

Using Data Analysis and Branding to Build Relationships

The 2008 Annual Conference
American Library Association

Bonnie Thomas, Ph.D.
BTS Research Consulting
Carroll Community College



Table 3
Differences for Freshmen and Seniors for Percent of Questions Answered Correctly for Library
Specific Questions (arranged by ACRL standards)

Question	Topic	Standard	Senior Score*	Freshman Score*	Difference	Potential Explanation
3	Secondary source identification	1	67	42	25	Higher increase due to practice and instruction on determining the extent of information needed.
2	Search Strategy	2	59	50	9	Due to previous experience with commercial search engines- there may already be a familiarity with search strategies using key words. Easy for students to succumb to inefficient searching.
8	Boolean Logic	2	42	23	19	Higher increase due to the unfamiliarity of Boolean logic prior to entering college. Boolean Logic is emphasized in Information Literacy Classes. Search engines use natural language as opposed to developing search strategies
5	Main Concepts	3	79	71	8	Students may be entering college using keyword searches and not higher level searches by subjects headings. Students may not see the reason for using subject heading searches because they find enough information through keyword searches.
15	Best support for claim	3	53	46	7	Both groups are failing to recognize the difference between primary, secondary, and tertiary materials and the appropriate application of those materials
24	Database usages from other schools	5	70	52	18	Students, after instruction, have a better understanding of our subscriptions and how to obtain items beyond those owned/accessible by the university.

*Percent of questions answered correctly

Bolded numbers represent the largest differences between freshmen and seniors

Overview

Analysis of the data from the *ILA* demonstrates that the University of Scranton senior students are scoring higher for Standard 1 (Determine the extent of information needed) and Standard 2 (Access the needed information effectively and efficiently). It appears that the seniors are making greater gains in the knowledge area, supported by the *Knowledge Score* (p. 5). However the seniors are scoring lower on Standard 3 (Evaluate information and its sources critically-Incorporate selected information into one's knowledge base) and 4 (Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose). This data is also supported by the smaller gains by the seniors in the *Application Score*. Standard 5 (Understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally) scores for the seniors fall between the Standards 1 and 2 and Standards 3 and 4 for gains.

One explanation for the difference in gains for the seniors between the acquiring information standards and the standards that address critical thinking may be the reinforcement of the strategies in accessing data and determining the amount of information needed during first year library instruction in combination with Freshman Seminar course information. It appears that the freshman obtain the information but have not, by senior year, demonstrated being able to fully integrate the information in order to critically evaluate the sources obtained, incorporate the information into their