

# **ARCHER LIBRARY INFORMATION LITERACY INSTRUCTION PROGRAM**

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**Submitted by the Instruction Program Planning Committee**

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### **I. Mission and Goals**

The mission of the Archer Library Information Literacy Instruction Program is to promote information literacy, particularly as it relates to academic pursuits, in the University of Regina student body. As a guide to what the concept of information literacy in higher education encompasses, the American Library Association's *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* (<http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/informationliteracycompetency.htm>) is widely viewed within the academic library community as the standard.

The Instruction Program Planning Committee has devised a set of goals for the Archer Library Information Literacy Instruction Program (hereafter called the Instruction Program), which aims to accomplish its mission. While not all aspects of the Information Literacy Competency Standards are specifically addressed by the goals, the Committee believes that the most important elements are covered, and that the goals provide a good balance between the ideals of the standards and what is feasible given the limited resources of the Library and the University at large.

The goals of the program are given at the end of this document in the appendix.

### **II. Components of the Program**

#### **A. Introduction to the Library and Library Tools and Resources**

The Library currently offers two one-session classes, Library Research Skills I and Library Research Skills II. The Library also teaches a session in the University's University 100 class, as well as to students in the University's English as a Second Language program. All of these activities will continue as part of the Instruction Program.

In addition to the information currently provided in these sessions, Library instructors teaching these sessions will also incorporate information relevant to Goal 3 in the list of goals in the appendix.

#### **B. The In-Class Instruction Component: Department/Faculty-Based Instruction**

The In-Class Instruction Component of the Instruction Program will consist of instruction given in the setting of regular term-length classes in the Faculties. Currently, information literacy instruction given in regular classes is given by librarians (usually in one-period sessions) at the request of teaching faculty. This model has two major limits: (1) instruction is given only when requested by teaching faculty, and (2) if teaching faculty were to collectively request enough instruction sessions to make substantial progress toward achieving the goals of the Instruction Program, it would strain librarians' workloads, and might not be feasible at all. Therefore, the Instruction Program enlists the help of the teaching faculty to provide in-class instruction to students.

### **The Information Literacy Liaison**

A key element of the In-Class Instruction Component is the appointment by each department (or faculty, in faculties that are not organized into departments) of an *Information Literacy Liaison*. The Information Literacy Liaison is a faculty member who works with the librarian for that department or faculty to coordinate the teaching of information literacy within the students' regular classes in the department or faculty. The Information Literacy Liaison may be the same faculty member who serves as the liaison for Library's collection development activities.

Working together, the Information Literacy Liaison and the librarian for the department or faculty will coordinate the goals of the Instruction Program with the curriculum of the department or faculty, and identify classes where instruction pertaining to the various goals can be incorporated into the class content. The Information Literacy Liaison and the librarian may also, if they choose, modify some of the goals to tailor them to the specific discipline of the department or faculty.

### **Library Personnel and Faculty Members Working Together**

The Information Literacy Liaison will get the approval of the instructors of targeted classes and/or the approval of the department/faculty chair for the inclusion of information literacy topics in the targeted classes. It will then be the job of the librarian to meet with the instructors of these classes (preferably in person, rather than just by email and phone) and discuss how the information literacy content will be given to the students. The librarian may, as appropriate, and depending on the workload constraints of the librarian and the faculty member, offer to give one or more instructional sessions to the class, provide written material, write some information-literacy-related exam questions, make suggestions regarding research paper assignments, etc. The faculty member should be encouraged to provide information-literacy instruction in areas where he or she feels competent.

The librarian may also, as appropriate, coordinate the participation of other library staff members in the in-class instructional effort, especially in cases where other staff members have particular knowledge or expertise that is applicable to the information literacy goals in the context of the targeted classes.

It is envisioned that the way in which information literacy content is delivered to classes will evolve over time. As more written instructional materials are developed, as faculty members become more familiar with techniques for using information tools offered by the Library, and as different instructional strategies and configurations are tried, faculty members who teach regularly may well become increasingly willing and able to take on teaching tasks that initially had been performed by librarians.

