From the President

LIRT became my “home” in ALA because I benefitted from the practical tips shared during discussion forums and conference programs. It has remained my “home” in ALA because of the welcoming people who are engaged with the organization. LIRT has given me and many others the opportunity to become involved in the work of ALA while making connections with and having a positive impact on individuals across the country. It has been a rewarding experience.

As I write this column, LIRT is collecting feedback from members about the organization to guide the discussion at our upcoming Strategic Planning Retreat. The survey includes demographic and SWOT questions. I’m excited to read about your perceptions of LIRT’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as they will help to shape the future of the organization. Current and past LIRT Executive Board members and current committee chairs will attend the Retreat which will take place on the Friday just before Annual. LIRT has contracted with two nationally recognized facilitators to lead and steer the discussion. I’m certain that the Retreat will affirm some of our traditions and will provide us with some new ideas and new directions.

The Retreat is just one event that will take place at Annual. LIRT has many learning and networking opportunities planned. We have a wonderful conference program about helping DIY library users. We are co-sponsoring a program with ACRL Instruction Section on aligning learning spaces with pedagogy. We’re also co-sponsoring a Discussion Group with RUSA Reference Services Section about discovery tools and the Framework for Information Literacy. And if you enjoy networking, join me at the Transitions to College Committee’s networking event on Friday evening, Bites with LIRT on Saturday for lunch, or come to the Awards Ceremony and Reception on Sunday evening. I hope to see you at one of these events so I can show you around my “home.”

Jennifer Corbin  LIRT President
Keeping up with instruction-related articles is challenging, but we can make that easier. Each year LIRT’s Top Twenty committee reviews articles and recommends the best for you to read. You’ll find the 2014 Top 20 reviews starting on page 7. Summer has just begun - take a little time out to pursue these. Wondering about ways to create a more inclusive environment for students? Tech Talk’s Billie Peterson-Lugo has the scoop on Universal Design for Learning. Meet Katie Bishop, Humanities & Fine Arts Librarian at University of Nebraska Omaha, who is featured on page 14 in this issue’s Member A-LIRT spotlight!

I hope you have the opportunity to join us in San Francisco! While you’re there you can meet LIRT colleagues and experience ALA Annual.

Are you hungry to get involved, but want to know more before deciding? You can start informally by signing up for a Bites with LIRT meal. You’ll get a good meal at a restaurant chosen by a local ALA member, and you’ll have the friendly companionship of fellow instruction librarians. I have been to several and each has been fun, and unique. Or check out the Awards Ceremony at the Nikko. Interested in students preparing for the college experience? The Transitions to College committee is hosting a reception Sunday evening. Meet, eat, greet, and learn more!

At annual, come hear the three speakers we’ve chosen for Sunday’s conference program, “Help Yourself! Library Instruction that Supports Self-directed Learning.” You can read more about the theme and presenters on page 5.

Best of all, get involved! Come to an All-Committee gathering Saturday morning - you’ll find the subcommittees at tables all in the same room. You could even table hop! Meet the leaders and members of any committee that interests you. Details on page 3.

The 2015 annual conference offers many events and meetings of interest to instruction librarians. Some of our LIRT members serve as liaisons who attend instruction related meetings at ALA conferences, and then submit Liaison Reports to LIRT News. Watch for these in future issues (and catch the backfiles in our archives, too).

Happy Reading!

Susan Gangl
University of Minnesota
s-gang@umn.edu
**LIBRARY INSTRUCTION ROUND TABLE**

**2015 ANNUAL CONFERENCE MEETING SCHEDULE**

http://www.ala.org/lirt/lirt-meetings-annual-conference

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**FRIDAY JUNE 26**

**LIRT Retreat** (Invitation only)
8:30 am - 3:30 pm
Marriot Marquis – Golden Gate C3
[http://alaac15.ala.org/node/28765](http://alaac15.ala.org/node/28765)

**Friday June 26 LIRT Networking Event**
7:30 pm – 9:30 pm (RSVP by 6-22, $5)
see page 4 for details

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**SUNDAY JUNE 28**

**Help Yourself! Self-directed Learning (LIRT)**
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm
Moscone CC 2016 (W)
[http://alaac15.ala.org/node/28788](http://alaac15.ala.org/node/28788)
see page 5 for details

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**Examining Discovery Platforms within the New Framework (RUSA RSS and LIRT)**
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Moscone CC 133 (N)
[http://alaac15.ala.org/node/29473](http://alaac15.ala.org/node/29473)

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**BITE WITH LIRT**

**Saturday, June 27, 12 noon**

“Bites with LIRT” is a lunch event at a moderately priced restaurant during the ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco. This is your opportunity to meet other librarians interested in library instruction while enjoying a meal in a local restaurant.

LIRT welcomes anyone who has an interest in instruction from all types of libraries. You need not be a member of LIRT to participate. We hope you will join us in this opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences about library instruction in a relaxed setting. Enjoy a stimulating and fun lunch with LIRT -- good food, good company, and interesting conversation. We will make the arrangements; all you have to do is reserve your spot and show up!

The first 10 LIRT members who sign up will receive a $20 gift card to cover the cost of their meal.
(To be eligible for the gift card, attendees must be LIRT members who are not current committee members.)

