

Assessment of Library Instruction on Undergraduate Learning Outcomes

Maira Bundza, Reference Librarian
Barbara Cockrell, Science Librarian



Objectives

- To assess effectiveness of current library instruction program on information literacy of WMU undergraduates
 - For library classroom instruction
 - For the online tutorial
- To develop an assessment plan for library instruction/information literacy





Information Literacy


- “A set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information.”

ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education






Library Instruction

- Meet classes taught by other WMU instructors for one session (usually 50 minutes)
 - Freshman writing classes
 - ENGL 105, IME 102, BCM(BIS) 142
 - 3,147 students in 128 sessions (2003-04)
 - Other classes through liaison program
 - 5,703 students in 262 sessions
 - Searchpath – online tutorial
- 




Purpose of Assessment

- Determine current effectiveness
 - Clarify goals and objectives
 - Develop more effective teaching
 - Better communication and collaboration with teaching faculty and administration
 - More information literate student body
- 




State of Assessment in the Library

- Library assessment committee
 - Two faculty members on University wide Assessment Committee
 - Individual librarians using various evaluation surveys
 - Usability testing of Web site
 - LibQUAL⁺ project – last year's grant
- 




LibQUAL⁺

- An assessment tool designed to measure library service quality
 - From the Association of Research Libraries
 - Measured Service, Library as Place & Information Control
 - Data gathered in 2004 and being analyzed
 - To be repeated every 3-4 years
 - Did not evaluate library instruction learning outcomes
- 




Information Literacy at WMU

- Learning objectives for students in freshman writing classes
 - Objectives in Searchpath
- 




Assessment Grant Project

- Send one librarian to the Information Literacy Immersion Program
 - Disseminate information from the Immersion Program
 - Define common objectives for freshmen writing classes
 - Evaluate instruments and techniques for assessment of student learning
- 




Information Literacy Standards

- Competency standards for higher education (ACRL, 2000)
 - Outcomes as discrete measurable results (ACRL, IS 2001)
 - SAILS project to develop a programmatic level standardized tool (now in its third, final, year)
- 




What has been done

- Information Literacy Immersion Program attended and reports given
 - Workshops for faculty and staff
 - Katharine Cummings – Teaching observation
 - Peter Saunders & Maira Bundza
 - ACRL Information Literacy Assessment online course
 - Freshman learning objectives defined
 - Measurable ACRL learning outcomes identified
- 




In Process

- Selection and development of assessment instrument(s).
 - Looking at web-based surveys such as the CSU one to assess entry-level information competence
 - Investigating project SAILS
- 




Next steps

- Evaluate & test assessment tools and techniques
 - Continue faculty / staff discussions
 - Create overall assessment plan for instruction/ information literacy
 - Incorporate assessment into strategic plan
- 




First Year Experience

- Library already committed to participate
 - Opportunity to provide incoming freshmen with Information Literacy skills
 - Opportunity to pre and post test
 - Encourage use of Searchpath and library instruction and assistance
- 



Issues

- Takes more time than you think
 - Culture of assessment
 - Logistics of working with many instructors (150 in Fall 2004)
 - Difficult to choose appropriate tools
 - Web or paper surveys
 - Pre and post testing
- 



Value of Grant

- Motivating force
 - Meetings provide a support group
 - Connection to the University
Assessment plan
 - Financial support
- 