



Companion Document to the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education

Sociology

Association of College and Research Libraries

**Anthropology and Sociology Section
Instruction and Information Literacy Committee**

**Approved by the ACRL Board of Directors,
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Introduction

Because sociologists have long been concerned with the social structures that influence the creation, dissemination, and popularization of knowledge, they are natural partners for librarians in information literacy projects. In classic theoretical texts (e.g., Berger and Luckmann's *The Social Construction of Reality*), feminist epistemological critiques (e.g., Oakley's *Experiments in Knowing*), and empirical studies of scientists (e.g., Knorr Cetina's *Epistemic Cultures*), sociologists have asked difficult questions about why we value certain kinds of knowledge and knowledge processes over others. This, we would argue, is the same line of inquiry librarians hope to inspire in their students through IL instruction.

In 2016, sociology professors Susan Ferguson and William Carbonaro published a white paper, [Measuring College Learning in Sociology](#), which includes the Sociological Literacy Framework (SLF). The SLF defines five essential concepts—The Sociological Eye, Social Structure, Socialization, Stratification, and Social Change and Social Reproduction—that “reflect larger organizing themes that lay the foundation of critical undergraduate knowledge in sociology” (p. 155). The Framework for Information Literacy in Sociology describes connections between the Association of College and Research Libraries' (ACRL) [Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education \(ACRL Framework\)](#) and the SLF that reveal how much librarians and sociologists have to learn from one another. It is for use by librarians who are well-versed in the *ACRL Framework* but who may have limited background in sociology. We believe that a deeper understanding of how sociologists think about the construction of knowledge can only improve librarians' instruction. As there are few standalone undergraduate classes on the sociology of knowledge, librarians can play an important role in developing activities and assignments that introduce these epistemological questions into traditional sociology courses.

We begin with a definition of Sociological Information Literacy (SIL) inspired by the *ACRL Framework* and [Measuring College Learning in Sociology](#). Using a conceptual crosswalk, we present six tables that explain how the essential concepts in the SLF relate to the six ACRL frames. Note that with one exception (“Sociological Eye”), the brief definitions of the SLF concepts embedded in the tables are taken directly from Ferguson and Carbonaro's white paper (2016, p. 154). Finally, we offer information for those interested in learning more about assessment strategies appropriate to the discipline (Appendix A), and we provide sample introductory and advanced student learning outcomes (Appendix B).

What Is Sociological Information Literacy?

Sociological Information Literacy is an understanding of how information and scholarship are created, published, disseminated, and used by individuals and organizations. It is informed by sociological thinking and scholarship, though SIL is not limited to sociological knowledge itself. Instead, it is an application of what Ferguson and Carbonaro (2016) call “sociological eye,” a distinctive disciplinary perspective that—like the “sociological imagination” or “sociological perspective”—encourages students “to see sociology in everyday life” (p. 143) with a wide variety of information. Students armed with SIL are better equipped to participate in informed public debates and lifelong learning. On the personal level, students can use this set of integrated abilities—searching, evaluating, synthesizing information and scholarship, and considering the role of the social world in the production of knowledge—in their learning, research, and employment regardless of their field.

Development of the Document

In 2016, following the adoption of the *ACRL Framework*, the ACRL Anthropology and Sociology Section's Instruction and Information Literacy Committee (ANSS-ILL) was tasked with developing a companion document reflecting the concerns and needs of those teaching information literacy within its respective disciplines. During the 2016-2017 academic year, ANSS-ILL decided to incorporate criminology/criminal justice into its work, as it determined that the knowledge practices and dispositions of this related field are unique enough to warrant a closer look. Three disciplinary subgroups were then formed to identify essential readings related to information literacy and the discipline, and after lengthy discussion, ANSS-ILL decided to develop three separate companion documents rather than a single framework, as originally intended. Over the course of the 2017-2018 academic year, the subgroups looked to the compiled readings to guide the development of their draft documents.

The sociology subgroup – Nidia Banuelos, Paula Dempsey, Hailey Mooney, and Rui Wang – defined sociological information literacy, paired the *ACRL Framework* with the SLF, and looked to the sub-field of critical information literacy to ensure the critical sensibilities of sociology were not lost. The subgroup used a table to visually represent the crosswalk between the two literacies and to handle the extensive scope of the document. It is important to note that the definition of sociological information literacy provided in the previous section has framed the development of the document, which therefore reflects the importance of applying the sociological

eye to the information landscape. In other words, this document prioritizes the application of sociological thinking to information (literacy) rather than the mapping of traditional information literacy practices onto the discipline of sociology (e.g. using a sociology database or developing keywords for a sociology research topic).