Register at: [http://www.ala.org/lirt/bites-annual](http://www.ala.org/lirt/bites-annual)

**Deadline is June 24, 2015.**
LIRT Awards Ceremony and Reception

Sunday, June 28th from 5:30-6:30 p.m.
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm Hotel Nikko – Golden Gate
http://alaac15.ala.org/node/28794
http://www.ala.org/lirt/awards-ceremony-reception

LIRT Innovation in Instruction Awards Committee:
Sherri Brown, Georgia Institute of Technology (Chair)
Jonathan Dembo, East Carolina University
Jeff Knapp, Pennsylvania State University Altoona

LIRT Librarian Recognition Awards Committee:
Michael K. Saar, Lamar University (Chair)
Jacalyn Bryan, Saint Leo University
Paula C. Johnson, New Mexico State University

In recognition of the accomplishments of librarians and libraries who promote information literacy, the Library Instruction Round Table (LIRT) will host an Awards Ceremony and Reception from 5:30pm-7:00pm on Sunday, June 28 during the ALA 2015 Annual Conference in San Francisco. The event will be held in the Hotel Nikko – Golden Gate.

This year we will be honoring Dr. Lesley S.J. Farmer, Professor of Library Media at California State University Long Beach, winner of the 2015 LIRT Librarian Recognition Award, and the Claremont Colleges Library, winner of the 2015 LIRT Innovation in Instruction Award.

Award recipients will be presented with a $1,000 cash prize and a plaque during the ceremony. The honorees will briefly discuss their work in forwarding information literacy, followed by a reception with hors d’oeuvres and a cash bar.

All conference attendees are welcomed and encouraged to attend. To add the event to your calendar through the Conference scheduler, visit http://alaac15.ala.org/node/28794.

This is the second year that LIRT has offered the Library Instruction Awards.

LIRT Transitions to College Networking event
http://www.ala.org/lirt/transitions-college-annual-conference-get-together
Friday June 26th 7:30-9:30 p.m.
Please join the LIRT Transitions to College committee for an evening of low-key fun and networking at ALA Annual. Come make new acquaintances from all types of libraries, including public, school, academic and special. The cost is $5 per person for a selection of appetizers. There will also be a cash bar available.

Space is limited - please RSVP by June 22nd
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1KecY7kSGI9ozlw3D3UMqRJmfU1jG5rotRAXy-R7Vf38/viewform
conference-get-together

Location:
Jasper’s Corner Tap
http://jasperscomertap.com/
401 Taylor Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
FEATURED PRESENTATIONS

“Can’t make it to the library?  Let the librarian come to you! ”
Corinne Dedini, Associate Director of Academics, The Online School for Girls, mcorinne.dedini@onlineschoolforgirls.org

Learning is no longer place dependent, but relationships are still at the heart of excellence in education. Nowhere is this more true than “in” the library—the cornerstone of our school campuses that is increasingly virtual. Today’s librarians need not only partner with classroom teachers to deliver blended instruction modules but they are also asked to facilitate entirely online lessons in research techniques that can run asynchronously. In this presentation, Online School for Girls, which provides the best education in a digital environment to girls around the world, will offer a pedagogical framework for librarians who are stepping into the virtual classroom. By the end of the presentation, participants will have the basic tools that they need to begin to organize an online learning space and build connections with students beyond the library walls.

The Bridge at Main: SFPL’s new literacy and learning center
Melissa Gooch, Branch Manager, The San Francisco Public Library, mgooch@sfpl.org

The San Francisco Public Library has created a new department to address the changing literacy and learning needs of the community. As the use of technology expands and the need for greater access to literacy and learning resources grows, the question of how to coordinate, facilitate access, and provide expert staff becomes an even higher priority. The Bridge at Main was developed to offer a broad range of services, programs, and resources for the public that are designed to address the need for 21st Century Literacy skills development. We will discuss why SFPL created a new learning and literacy center, the development of our new staff division—the Learning and Instruction Unit, the range of public instruction we offer through the new center, and our change in focus from a transactional to a relational service environment.

“Self-directed learning that supports the learner: Three case studies from Virginia Tech”
Rebecca Miller, Assistant Director of Learning Services, Virginia Tech, millerrk@vt.edu

At Virginia Tech, we are always considering new ways to offer sustainable, scalable, and high quality teaching and learning, and one of the ways that we have succeeded in doing this is developing methods of reaching learners who do not require the physical presence of a librarian. This presentation will explore three case studies, each of which includes a specific form of self-directed learning. Each case study will focus on a different type of learner—including undergraduate students, graduate students, and teaching librarians—and the various formats of self-directed learning that is most effective for these different types of learners.

As a place, the library has evolved from a static repository of information to a multi-dimensional place for patrons to access technology, information, meeting and creation spaces. As library buildings have transformed, so has the nature of librarianship — including library instruction. Traditional, face-to-face and stand-alone, instruction sessions have expanded to include, or at times have been replaced by, self-paced modules and online instruction. Instruction can now occur digitally via research guides, podcasts, and in pre-recorded or live video feeds. Even the delivery of text-based instruction in libraries has evolved into the 21st century, with basic standardized placards giving way to colorful, customizable displays, librarian-created content, visual infographics, or digital touch pads.

This program will focus on some of the ways in which librarians are delivering non-traditional library instruction. A panel of three speakers — representing academic, public, and school libraries — will share their experiences in providing non-traditional library instruction.
• **What brought you to LIRT?**
I wanted to be involved in ALA Committees and had heard that the round tables were generally very welcoming to new members. In addition we had just started making some changes to our instruction program for Composition classes. I thought that with LIRT I could not only get committee experience with some friendly librarians, but also get new ideas from others who are interested in instruction.

• **What was your path to librarianship?**
I went into academia planning on getting a PhD in American Studies. I may have walked away from that program with only a Master’s degree, but I still wanted to be involved in higher education in some way. Because I loved doing research and helping students, I thought that maybe being a librarian would be a good fit. I applied to several library science programs right after quitting my PhD program, but then thought better of it. One graduate program didn’t really work out for me, did I really want two “failed” degrees? I knew I should get some library experience first to see if it was a good fit for me. I applied for a paraprofessional position at a small liberal arts college and got it. About two years in I knew that not only could I be a professional librarian, but that it really was the job for me!

