

Illuminating New Instruction Research: Applying Research to Practice
ACRL Instruction Section Program
ALA Annual Conference
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Speakers

Randy Hensley, Head of Instruction, Newman Library, Baruch College, City University of New York

Heidi Julien, Associate Professor, School of Library and Information Studies, University of Alberta

Michelle Morton, Librarian, Cañada College

Moderator: Merinda McLure, Applied Human Sciences Librarian, Colorado State University

How to Participate

The purpose of this program is to:

- Provide a forum to spotlight and discuss recent instruction-related research, including research from outside of Library and Information Science.
- Show how instruction-related research can be applied to various instructional practices including, for example, classroom teaching, instructional design, and programmatic planning.

The panelists will summarize the three research studies listed below and apply them to the following instructional scenario. We will pause the panelists' discussion several times during the session and at that time invite comments and questions for the panelists. Throughout the program, please use the index cards on your seats to write questions or comments for the panelists and raise your hand to alert a runner to collect your card(s). Runners will collect the cards, read some of the questions and comments from the microphones in the audience, and pass all of the cards to our typist, who will enter them for display on one of the projection screens.

You can also submit questions and comments to be displayed in the same manner via Twitter. The hashtag is: **#ala09_is**

We have also provided a tracking sheet to help you take notes about the four aspects of research that the panelists will highlight during the program.

Thank You

The Conference Program Planning Committee would like to extend our sincere thanks to Catherine Haras, Edward M. Lopez, Kristine Ferry, and Margy MacMillan, and to all who responded to our call for submissions of research to be used in today's program.

Instructional Scenario

Librarians at University X and Community College Y have had a good collaborative relationship for years, especially since many Community College Y students transfer to University X. They have been talking about coordinating their information literacy programs, so that students at each institution receive effective instruction that addresses their needs at each stage of their coursework. They have decided to create a joint task force to conduct a systematic examination of the instructional needs of their students and make recommendations to modify information literacy instruction at both institutions. They also need to develop a plan to assess student learning so they can continually evaluate any new instructional approaches.

The task force decided that their first step should be a review of the instruction-related research that might inform their inquiry into student preparedness for college-level research, student learning needs as they progress through their coursework, and the assessment of information literacy instruction. The task force is comprised of a librarian from University X (Randy Hensley) and Community College Y (Michelle Morton). They have also invited a member of the Library and Information Science School faculty (Heidi Julien) at University X to help them review and apply the existing research-based literature.

Research Reviewed by Task Force

Haras, Catherine, Edward M. Lopez, and Kristine Ferry. 2008. (Generation 1.5) Latino students and the library: A case study. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 34 (5): 425-33.

Purpose – This study tests the hypotheses that English-dominant students will report learning research skills earlier or will describe advanced research behaviors compared with Spanish-dominant students and that there will be a positive relationship between research activity and library use throughout the K-12 academic pipeline.

Design/Methodology/Approach – Data investigating library usage and information literacy development were collected with a three-part survey and implemented as part of an on-going longitudinal investigation assessing the effects of mathematics, science, and information literacy development and library usage on the academic achievement of first year Latino students.

Findings –Although the hypothesis that English-dominant students would exhibit research-focused library use contrasted to Spanish-dominant students was not confirmed, the analyses reveal a pipeline story and confirm the hypothesis of a positive relationship between research activity and library use throughout the K-12 years.

Research Implications – This longitudinal study of generation 1.5 Latino students provides a model for further research, either through replication at other institutions or with other “native-born non-native speakers.”

Practical Implications – Findings provide documentation to support the importance of teaching information literacy and the research process throughout K-12, the value of middle school and high school teachers and librarians collaborating to prepare students for research expected in college, and the need for both high school and college libraries to better articulate information literacy curricula, especially with language-minority Latino students.

Originality/Value –The pathway analysis of student reports of doing research and using their school libraries across the academic pipeline is an important and universal statement for libraries at all levels.

Lupton, Mandy. 2008. Evidence, argument and social responsibility: First-year students' experiences of information literacy when researching an essay. *Higher Education Research & Development* 27 (4): 399-414.

