Implementing a Multi-Study Information Literacy Assessment Plan for General Education Spring 2012—Fall 2015

The Mercy College Assessment of Student Learning Strategic Plan was initiated in 2012. Its purpose was to enhance the quality of processes related to the assessment of student learning and the academic success of the students at Mercy College. The aim was to increase retention and graduation rates through increased quality in academic programs and courses. The Mercy College Libraries Strategic Plan focuses on assessment and instruction. It is built upon a formalized set of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) that complement IL instruction in the Gen Ed curriculum. The SLOs selected and adapted from the Association of College & Research Libraries’ Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education, apply to all levels if IL instruction (ILI) at the Gen Ed level.

The Mercy College Libraries piloted an artifact study based on student work from selected Gen Ed courses where library instruction took place: Critical Inquiry, Sociology 101; Psychology 101; English 112; and Junior Seminar.

Artifacts

The artifacts consisted of outlines, bibliographies, research drafts, completed library instruction assignments and final drafts of research papers. Artifacts were evaluated using the Association of American Colleges & Universities’ Information Literacy VALUE rubric. A total of 52 artifacts were evaluated.

Evaluation

The evaluation consisted of a quantitative analysis of artifacts uploaded to an asset management system. Following a “norming” session in which scoring approaches were calibrated, two faculty evaluators separately scored each artifact via a rubric embedded in the E-Portfolio program. Using the Association of American Colleges & Universities’ (AAC&U) Information Literacy VALUE rubric and the Association of College and Research Libraries’ (ACRL) Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education, the faculty evaluators scored each artifact on five criteria for information literacy competency. Each artifact had two raters. The evaluators’ scores were then reconciled to produce a composite cumulative score for each course sample across the following five information literacy (IL) competency criteria:

- Determining the extent of information needed
- Accessing the needed information
- Evaluating information and sources critically
- Using information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- Accessing and using information ethically and legally

The E-Portfolio program tabulated and recorded the scoring totals for each individual student artifact. The evaluation team then produced summary data reports from the E-Portfolio program based on these scoring tabulations. This methodology was applied to the sequential assessment studies.

Baseline Study Fall 2012

In the Fall of 2012 the libraries expanded the pilot study to establish a baseline. Student proficiency in the information literacy competency within the Gen Ed Curriculum was measured. These findings showed the Psychology 101 students “met” the five IL student learning outcomes at 38%, compared to Freshman and Junior Seminar students at under 5%. They were the least proficient in information literacy knowledge and skills at under 5%. They were the least proficient in information literacy knowledge and skills at under 5%. They were also evident by the low scores for the student learning outcome “the student will be able to access information ethically and legally.” Another indicator was there was no difference in the information literacy proficiency between Freshman and Junior Seminar students. The Fall 2015 assessment concentrated on reinforcement. The college purchased Information Literacy videos that were integrated in the Freshman Library instruction assignments. The Spring 2015 assessment focused on library instruction, the IL/General Education assignment. We sorted the population into three groups; Classes who received library instruction, intervention, and the IL/General Education assignment. We sorted the population into three groups; Classes who received library instruction, intervention, and the IL/General Education assignment. We sorted the population into three groups; Classes who received library instruction, intervention, and the IL/General Education assignment.

Assessment Study Spring 2015

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