• **Tell us about your current position. What do you like most about it?**
I’m the Humanities & Fine Arts Librarian at University of Nebraska Omaha. I serve as the liaison to six different departments: Art, Communication, English, Foreign Language, Music, and Theatre. I also serve as the coordinator for our Composition information literacy program. I love working with the students. I get a lot of research questions from the art students and it is so much fun to help them find books and articles. It is really making me want to learn more about art history.

• **In what ways does it challenge you?**
As we work to improve our Composition information literacy instruction program we have been implementing active learning into our sessions. Being the lead on this project has involved developing and piloting new lesson plans. Trying out new things in a class is always a bit scary because you never know how the students will respond. It is very rewarding though when a new activity goes well and you can share it with your team!

• **Throughout all your educational experiences, what teacher inspired you the most and why?**
That would definitely be Sue Rosowski. She was nationally known as the premier Willa Cather scholar, but what people didn’t often realize about her was that she was a champion for her undergraduate students. I first met her in an honors English class when I was a freshman. Sue not only inspired her students to learn and grow, but she also treated us as actual people. That alone made a big impression on me. I later was privileged to be part of a seminar program with her to encourage and promote undergraduate research. I wrote my honors thesis as part of that class, and when I was applying to graduate school, I asked Sue to write a letter of recommendation for me. Everyone I met from the admissions committee remembered that letter. You don’t often see tenured faculty work so hard for undergraduates. I will never forget her and everything she did for me and all her students.

• **When you travel, what do you never leave home without?**
My white noise machine. I absolutely cannot sleep without it!

• **If you could change one thing about libraries today, what would it be?**
I would like academic libraries to be more involved in open access publishing, and as part of that become less reliant on big journal packages. This is a big issue that definitely won’t change overnight, but I think academic libraries should really band together to improve academic journal publishing. Big journal packages can be crippling to a library’s budget, and faculty don’t always understand the way publishers work. Librarians should be working more to promote open access and educate faculty in academic departments on this issue.

• **Tell us one thing about yourself that most of us probably don’t know.**
I love games of all kinds! My family gets together about once a month for Ticket to Ride (and other games). But I also love video games, and I even play D&D. My current character is a 5th ed. Gnome Illusionist.

This insightful study reports on a multi-semester workshop series developed and offered at the University of Michigan Library to help graduate students navigate the world of scholarly publishing. Drawing on the fact that graduate students planning a career in academia face increasing pressure to become published authors before graduating, this collaborative effort between subject librarians, publishing professionals, and teaching faculty members was organized to address students’ concerns about the publishing lifecycle. Upon the completion of a pilot workshop consisting of a single 1.5 hour session accompanied by an online guide with a departmental focus, the librarian team expanded on the project to initiate a campus-wide workshop series. The specific elements of the series included introduction to publishing, a faculty panel with participants from a variety of disciplines, as well as a number of sessions on such topics as copyright, citation analysis and journal ranking, turning a dissertation into a book, and academic blogging. The authors also discuss promotional activities as well as assessment efforts related to the workshop series. This is a clearly written, highly informative article that comes in especially handy with the introduction of the new ACRL Framework and its inclusion of such threshold concepts as Scholarship as Conversation and Research as Inquiry, as it provides interested libraries with a blueprint for a massive, concentrated program teaching students how to become active participants in the information ecosystem.


Librarians at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Libraries used transaction logs of student searches of the library’s federated search system to learn more about student search behavior. Not only did the logs clearly reflect the students’ search methods and strategies during the instruction session, but they let librarians see whether or not students were modeling the search behavior that they had just been taught. The literature review includes many studies reviewing student search logs, but this particular study is unique in that it is the first to present data collected during student searches conducted within actual bibliographic instruction sessions.

In this study the students were mostly freshmen from a variety of majors. For their searches, students in library instruction sessions were asked to find three reliable sources by first developing a concept map of their topic and then creating a search strategy and running a search on that topic. Samples of these maps are included within the article. The authors used the transaction logs to determine whether or not students were able to successfully apply their newly-learned research skills. Some limitations were encountered which are noted within the article. Analysis of the transaction logs was facilitated by use of a scoring rubric that is reproduced within the article. Reviewing transaction logs revealed some common student problems in search string construction and keyword generation, such as how to use quotation marks in a search string, or identify alternative and/or more sophisticated keywords to use in their search. Based on their analysis, the authors feel that transaction log analysis holds value even beyond the scope of their study. Armed with a heightened awareness of common student search problems, librarians at any library can better address these gaps in the classroom as well as at the reference desk.

LIRT TOP TWENTY, continued on page 8

A geography professor and an academic librarian partnered to develop class assignments that would incorporate information literacy skills through the lens of cultural geography in their own community. These assignments, worked before a final research project was due, would allow the instructors to identify and address research skill gaps, as well as to support and build upon the valuable tacit information literacies the students already possessed. Two kinds of assignments were designed, implemented, and assessed. First, students were asked to create “surf maps” to show their methods for discovering web-based information on their topic. As they presented their maps to their classmates and demonstrated their search techniques, faculty were able to reaffirm successful research methods and guide students away from flawed search strategies. Feedback from peers during these presentations also provided valuable teaching moments and opportunity for discussion. Next, students built “concept ladders” to connect their research topic to broader themes within the scholarly literature. Concept ladders allowed the students to gradually climb from their original, narrow topic to broader and more abstract themes as they moved up each rung of the ladder. Students used their newly-identified search terms to find materials in library research databases and discovered that reconsidering their topic within a wider conceptual framework expanded not only their search results but their understanding of how their topic could be relevant within a larger disciplinary scope.