### **Birthing the In-Class Instruction Component**

This component of the Instruction Program cannot be brought into existence by the Library's effort alone. The various faculties, departments, and instructors will have to be persuaded that this is a worthwhile undertaking, and be willing to do their part to make this component viable. Such persuading might require a sustained effort.

It would probably be most effective for the University Librarian to take the lead in announcing and promoting the Instruction Program, with its In-Class Instruction Component, to the University at large. Convincing key administrative officers of the importance and soundness of the program would go a long way toward its adoption by the faculties and departments. Librarians could help by discussing the importance of information literacy and the merits of the program with faculty members, at faculty meetings and other venues.

## **C. Online Instructional Materials**

The Library presently has some instructional documents, mostly of a practical nature, available online at its Web site. Additionally, the Library is currently working on developing instructional viewlets, and also makes available on its Web site an online tutorial, with student worksheets, that can be used in both faculty and librarian-led information literacy instruction. It is envisioned that such materials will form an important component of the Instruction Program, increasingly so as more and more materials are developed, and will eventually be a solid foundation upon which teaching activities can be based. Many of these materials may be assigned as required reading/viewing by faculty members as part of the information literacy instruction incorporated into regular classes.

## **III. Guidance and Evolution of the Instruction Program**

The Instruction Program Planning Committee will steer the development and evolution of the Instruction Program.

The tasks that the committee will concern itself with include, but are not limited to:

- publicizing the program
- expanding the reach of the program
- promoting participation by faculties and departments

- assessing the program
- making the program more effective
- building up a body of online instructional materials and keeping it current.

## APPENDIX

### GOALS FOR THE ARCHER LIBRARY INFORMATION LITERACY INSTRUCTION PROGRAM

#### Overall Goals

1. Students will understand ...
  - the general outline of information, i.e., the different kinds of information and the media and formats in which they occur (digital and print, books, journal articles, government documents, etc.);
  - principles of successful information-searching (e.g., principles for using online databases);
  - basic rules for evaluating information—its reliability, its importance, its ephemerality.
2. Faculty will ...
  - understand the importance of addressing the topic of information literacy in their classes;
  - know that the Library can play an important role in fostering information literacy in their classes, and can provide information literacy instruction tailored to their classes and their classes' assignments.
3. Students and faculty will ...
  - understand the importance of information literacy and the need to make an effort to become information-literate (i.e., that information literacy does not arise automatically in an individual);
  - know that the Library is always available for help in information literacy topics, both basic and advanced;
  - know that standard formal information literacy instruction sessions are just a beginning, and that the Library is available to help individuals and groups increase their level of information literacy, in formal and informal settings, beyond what is covered in the standard sessions.

#### Detailed Goals for Students

4. First-year students will ...
  - understand the basics of information organization—books (including encyclopaedias and other reference books), scholarly journals, magazines, and newspapers, and what type of information is in them; they will also be aware that there are other kinds of information carriers, such as government documents and conference proceedings;
  - know that items of any of these kinds of information source may exist in print or online format;

- understand the difference between these kinds of information source and general Web sites;
- understand some basics of how to search for information in these types of information source, and how this type of searching is different from using Google or other general Internet search engines;
- understand when it is useful to use general Internet search engines, and know some basics for using them effectively;
- know of some general multidisciplinary databases provided by the Library;
- know the services that the Library offers, including reference, instruction, and interlibrary loan;
- know that the Library is a welcoming place and service, and is their ally in increasing their information literacy.

5. Students taking upper-division classes geared toward their major will ...

- be reinforced in their understanding of the topics for first-year students;
- understand the principles of successful information-searching, especially in the context of their major subject;
- have skill in using available databases most pertinent to their major subject and to specific assignments;
- understand the basics of evaluating information.

6. Graduate students will ...

- have a thorough knowledge of the organization of information in their discipline;
- know what the main tools (databases and anything else) for finding information in their discipline are, and how to use them well;
- know that the Library is a welcoming place and service, and that it is a valuable ally in meeting their information needs.