

## Library Workshop Assessment Report: ENGL 221

Course: ENGL 221 Honors

Semester: Fall 2013

Instructor: A. Sterling

### **What Student Learning Outcomes does this project assess?**

Library PSLO:

- Access appropriate information resources available through the library in support of class assignments and course instructional objectives.

ACRL information literacy standards:

- The information literate student determines the nature and extent of the information needed. [ACRL standard 1]
- The information literate student accesses needed information effectively and efficiently. [ACRL standard 2]
- The information literate student evaluates information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system. [ACRL standard 3]

### **What we did:**

The students of English 221 came in to the library classroom for an advanced workshop focused on finding additional articles for their papers and evaluating website information. The students had already completed a rough draft of their essay and were charged to find at least two additional articles they could use when writing the final draft. The instructor asked that they find articles that brought new information to their paper and that they focus on learning more. Students were given a library assignment that was co-created by the instructor and the librarian.

The second part of the assignment focused on website evaluation. Students were given the links to two reports on a similar topic but from differing organizations. As part of their assignment they were to compare and contrast the two reports, noting questions that were generated from the information they read. Students were also asked to visit four websites and evaluate their content and point of view.

The papers were turned into the English instructor who then forwarded copies to the librarian for assessment. 17 papers were forwarded. For the purposes of this assessment, the article citations and summaries in Part 1 of the assignment were counted individually for a total count of 33. In Part 2, each evaluation component (report comparison, questions and web evaluations) was reviewed as a whole to determine if they met the evaluation criteria.

**The following criteria were used during this assessment project:**

Part 1 evaluation criteria:

Article citations:

Student recognizes relevant information sources using an article database and records all pertinent citation information for future reference.

Accuracy: correctly identifies title of article and title of publication

Relevancy: title relates to topic

Article summaries:

Student summarizes main ideas of the article, demonstrates application of evaluative criteria, and student explains how the new information adds to their existing paper.

Integrated: Annotation addresses application of new information to existing paper.

Summarized: Annotation is summarized in student's own words and main points are represented.

Part 2 evaluation criteria:

Comparison of reports:

Student accurately identifies the information in each report and related arguments of each organization, analysis includes comments on the inherent bias associated with each.

Summarized: Information from the report is summarized in student's own words and main points are represented.

Differences identified: Information and arguments from each paper are identified and compared.

Questions:

Student formulates questions based on the information introduced in the new readings.

Relevant: question relates to topic and demonstrates need for additional evidence or information.

Website summaries and evaluations:

Student summarizes main ideas of the article and demonstrates application of evaluative criteria. Analysis includes comments on the inherent bias associated with each.

Summarized: Information from the website is summarized in student's own words and main points are represented.

POV: Point of view is identified and bias discussed.

## What we learned about our students:

The results for Part 1 below indicate that all the students were able to use the library's electronic resources to find and access articles related to their topics. The citations were complete and accurate. Of the summaries, 79% included both a summary of the main ideas and some indication as to what information would be used in the student's essay.

| <b>Part 1</b>                                      |                         |                            |                            |                                |
|--|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>33 article citations and summaries reviewed</b> |                         |                            |                            |                                |
|  | Accurate & relevant     | Accurate, not relevant     | Relevant, not accurate     | Not accurate, not relevant     |
| Article citations                                  | 33                      |                            |                            |                                |
|  |                         |                            |                            |                                |
|  | Summarized & integrated | Summarized, not integrated | Integrated, not summarized | Not integrated, not summarized |
| Article summaries                                  | 26                      | 4                          | 3                          |                                |

After seeing that a high percentage of students successfully met the initial evaluation criteria, it was decided that the evaluation criteria for the article summaries should be revised. The revision of the criteria was to both look more closely at to what degree the students were completing the assignment requirements and to identify areas where instruction could be improved. The librarians chose to look at the article summaries and try to identify the degree to which students were detailing 1) what information from the article they would be using and 2) where in their own papers the information would be useful. In the chart below there is a differentiation between article 1 and article 2 to illustrate the finding that individual students did not always include the same information in both article summaries. Overall, 76% of the summaries included some specificity, with the majority of those detailing what new information would be used. A very small percentage detailed where the new information would be used in their papers, and 24% of the summaries included no detail at all.

| <b>Part 1 - revised</b>              |   |  |  |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| <b>33 article summaries reviewed</b> |   |  |  |   |
|                                      | Specifies what information will be used from the new article. | Specifies where in the paper the information will be used. | Specific about both (the what and the where) | Does NOT identify any specific information. |
| Article 1                            | 9   | 2  | 1  | 5   |
| Article 2                            | 8   | 1  | 4  | 3   |
| <b>Total:</b>                        | <b>17</b>   | <b>3</b>   | <b>5</b>                                     | <b>8</b>                                    |

While students successfully completed the activities in Part 2 overall, only half of the papers included a report comparison component that met the assessment criteria. The remaining half included only a summary or did not address the comparison requirement at all.

| <b>Part 2</b>             |                                    |  |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>17 papers reviewed</b> |                                    |  |
|                           | Summarized, differences identified | Summarized, differences not identified |
| Report comparison (13)    | 9                                  | 4                                      |
|                           |                                    |  |
|                           | Relevant                           | Not relevant                           |
| Questions (15)            | 15                                 |  |
|                           |                                    |  |
|                           | Summarized with POV or bias        | Summarized, no POV or bias             |
| Website evaluation (16)   | 13                                 | 3                                      |

**What we plan to do next to improve student learning:**

In many library workshops emphasis is placed on teaching students the mechanics of the search: how to access the databases, what words to search for, etc. This assessment helps to illustrate the need to teach students how to apply their results to a project or paper. Being able to identify information as useful is important, but it is equally important to be thinking about *how* you will use that information and how new information relates to what you have already learned is the higher level skill that needs to be addressed.

In future workshops, the assignment instructions should be more explicit in terms of guiding students to use detailed descriptions in their article summaries. It would also be helpful for the librarian to model the process of searching for information that complements what has already been written and explaining how to make the connections between new evidence and existing claims.

Students also need more instruction on how to create a true report comparison that evaluates sources bias and content. The students were skilled at reviewing a website and naming the bias or viewpoint, but were not as skilled when applying the same activity to the reports. In the future, it may be beneficial to have the article activity separate from the evaluation activity.