The authors present these teaching strategies with a high level of detail. For example, the article includes concrete examples and reproductions of student work and how each item was addressed within the instructional framework, which ensures these teaching tools are replicable in other academic environments.


Buck’s highly informative case study discusses Instruction Boot Camp, a two- to three-hour in-house professional development opportunity offered in 2012 at Oregon State University Libraries and Press (OSUL&P). Drawing upon several established peer-group based collaborative programs and models, such as ACRL Immersion, OSUL&P’s research and writing boot camp, and lesson studies, the event aimed to improve librarians’ instructional competencies through experience sharing. Specifically, in a workshop setting, librarians collaborated in small teams of four to six to help a colleague improve an instructional session. All librarians with instruction in their job description were invited, with all having the opportunity to submit an application for their session to be redesigned. In order to better focus the revision process, librarians whose sessions were selected for a makeover filled out a course-design document outlining course learning objectives, intended audience, instructional strategies and assessment. The program was very well received, with librarians citing such benefits as exposure to different teaching styles and learning new instructional design skills. The author’s inclusion of a list of recommendations for institutions wishing to hold a similar workshop makes this cost-effective event easy to replicate. Possible limitations of the study include a lack of assessment beyond librarian satisfaction and the decision not to invite non-library faculty to the workshops, even in cases when an analyzed library one-shot instruction session was part of their credit-bearing course. Both of these limitations are addressed by the author.


Furay explores library instruction through the lens of theatrical performance. The author reviews the literature of theater in business presentations and instruction. She covers a variety of theatrical elements related to performance and engagement of an audience and applies them to the classroom, particularly “one-shot” environment. With great acumen Furay discusses how lighting, scenery, imagery, voice, space, narrative, and humor can all become important elements in a well–scripted, acted and directed information literacy session by drawing upon a wide range of literature from various fields. Furay paints an articulate and convincing argument to encourage librarians to foray into the area of theater in their quest to make instruction more engaging to students.
LIRT TOP TWENTY, continued from page 8


Green and Jones call for school librarians to play an active role in online learning by designing and teaching online courses. Differentiating between three types of online learning spaces – virtual libraries, flipped classrooms, and fully online courses – the authors describe how school librarians’ roles in these spaces differ. They also present a concise instructional design model for online learning: plan, prepare, present, perfect. The article makes a valuable contribution by presenting a concise overview of the opportunities for, benefits of, and an approach to providing online library courses. It is of particular value to school librarians seeking a starting point for teaching online.


Rubrics can be a powerful tool for assessing student learning, and they are beginning to be more widely used in information literacy instruction. In this article, the authors discuss an unusually extensive IL rubric project that began five years ago and is still ongoing. They describe what they learned about their students, but their focus is also on the powerful effects the development of a rubric can have on an IL program. At the outset of the project, the questions they investigated had to do with students’ skills. For example, could they distinguish between popular and scholarly sources? As the project progressed, the authors became more interested in students’ IL habits of mind. Could they draw on evidence to make an argument or pull together primary sources to make a claim? Through the rubric, the librarians developed a better understanding of students’ strengths and weaknesses in the areas of attribution, evaluation of sources, and synthesis and incorporation of sources. This better understanding directly informed classroom practice, particularly through a recognition of the extent to which students need guidance about the role that evidence plays in their writing and thinking. The project also deepened the librarians’ own understanding of IL as a critical habit of mind. As they presented on the project at their institution, they were able to engage faculty in meaningful conversations about IL, pedagogy and curriculum. Together they are beginning to set community-wide expectations. Although the authors had hoped to learn about their students’ abilities, they had not anticipated the ways the rubric project would also lead to conversation and change on campus. The “Information Literacy in Student Writing Rubric” is included in the appendix.


Jumonville’s unique analysis of grant applications, post-assessment data, and other artifacts generated by the Information Literacy Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) conducted at her university as part of the accreditation process offers librarians insight on how supporting faculty autonomy positively impacts faculty–librarian collaborations. After summarizing the relevant data from these documents, the author uses self-determination theory to better understand faculty motivation and tease out a new approach for encouraging faculty to integrate information literacy into their course goals. The author discovers the important role autonomy plays in motivating faculty to adopt and align information literacy goals within their courses. The evidence presented in this case study suggests that if faculty are free to select information literacy outcomes and assessment tools that match their understanding and support their overall course goals, they will be more likely to identify with information literacy values in a way that leads to deeper integration of these values within their pedagogical framework. Instead of prescribing a specific information literacy plan, librarians should offer gentle support and guidance to faculty as they work through the process of integrating information literacy into a course. Jumonville’s insightful article will help librarians better comprehend faculty motivation and prepare them to use this enhanced understanding to create effective and sustainable partnerships that promote information literacy across the curriculum.

LIRT TOP TWENTY, continued on page 10

Quantifying the impact of libraries and librarians on student retention is a challenge. In their case study, Knapp, Rowland, and Charles describe how embedding librarians in undergraduate research experiences (UREs) can impact student retention. The authors provide a sample curriculum, including detailed descriptions of learning activities to be used in the context of UREs. These well-designed “science games” are a key contribution of the case study. The games are impactful yet compact, appropriate for implementation in a variety of instructional contexts. However, because the authors are reporting on the curriculum and games prior to implementation, the activities have not been assessed. The authors suggest areas for further research, such as quantifying the impact of embedded librarianship on student retention through student data.