Purpose – This investigation of students' experiences of information literacy in the context of a first-year course was designed to contribute to an understanding and awareness of information literacy from the perspective of the students and to enable educators to design effective and relevant teaching, learning and assessment strategies for developing information literacy.

Design/Methodology/Approach – A phenomenographic approach was used in this study of 20 students enrolled in a first-year, first semester environmental studies course. In line with the methodology, participants were selected for maximum variation, including age, disciplinary major and degree program. Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted and transcribed verbatim and formed the primary data. The non-linear analysis included a search for how the phenomenon of information literacy is experienced using the layers of awareness and logical relationships between the categories identified.

Findings – Findings indicate that information literacy incorporates both universal and contextual aspects. Findings also contribute to an understanding of the contextual and integrated dimensions of information literacy, and identify that students in the higher order category of learning as a social responsibility were influenced by course context and transcended the generic dimension of information literacy.

Research Implications – Phenomenography is a qualitative, nondualistic research approach that identifies and retains the discourse of research participants. It is based on the relationship of the person and the phenomenon being investigated, the perspective of the phenomenon through the experience of the person, and the idea that a limited number of ways exist for people to experience a phenomenon. This research maps information literacy experiences into categories of description that are distinct due to particular aspects of variation identified as educationally critical. This methodology adapts well to the many layers of information literacy education that are part of disciplinary knowledge and community and professional practice.

Practical Implications – The outcomes offer a way of understanding information literacy in order to design curricula based on critical educational aspects of student experiences. This study contributes to a more holistic understanding of information literacy in a formal educational context and supports the value of information literacy as a learning activity situated within a topic, course and discipline.

Originality/Value – The application of phenomenography to the study of information literacy significantly enhances the contextual aspects of the student experience in seeking evidence, developing an argument, and learning as a social responsibility. Information literacy as a generic skill disconnected from disciplinary knowledge is questioned.

MacMillan, Margy. 2009. Watching learning happen: Results of a longitudinal study of journalism students. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 35 (2): 132-42.

Purpose – This longitudinal study tracks the information skills of journalism students during a three-year program, describes what changes occur in their information skills, and documents factors influencing those changes.

Design/Methodology/Approach – The I-SKILLS (Information Skills and Knowledge for Lifelong Learning Success) Resume was introduced to first-year journalism students. The progress of these same students was tracked using their I-SKILLS resumes during a second-year class and a senior capstone course.

Findings – Student skills for finding and using information deepen and broaden over the course of their studies; the I-SKILLS resume demonstrates the impact of information literacy instruction and was validated as a tool for gathering qualitative data from a large population; and the changing information environment is reflected in the I-SKILLS resume across time.

Research Implications – This study supports continued research using a qualitative instrument designed to ask students directly about their use of information resources and the application of these resources to their academic careers.

Practical Implications – The use of a qualitative tool like the I-SKILLS resume provides valuable insight into student learning and is a useful teaching tool that provides students the opportunity to consolidate their learning through reflection and articulation. Information garnered from this study supports the value of program-integrated instruction throughout a sequence of study.

Originality/Value – The innovative design and development of the I-SKILLS resume both as a methodology for data gathering and as a teaching tool provides an excellent model for teaching librarians. The longitudinal aspect of the project gives depth to the findings of how students develop and apply information literacy skills.

Additional Research

Center for Student Success. 2007. *Basic skills as a foundation for success in California community colleges*. Sacramento, CA: California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

http://www.cccbsi.org/Websites/basicskills/Images/Lit_Review_Student_Success.pdf.

Note: summary available:

http://www.cccbsi.org/Websites/basicskills/Images/BasicSkills_booklet-2.pdf

Chelton, Mary K. 1997. The overdue kid: A face-to-face library service encounter as ritual interaction. *Library and Information Science Research* 19 (4): 387-400.

Given, Lisa M. 2007. Faculty and librarians' perspectives on academic space: setting the stage for undergraduates' information behaviors. In *The library as place: history, community and culture*, ed. John Buschman and Gloria J. Leckie. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.

Oakleaf, Megan. 2009. Using rubrics to assess information literacy: An examination of methodology and interrater reliability. *JASIST* 60 (4): 969-983.

<http://meganoakleaf.info/oakleafjasist2009.pdf>