

Characteristics of Programs of Information Literacy that Illustrate Best Practices

<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/standards/characteristics.cfm>

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Category 1: Mission

A mission statement for an information literacy program:

- includes a definition of information literacy;
- is consistent with the “Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education” [<http://www.ala.org/acrl/ilcomstan.html>];
- corresponds with the mission statements of the institution;
- corresponds with the format of related institutional documents;
- clearly reflects the contributions of and expected benefits to all institutional constituencies;
- appears in appropriate institutional documents;
- assumes the availability of and participation in relevant lifelong learning options for all—faculty, staff, and administration; and
- is reviewed periodically and, if necessary, revised.

Category 2: Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives for an information literacy program:

- are consistent with the mission, goals, and objectives of programs, departments, and the institution;
- establish measurable outcomes for evaluation for the program;
- reflect sound pedagogical practice;
- accommodate input from various constituencies;
- articulate the integration of information literacy across the curriculum;
- accommodate student growth in skills and understanding throughout the college years;
- apply to all learners, regardless of delivery system or location;
- reflect the desired outcomes of preparing students for their academic pursuits and for effective lifelong learning; and
- are evaluated and reviewed periodically.

Category 3: Planning

Planning for an information literacy program:

- articulates its mission, goals, objectives, and pedagogical foundation;
- anticipates and addresses current and future opportunities and challenges;
- is tied to library and institutional information technology planning and budgeting cycles;
- incorporates findings from environmental scans;
- accommodates program, department, and institutional levels;

- involves students, faculty, librarians, administrators, and other constituencies as appropriate to the institution;
- establishes formal and informal mechanisms for communication and ongoing dialogue across the academic community;
- establishes the means for implementation and adaptation;
- addresses, with clear priorities, human, technological and financial resources, current and projected, including administrative and institutional support;
- includes mechanisms for articulation with the curriculum;
- includes a program for professional, faculty, and staff development; and
- establishes a process for assessment at the outset, including periodic review of the plan to ensure flexibility.

Category 4: Administrative and Institutional Support

Administration within an institution:

- identifies or assigns information literacy leadership and responsibilities;
- plants information literacy in the institution's mission, strategic plan, policies, and procedures;
- provides funding to establish and ensure ongoing support for
 - formal and informal teaching facilities and resources
 - appropriate staffing levels
 - professional development opportunities for librarians, faculty, staff, and administrators; and
- recognizes and encourages collaboration among disciplinary faculty, librarians, and other program staff and among institutional units;
- communicates support for the program;
- rewards achievement and participation in the information literacy program within the institution's system.

Category 5: Articulation with the Curriculum

Articulation with the curriculum for an information literacy program:

- is formalized and widely disseminated;
- emphasizes student-centered learning;
- uses local governance structures to ensure institution-wide integration into academic or vocational programs;
- identifies the scope (i.e., depth and complexity) of competencies to be acquired on a disciplinary level as well as at the course level;
- sequences and integrates competencies throughout a student's academic career, progressing in sophistication; and
- specifies programs and courses charged with implementation.

Category 6: Collaboration

Collaboration among disciplinary faculty, librarians, and other program staff in an information literacy program:

- centers around enhanced student learning and the development of lifelong learning skills;
- engenders communication within the academic community to garner support for the program;
- results in a fusion of information literacy concepts and disciplinary content;
- identifies opportunities for achieving information literacy outcomes through course content and other learning experiences; and
- takes place at the planning stages, delivery, assessment of student learning, and evaluation and refinement of the program.

Category 7: Pedagogy

Pedagogy for an information literacy program:

- supports diverse approaches to teaching;
- incorporates appropriate information technology and other media resources;
- includes active and collaborative activities;
- encompasses critical thinking and reflection;
- responds to multiple learning styles;
- supports student-centered learning;
- builds on students' existing knowledge; and
- links information literacy to ongoing coursework and real-life experiences appropriate to program and course level.

Category 8: Staffing

Staff for an information literacy program:

- include librarians, disciplinary faculty, administrators, program coordinators, graphic designers, teaching/learning specialists, and others as needed;
- serve as role models, exemplifying and advocating information literacy and lifelong learning;
- are adequate in number and skills to support the program's mission;
- develop experience in instruction/teaching and assessment of student learning;
- develop experience in curriculum development and expertise to develop, coordinate, implement, maintain, and evaluate information literacy programs;
- employ a collaborative approach to working with others;
- receive and actively engage in systematic and continual professional development and training;
- receive regular evaluations about the quality of their contribution to the program.

Category 9: Outreach

Outreach activities for an information literacy program:

- communicate a clear message defining and describing the program and its value to targeted audiences;
- provide targeted marketing and publicity to stakeholders, support groups and media channels;
- target a wide variety of groups;
- use a variety of outreach channels and media, both formal and informal;
- include participation in campus professional development training by offering or co-sponsoring workshops and programs that relate to information literacy for faculty and staff;
- advance information literacy by sharing information, methods and plans with peers from other institutions; and
- are the responsibility of all members of the institution, not simply the librarians.

Category 10: Assessment/Evaluation

Assessment/evaluation of information literacy includes program performance and student outcomes:

for program evaluation:

- establishes the process of ongoing planning/improvement of the program;
- measures directly progress toward meeting the goals and objectives of the program;
- integrates with course and curriculum assessment as well as institutional evaluations and regional/professional accreditation initiatives; and
- assumes multiple methods and purposes for assessment/evaluation
 - formative and summative
 - short term and longitudinal;

for student outcomes:

- acknowledges differences in learning and teaching styles by using a variety of appropriate outcome measures, such as portfolio assessment, oral defense, quizzes, essays, direct observation, anecdotal, peer and self review, and experience;
- focuses on student performance, knowledge acquisition, and attitude appraisal;
- assesses both process and product;
- includes student-, peer-, and self-evaluation;

for all:

- includes periodic review of assessment/evaluation methods.