Leichner et al. show that it is possible to create rubrics for scoring information search tasks in order to assess information literacy. The authors compare common IL assessment methods, including standardized tests, analysis of bibliographies, portfolio analysis, and the use of information search tasks. The latter, they argue, are more similar to real-world tasks and therefore offer a more accurate assessment of information literacy, while offering the convenience of a standardized instrument. The authors present a taxonomy of scholarly information search tasks, from which other practitioners might create their own tasks and assessments. While these tasks are more similar to students’ real work than multiple-choice questions posed in standardized tests, they do not comprise truly authentic assessment. Also, assessment based solely on information search tasks neglects other important IL skills such as evaluation, integration, and synthesis.


Lundstrom, Fagerheim and Benson report on an assessment program for college writing courses that identified “bottlenecks” in learning, including topic development, reading comprehension, and synthesis. The authors designed an eight week workshop for writing faculty and librarians to re-design learning outcomes for their classes based on these bottlenecks and the new ACRL Framework for Information Literacy, using backward design principles. The workshops, attended by five writing lecturers and four librarians, were successful and were used as a model for other workshops in the disciplines.


Miller asks how academic libraries, especially within a constantly changing culture of learning, are supporting their students. She presents seven strategies that academic libraries can adopt in order to meet the more experiential and hands-on learning style of the “next university” student. The library of the future, in order to succeed, will need to support a new kind of higher education where students are more questioning, collaborative and purposeful. “Future-present” libraries, as Miller describes, are those that are already responding to those ever-changing user needs. Each of Miller’s strategies is presented with a real-life, tangible example of how the UCLA Library interpreted and applied it, as well as related innovative practices from other libraries. Miller’s unique style of considering how and why an academic library supports its students within a framework of change by looking toward the library of the future and the “next university” provides a valuable roadmap to help keep libraries from becoming mired within their current structure and context. Students are not the only ones who will benefit when libraries implement these strategies; libraries will be positively transformed by constantly reaching and growing into the next “future-present” version of themselves. Practical examples and successful, innovative models keep this article grounded and practical while still imaginatively providing inspiration to libraries and librarians looking to stay relevant and valuable in a time of constant change.

Moselen and Wang report on an exemplary professional development program for librarians at the University of Auckland that prepares them to work with academic staff to integrate information literacy into the curriculum. Based on a model of IL curricular integration developed by Wang in her doctoral work, the program focuses on the *what, who* and *how* of integration. *What* refers to the IL guidelines found in the intended curriculum. *Who* refers to the stakeholders and all who might have a role in IL integration. *How* refers to all the planning, design, and pedagogy involved in teaching IL across multiple courses in a particular context. The program consists of five modules, representing a significant investment of time for both participants and instructors. Although the results of the program have not yet been formally assessed, anecdotal evidence shows increased IL activity, especially in areas with little previous activity. Librarians also feel more confident in addressing curricular issues with academic staff. As a happy side effect, librarians feel re-engaged with IL as they have the chance to reflect on and discuss the meaning of IL in their own context. The authors suggest the methodology behind their program would be highly applicable to other institutions.


Nichols Hess’ article discussing online tutorials stands out among the many found in professional literature as a unique and valuable contribution to the scholarly discourse on this topic. Her article walks the reader through the process of developing a workflow for creating, assessing, and marketing online learning objects. She begins with a literature review that concisely summarizes significant research findings and results in a comprehensive, easy to follow list of best practices grounded in scholarship. Recognizing the importance of considering the unique climate of her library and institution, the author arranged for informal conversations with other university librarians to discern their concerns and suggestions. The information gathered during these open discussions assisted the author in constructing a framework for creating, revising, and sharing online learning objects. Nichols Hess continues her information gathering by selecting fourteen public universities’ websites and examining their online learning objects within the context of six predetermined criteria. During this process the author discovers the strengths and weaknesses of her library’s tutorials. In the next section of the article, the author synthesizes the information collected from the scholarly literature, conversations, and website analyses to develop comprehensive guidelines, a detailed workflow, and a tutorial evaluation rubric. The author uses the acronym MAGIC (maintainable, available, geared at users, informative, and customizable) to frame the new structure for an online tutorial project. The article concludes with a glimpse at MAGIC in action and the next steps for this project. Any librarian responsible for online tutorials will benefit from reading this well-written, practical article which includes the workflow diagram, rubric, and redesign timeline.


Since the new ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education differs substantially from the previous Standards in terms of its theoretical underpinnings, areas of focus, and structure, this article aims to provide a roadmap for library professionals as they begin to use the frames. Oakleaf skillfully guides readers through a series of steps for the adaptation process, including the need for an institution to identify and prioritize overarching thresholds it will follow, translating these concepts into measurable learning outcomes, securing the support of all stakeholders, employing active learning and assessment strategies in related instructional design activities, developing curriculum maps that merge student learning opportunities with library instruction, and making decisions regarding how to deploy the Framework-empowered instruction plans. The author focuses especially on the assessment challenge the frames pose. She recommends that libraries use performance

LIRT TOP TWENTY, continued from page 10

LIRT TOP TWENTY, continued on page 12
assessment techniques, such as concept maps, research logs, and self or peer evaluations, rather than surveys or fixed-choice skill tests and develop (and later norm) corresponding rubrics. Libraries are also encouraged to report the assessment results at the programmatic level and to reflect on them in order to make improvements as needed. This is a must-read, timely piece for librarians at any institution beginning to incorporate threshold concepts into their information literacy teaching practice.


