

**WML Information Literacy Instruction Assessment 2020-21
Classroom Activity Report – Individual**

Faculty Librarian: Frank Conserette

Semester: Spring 2021

Course Number and Name: COMM 240: Communications Research Methods

Course Instructor (Last Name): Snee

Date(s) of Information Literacy Instruction: 3/12/2021

Time(s) of Information Literacy Instruction: 12:00-12:50pm

Location: Zoom

Number of Students Registered in Course: 21

Summary of research assignment or task

Each student will identify and describe a new and unique theory (hypothesis, really) that explains a communication and/or media phenomenon that they have recognized or experienced. A thorough review of related literature is required to inspire their thinking and assure that they are not reinventing the wheel, as is a case study (real or hypothetical) to illustrate the theory and permit us to ‘see’ it in action.

Part 2 of this research assignment is the Literature Review (5+ pages) and includes a minimum of 10 primary academic sources.

I collaborated with Dr. Snee on his Information Literacy Stipend proposal and project for this course. The three student learning outcomes we came up with are found below.

Classroom Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) – at least one, no more than three

SLO 1: Define “research” as they understand it in the field of communication and media.

SLO 2: Articulate both their expectations and their subsequent experiences locating, critically reading and concisely summarizing primary scholarship in communication and media studies.

SLO 3: Reflect upon the nature and process of research in their field and speak to benefits of sharpening one’s information literacy skills.

How will you know how students are doing as they work toward meeting these outcomes?

As part of the Information Literacy Stipend, Dr. Snee and I came up with the following assessment plan to gauge students' understandings of the research process within the field of communication and media and their abilities to articulate their research experiences and perceived benefits of enhanced information literacy skills.

- Prior to a guest lecture by Prof. Francis Conserette, students will be required to complete a pre-questionnaire that includes at least the following questions: "How do you define 'research'?" "If you were given a topic you've never seen before, what would your approach be to research the topic?"
- Students will be required to research and write a 5-10 page Literature Review that summarizes primary scholarship in the field of communication and media. The Lit. Review should focus on a particular topic (e.g. culture and nonverbal communication) and a particular communication context (e.g. interpersonal communication).
- Students will be required to write a short (2-page) reflection paper after Prof. Conserette's lecture that addresses definitions of research and the process by which students would now approach a research project.

Based on your experience teaching this class and any assessment of student work you were able to do, what can you change next time to improve how you teach it? Or, what was successful that you want to be sure to do again the next time you teach it?

Overall, this teaching experience was a successful one because the information literacy session and discussions with students seemed to be productive in their development of enhanced information literacy skills. The literature reviews submitted by the students were better than expected. Dr. Snee was also impressed with the number of students in the course that applied what they had learned with me to their literature review: 90% of the students located and submitted papers using all, or nearly all, primary peer-reviewed sources from relevant and respected journals within the field of communications and media. Dr. Snee reported in his grant final report (accessible here: <https://www.scranton.edu/academics/wml/infolit/documents/s21-snee-final-report.pdf>) that he had not seen this in his nearly 30 years of teaching, which he attributes to the inclusion and collaboration with a Research & Instruction Librarian.

Many of the students in the course were able to demonstrate enhanced information literacy skills in their assignments, so the stipend collaboration was deemed a success.

Note: This information literacy instruction was part of an Information Literacy Stipend project.

Information Literacy Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) – at least one, no more than four – this information literacy instruction supports

PLO1: Students will investigate differing viewpoints that they encounter in their strategic exploration of topics in order to be able to develop their own informed arguments or hypotheses.

PLO2: Students will gain insight and understanding about diverse sources of information in order to evaluate and use resources appropriately for their information needs.

PLO3: Students will identify the appropriate level of scholarship among publication types (scholarly journals, trade publications, magazines, websites, etc.) in order to critically evaluate the usefulness of the information for their research need.

PLO6: Students will properly distinguish between their own ideas and the intellectual property of others in order to ethically use information and demonstrate academic integrity.