th>
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<td>Delaware</td>
<td>No mention of library instruction or information literacy.</td>
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Some states acknowledge the instructional role of libraries

Georgia: “...make reports and recommendations concerning the improvement of instruction, curriculum, research, and service in matters related to libraries.”

Virginia: “...ensures that the students use the library and its resources as an integral part of their learning experience.”

West Virginia: “...there shall be communication to students in a matter to minimize barriers to [library] usage.”
Some states acknowledge the instructional role of libraries

Alabama: Librarians should “...collaborate to share expertise, develop shared teaching and learning tools...” and “...encourage the development of teaching and learning tools that can be shared...”

Mississippi: Librarians should “...have adequate interaction with the students to support the library and research needs of the students.”
Some states acknowledge the instructional role of libraries

Oklahoma:

“Services (instruction, consultation, professional development) are provided to faculty and students to meet their educational needs. Personnel treat the library as a hands-on classroom and engage strategies that invite student interest, encourage student questioning, and guide student resource searches.”
In August 2012, the Louisiana BOR cut the IL requirement...why?

“to provide better clarity and relevance to the Statewide General Education Requirements.”

No credit hours associated with the requirement or other formal assessment made it hard to determine if institutions were providing the instruction.
What could we have done to save it?

Mandating a for-credit IL course?

Implementation of a statewide IL assessment?

These things take money and time, which have been in short supply in Louisiana academic libraries.
Louisiana’s Higher Education Budget Cuts

2007-2013

Louisiana higher education cut over $600 million.

➢ Hiring freezes
➢ Retirement incentives
➢ Furloughs
➢ Elimination of departments, faculty, staff
History of Surveys

- 2002
- 2006
- 2008 (Rollins, Hutchings, Goldsmith, & Fonseca, 2009)
- 2012
2012 Information Literacy Survey Results

- Respondents
- Information literacy on campus
- Educational role of librarians
- Assessment of information literacy
- Budget cuts
2012 Information Literacy Survey
Non-library Faculty

- Collaborative planning with librarians (74%)
- Research activities that stress information literacy (52%)
- Teaching discipline-specific courses (37%)
- Collaborative planning with other departments (16%)
- Participation in cross-disciplinary efforts (5%)
- Leadership in campus-wide efforts (5%)
2012 Information Literacy Survey
Librarians as Educators

- Library-related instruction sessions (100%)
- Instruction at the reference desk (90%)
- Course components or modules (42%)
- Credit courses in other academic departments (37%)
- Library-related credit courses (32%)
2012 Information Literacy Survey
Assessment Strategies

- Student evaluation (53%)
- Assignment that involves research (42%)
- Rubrics (26%)
- In-house skills test (21%)
- Standardized skills test (5%)
2012 Information Literacy Survey
Impact of Budget Cuts

- Non-hiring or hiring freezes (63%)
- Book budgets (58%)
- Decreases in travel and professional development funds (58%)
- Low morale (47%)
- Long-range planning difficulties (47%)
- Loss of electronic resources (37%)
- Poor technology infrastructure (37%)
- Eliminated positions (32%)
2012 Information Literacy Survey
Open-ended Questions

1. Where do you see the future of information literacy on your campus?

2. What changes would you implement on your campus to promote information literacy?
Implications

What is the future of information literacy in Louisiana higher education?

What is the future of the LALINC Information Literacy Committee?
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