Academic librarians grappling with the challenges of assessing student learning will appreciate Palsson and McDade’s article summarizing the two-year process of implementing a common assignment within a first-year writing course. The authors stress the importance of moving from one-shot sessions to course integrated instruction and aligning information literacy and course learning outcomes to support assessment. Through a careful analysis of both the successes and failures they encountered during the first year of the pilot program and the subsequent changes they made to improve the assessment process, the authors construct a valuable model for librarians to use at their institutions. Effective librarian and faculty collaborations lie at the heart of this model. For most readers, the need for collaboration will not come as a surprise. However, these authors, through thoughtful insights and practical examples, offer librarians a fresh approach for securing the support of course instructors. They use pedagogical theory and published research to build an effective argument for using a common assignment across multiple course sections to facilitate assessment. As Palsson and McDade explain why they chose to use a rubric for assessment, they also reveal the challenges posed by this assessment method and how the shortcomings in their initial implementation intensified these challenges. Through an honest examination of the program’s weaknesses, the authors discover effective strategies for fostering faculty–librarian collaborations and improving their program. Instruction and assessment librarians will be able to easily adapt these strategies to their unique situations. Librarians seeking tangible examples will welcome the assignment handout, rubrics, and instructor workshop activities included in the appendices.


Research on information seeking behavior should inform information literacy teaching, suggest the authors of this article. Their own research project investigates the evaluation of internet sources by young people aged 13-18. According to much of the literature they survey, young people tend not to rigorously evaluate information they find on the internet. Suggested causes range from the heavy cognitive burden imposed by evaluation (which sits at the top of Bloom’s taxonomy) to the students’ lack of engagement with their assignments to some young people’s belief that if it is published on the internet it is true. The various information literacy models and frameworks the authors survey certainly emphasize the evaluation of information sources. Evaluation of source material has also become a mainstream skill in the classroom. However, the authors recognize that young people are unlikely to adopt the strategies they are taught unless they appreciate their value. Their research project, conducted at a school in England, therefore focuses on assessing student attitudes to proven criteria for evaluation, specifically their attitudes to various internal cues. They found that the criteria most highly valued by the participants were currency; freedom from spelling and grammar mistakes; and the ability to easily verify the information elsewhere. Authorship was least valued, although the organization responsible for the web page was seen as important. In their recommendations the authors emphasize reinforcing students’ good practices, identifying assessment criteria that the class can agree on, and teaching techniques to apply them.


Tewell reports on a mixed method study conducted at a small liberal arts college. Half of the information literacy sections in one semester (eight) received an experimental instructional method consisting of illustrating
information literacy concepts through the use of comedy film clips, while the other half received traditional instruction. The author adds to the growing literature on using popular culture to increase student interest and achievement in information literacy sessions. The results from this study were inconclusive though they did show that students in the experimental group did perform slightly better on the post-test. The focus groups demonstrated that students were more interested in the content than in the format employed in the sessions.


Carrol Wetzel Wilkinson and Courtney Bruch provide the rationale and a plan of action for librarians to embrace in order to create an internal information literacy (IL) library culture. In June of 2013 ACRL revised the 2012 *Characteristics of Programs of Information Literacy that Illustrate Best Practices*, which clearly states that a fully evolved IL program is characterized by a mission, goals, a plan, administrative and institutional support along with a program of curriculum, pedagogy, staffing, outreach, and assessment. A review of library literature, the authors’ lived experiences, and elements of theory on organizational culture from Edgar Schein are blended calling on instruction librarians to implement second order change that will support libraries within the greater campus culture. Fostering an IL culture is an important factor as libraries re-establish strategic priorities aligning goals with those of the institution. Wilkinson and Bruch use these principles in relation to library instruction to outline steps to move forward with this endeavor: organizational assessment, encouraging courageous conversation, recognizing and addressing change resistance, and fostering inclusive dialogue with implementation of an action plan. The authors give practical examples, discuss likely obstacles, and offer suggestions for success in making changes. This is an excellent guide to share with library colleagues and begin a conversation about the strategic importance of IL.


This article provides an in-depth look at a course designed to incorporate metaliteracy. The authors created and taught an undergraduate course titled Rhetoric and Social Media at The University of Scranton using metaliteracy competencies, information literacy standards, and basic rhetoric theory as a basis for the course goals. Through this study Witek and Grettano discovered four themes that reflect the need for the recent overhaul of ACRL *Information Literacy Standards for Higher Education* (2000): 1) information now comes to users; 2) information recall and attribution are now social; 3) evaluation is now social; and 4) information is now open. The update published in February from ACRL *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* (2015) draws from the metaliteracy competencies as well as the former Standards. This study illustrates how to teach and assess information literacy in light of the differences in how information is delivered, evaluated, and used in the second decade of the 21st century. The students used familiar social media tools such as Facebook to produce and share information for this course. This article is an excellent example of bringing together information literacy skills with the changes in information delivery as they apply to higher level thinking processes and the new Framework that takes these into account.
Dear Tech Talk — I need a better understanding of the concept – Universal Design for Learning – to see how it fits in with the instruction I provide. What do I need to know?

-- Understanding ‘da Lingo of Universal Design for Learning

Dear UDL UDL — Universal Design for Learning (UDL) evolved from an architecture movement, Universal Design (UD). At the heart of Universal Design is the design of structures that are easily accessible by anyone – the elimination of barriers. Curb cuts is an excellent example of Universal Design – yes, curb cuts make it easier for people in wheelchairs to use sidewalks, but they also make it easier for everyone to use sidewalks: mothers with strollers, bicyclists, travelers with bags, runners, anyone who finds a curb to be a “barrier” – no matter how large or how small – when using a sidewalk.

The concept of Universal Design has been around for decades but was most fully developed by Ron Mace (an architect and polio survivor), who founded the Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University. UD is based on seven principles (http://www.ncsu.edu/ncsu/design/cud/about_ud/udp romes.htm):

1. Equitable Use – identical wherever possible, equivalent when not
2. Flexibility in Use – provide choices
3. Simple and Intuitive Use – eliminate unnecessary complexity
4. Perceptible Information – use different modes (pictorial, verbal, tactile) for redundant representation of essential information
5. Tolerance for Error – minimize hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions
6. Low Physical Effort – use is efficient and comfortable
7. Size and Space for Approach and Use – provide an appropriately-sized space regardless of a user’s body size, posture, or mobility

According to the Center for Applied Specialized Technology (CAST) website, Anne Meyer and David Rose first laid out the principles of Universal Design for Learning in the 1990’s. (http://www.cast.org/our-work/about-udl.html) Universal Design for Learning takes the UD construct and applies it to the learning environment. In the video, UDL at a Glance, CAST defines Universal Design for Learning as “an approach to curriculum that minimizes barriers and maximizes learning for all students.”

The questions are, what currently drives the use of UDL and how does UDL fit in with library instruction?

For more than 60 years, educators have encountered a growing population of students with varying degrees of disabilities for a variety of reasons: advancements in medical care on battle fields and at home that save more lives than ever before; children born with disabilities who are no longer shuffled off to “homes”
to spend their lives; Baby Boomers who continue to participate and contribute to society in spite of any limitations associated with age; an increase in the number of non-English speaking students; the significant increase (55% between 1980 and 2010) in children who have a learning disability (in general) and autism (in particular), shown in the charts below.

According to the Learning Disabilities Association of America, "2.4 million students are diagnosed with specific learning disabilities ['a neurological condition that interferes with an individual’s ability to store, process, or produce information'] and receive services under IDEA. This represents 41% of all students receiving special education services.” Additionally, “Children grow up to be adults and unfortunately learning disabilities cannot be cured or fixed; it’s a lifelong issue. And some individuals don’t realize they have learning disabilities until they are adults [emphasis added].” (http://ldaamerica.org/support/new-to-ld/)

Coupled with these changes, is the legislation passed to improve education opportunities and quality of life for those with disabilities, for example, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, which was passed in 1975 and reauthorized as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1997 and reauthorized again in 2004. In 1990, Congress passed the American Disability Act (ADA).

Related to existing legislation is an important distinction in the application of IDEA. IDEA applies to children from preschool through the 12th grade and dictates that teachers, parents, and other specialists are responsible for providing a “free appropriate public education” and for developing an “individual education plan” for each student identified as disabled; however in higher education a different approach is used: "College students are responsible for identifying themselves to their institutions’ disability office and for negotiating any accommodations they need within the curriculum.” (Mulliken and Lear)

Self-identification by students is fraught with issues, and self-identification to a librarian – with whom (from their perspective) they may have a very limited relationship – even more so. These students may wait passively for assistance (as in high school); they may lack self-confidence and skills to negotiate for accommodations; they may fear different treatment or stigmatization associated with self-identifying a learning disability; they may be unable to recognize issues related to self-efficacy. (Mulliken and Lear)

Nevertheless, since the end of 2000 ALA has advocated service to the disabled in their "Library Services for People with Disabilities Policy”, stating: “Libraries should use strategies based upon the principles of universal design to ensure that library policy, resources and services meet the needs of all people.” and under
assistive technology, stating: “Well-planned technological solutions and access points, based on the concepts of universal design, are essential for effective use of information and other library services by all people.” (http://www.ala.org/ascla/asclaiissues/libraryservices)

The demographics of the disabled population have changed and continue to change significantly; legislation has changed, accordingly; ALA is a strong advocate of meeting the information needs of and services to all people; an unknown number of students in classes may have undisclosed or unknown learning disabilities. It is for these reasons, and more, that the principles of Universal Design for Learning should be considered in planning library instruction sessions and activities.

Given how long UDL has been around, it is surprising to note that relatively little has been written about specifically incorporating UDL principles into library instruction, especially in light of one of the basic benefits of UDL – just like curb cuts, incorporating UDL in library instruction not only helps those (identified and unidentified) who have special learning needs, UDL also proves beneficial to a wide array of students who have different learning styles. Additionally, the incorporation of UDL mitigates the need to make – perhaps last minute – special accommodations.

In 2009, Chodock and Dolinger discussed their implementation of UD principles into information literacy instruction at a college that deliberately seeks and supports students with learning differences. Bongey, Cizadlo, and Kalnbach (2010) discussed the use of a supplemental online course site to enable UDL to a large undergraduate biology class. Siu and Lam (2012) examined the application of UD principles to computer-assisted learning facilities for children. Also in 2012, Zhong reports on her study in which UDL is used for teaching Boolean Logic. Hoover, Nall, and Willis (2013) report on their collaboration with Project STEPP (an innovative program for students with learning disabilities) at East Carolina University. Catalano (2014) discusses how the incorporation of UDL for distance learners can improve the distance education experience for both those with learning disabilities and all other types of learners. Harpur and Suzor (2014) take a slightly different approach, as they discuss the potential for e-books to help those with reading challenges. And most recently (to be published in 2015), Kavangh and Hoover report on their incorporation of UDL in the revision of an online tutorial for students in basic biology classes.

In addition to these instruction-focused case studies, others have described methods of making learning content more accessible (Oud, 2011 and Wray, 2013) or have discussed the use of Universal Design in context with library websites (Guder 2014 and Riley-Huff, 2012). Overall, there is more information on how librarians deal with accessibility issues in general.

Universal Design for Learning is all about eliminating barriers to learning – for the broadest group of learners. But, what are the barriers? Mulliken and Lear identify skills needed by those who attend library instruction sessions:

- Auditory-processing skills
- Attention to many visual cues and make inferences from them, tuning out irrelevant visual stimuli
- Vocabulary, spelling, and language skills to compose effective search strings
- Prior knowledge and reading comprehension skills
- Executive function skills to select limiters and choose items from search results
- A strong working memory to navigate from records, to full text, and back to search results
- Good communication and social skills for class and librarian interaction

Clossen suggests that simply asking a basic question: “Who might have trouble with this design choice?” can be hugely revealing.” Additionally, Mulliken and Lear recommend that librarians “focus on introducing and supporting the crucial content, and relegate additional information to websites, handouts, or follow-up appointments.” When planning for instruction, they recommend thinking about these questions:
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• What is the students’ assignment or task?
• What do students need to know and do to complete it?
• What resources, technological features, and information literacy concepts are absolutely essential for completing it?
• How can I best encourage students to ask for additional assistance if they need or want it?

Universal Design for Learning is all about flexibility and providing multiple ways for learning and demonstrating knowledge of learned content. Just as librarians have changed the library physical environment to be more flexible, adjusting to the needs of diverse users – group areas; quiet areas; study commons; graduate/faculty areas; coffee/café-centered areas; presentation areas; maker spaces; late-night/24-hour spaces – librarians should consider reframing their instruction sessions and activities to adjust to the diverse learning behaviors of students. For some, this reframing may result in a paradigm shift from “all learners are pretty much the same and need to adapt to the curriculum” to “learners have diverse learning styles for a variety of reasons (including learning disabilities), and curriculum should be adapted to meet diverse learning styles.”

Mulliken and Lear recommend that librarians “say, write, and demonstrate all important concepts so that students have aural, visual, and cognitive entry points”; “provide time for students to demonstrate skills, for the librarian to assess their efforts, and for the librarian and each student to work together on improving individual skills”; and give students in one-on-one sessions “a retrieval task, asking them to talk through their steps and observing their performance is sometimes more helpful” than having a conversation about what they need. Catalano found that “Students appreciated having a choice of final project as it gave them the motivation to do well.” Nearly everything written on Universal Design for Learning emphasizes that all students will benefit from the implementation of UDL.

Clearly some librarians are experimenting with the incorporation of UDL in their instruction sessions, but overall UDL appears to be flying under the information literacy radar – perhaps because few librarians have been exposed to the idea; perhaps because they are somewhat daunted by the implementation. However, there are resources available that help address the implementation issue. Chodock and Dolinger provide a useful chart that maps UD principles to information literacy instruction and specifically identifies how they will achieve each principle in their instruction. However, Chodock and Dolinger also say, “UDI is not a list of steadfast rules or sequential steps. Rather, UDI provides a set of principles to help guide teaching practices.”

CAST defines 3 guiding principles for UDL in order to eliminate barriers and create flexible paths to learning so that each student can progress. UDL should provide multiple means of:

• Representation – present content and information in multiple media and provide varied supports;
• Action and Expression – give students plenty of options for expressing what they know and provide models, feedback, and support for their different levels of proficiency;
• Engagement – give students choices to fuel their interests and autonomy. (CAST video, UDL at a Glance)

CAST also goes into depth with each of these principles in their UDL Guidelines – Educator Checklist (UDL [http://www.udlcenter.org/sites/udlcenter.org/files/Guidelines_2.0_Educator_Checklist%20(1).pdf]). Using the links provided in this PDF, an instructor can move from a top principle, to a sub-principle, to methods of executing a sub-principle, to specific examples and resources that could be used to implement the sub-principle. This interactive document provides a valuable framework for implementing UDL in any instruction setting.

Perhaps, it sounds like UDL is nothing more than “good teaching” practices that are already being followed
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– thinking about the teacher’s desired outcomes; assessing the best ways to meet those outcomes; presenting information efficiently and effectively in order to achieve the outcomes; assessing the outcomes. Edyburn presents a different perspective, saying that “UDL must be recognized as a learned skill, one that is refined over time, to produce high levels of performance.” The implication of this perspective for librarians who teach is that although their current instruction may incorporate some aspects of UDL, far more UDL integration could be accomplished with a more studied practice.

And yet, this studied practice will take time, especially if instruction that has been provided for some period of time needs to be adapted to a UDL framework. Taking the time to make these changes may seem to have little value – especially if there doesn’t appear to be an obvious need (no students with obvious learning disabilities) to make the changes. But – remember the curb cuts – making these changes most likely will benefit anyone who receives the instruction. Aren’t good instruction librarians always looking for ways to improve their instruction, engage the students, and enable them to complete their work successfully? Retrofitting older content is one approach; however in conjunction with incorporating UDL in previously-created instruction, instruction librarians should create new course content using a UDL perspective.

Last, why is Universal Design for Learning being addressed in a column that traditionally focuses on some aspect of technology? Because – to a large extent – it is the ubiquitous presence of easy-to-implement, technology-based tools that enable the development of learning content that uses UDL principles. Edyburn states, “The reason why UDL is possible today as opposed to the 1950s or 1970s is that digital technology provides a high degree of flexibility. Paper-based instructional technologies . . . cannot match the array and flexibility of supports provided in a digital environment (e.g., alter the font size, color contrast, text to speech, hyperlinks for explanatory aids, agents that offer strategy suggestions, movies that supplement text).” LibGuides is a prime example of a ubiquitous, easy-to-use technology that didn’t exist 10 years ago. The number of libraries using LibGuides abounds, and within LibGuides it’s virtually trivial to incorporate text, hypertext links, images, sound, video, assessment tools, and more. As an example, Kavangh and Hoover revised an existing LibGuide, “Biology and Information Literacy Tutorial”, using UDL principles: http://libguides.ecu.edu/biol1101.

With the availability of ACRL’s new Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, many instruction librarians will be examining their instruction services under a new lens. Why not also consider Universal Design for Learning as a lens for an additional perspective?

Additional Resources


Catalano, A. (2014). Improving distance education for students with special needs: A qualitative study of students’ experiences with an online library research course. Journal of Library & Information Services in Distance Learning, 8(1), 17-31. doi:10.1080/1533290X.2014.902416


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