In 2018, this work was presented at a poster session at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, where it was well received.

In 2019-2020, ANSS-ILL began the process of sending the document out for external review, starting with the ANSS Executive Board. In 2020-2021, IRB approval was secured and a survey was distributed to solicit feedback from a larger group of librarians, sociologists, and other stakeholders. Another subgroup was formed – Krystal Lewis (PI), Gina Schlesselman-Tarango (PI), Paula Dempsey, Hailey Mooney, and Christine Slaughter –to review the peer feedback and revise and update the document accordingly. To date, members of ANSS-ILL involved in the project include:

Craig Arthur
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Emily Scharf
Gina Schlesselman-Tarango
Teresa Schultz
Christine Slaughter
Diana Symons
Pamela Upsher
Rui Wang
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The Frames

1. Authority Is Constructed and Contextual

Information resources reflect their creators' expertise and credibility, and are evaluated based on the information need and the context in which the information will be used. Authority is constructed in that various communities may recognize different types of authority. It is contextual in that the information need may help to determine the level of authority required.

Sociological Eye (1a) Sociology as a distinctive discipline that investigates the social roots of everyday life, including micro and macro phenomena	Social Structure (1b) The impact of social structures on human action	Socialization (1c) The relationship between the self and society	Stratification (1d) The patterns and effects of social inequality	Social Change and Social Reproduction (1e) How social phenomena replicate and change
<p>The social construction of everyday life applies to the way people shape ideas about authority and are shaped by them.</p> <p>Knowledge has a social basis; authoritative knowledge varies by society, social position, and time period.</p> <p>"Truth is political:" the legitimacy of scientific knowledge competes with other ways of knowing and authorities (e.g., Weber's classification of legitimate authority).</p>	<p>Social roles influence human thought and action. Roles with more social privilege (gender, race, age, sexual orientation, ability, socioeconomic) may be accorded authority that should be examined critically.</p> <p>Institutions of government, business, and higher education exert influence over what is considered valid or factual.</p> <p>Hierarchy and power relations can be discerned in the construction of reality.</p>	<p>Conceptions of authority may be shaped by personal histories and learned worldviews; these ideologies are based in the social world.</p>	<p>The authority to produce knowledge is most often bestowed by colleges and universities - institutions that employ policies and practices that marginalize certain groups. Even within the academy, certain forms of knowledge production (i.e., those that seem to be most "objective" and "general") are valued over others.</p> <p>These inequities lead to forms of knowledge and ways of knowing that reproduce social inequality. Consider, for example, deficit theories in educational sociology that describe low income students as <i>lacking</i> cultural capital, rather than suffering at the hands of institutions that do not value the capital they do have (Yosso, 2005).</p>	<p>Scholarly paradigms (i.e., fundamental beliefs and practices that guide the creation of knowledge) tend to persist over time, in part because students learn about them from mentors who have accepted certain fundamental premises.</p> <p>Authority is constructed from acceptance of these paradigms and, as such, they develop a "deep hold" on students' minds (Kuhn, 1970, p. 5). It can be difficult for students acculturated in a given discipline to think in terms of different paradigms (e.g., different ideas of what kinds of evidence are "legitimate," what level of scale is the object of investigation, etc.).</p>

2. Information Creation as a Process

Information in any format is produced to convey a message and is shared via a selected delivery method. The iterative processes of researching, creating, revising, and disseminating information vary, and the resulting product reflects these differences.

Sociological Eye (2a) Sociology as a distinctive discipline that investigates the social roots of everyday life, including micro and macro phenomena	Social Structure (2b) The impact of social structures on human action	Socialization (2c) The relationship between the self and society	Stratification (2d) The patterns and effects of social inequality	Social Change and Social Reproduction (2e) How social phenomena replicate and change
<p>Information creation processes are embedded in specific social, material, and cultural contexts that can affect the nature of the information output.</p> <p>The format a message takes can influence the message itself, e.g., “the medium is the message.”</p> <p>Social media outputs are part of a performance of identity.</p>	<p>The material structures, values, beliefs, and norms of a field (for example, a given academic discipline) shape what kind of information is ultimately produced and regarded as knowledge.</p> <p>The ownership of systems of information production and dissemination by media and technology corporations and oversight (or lack thereof) by government influences the processes of information creation and what information is made available.</p>	<p>Accessing, processing, and producing information and knowledge are mediated by social locations such as race, class, and gender and institutions such as the family, education, religion, and the media.</p>	<p>The ability to participate as a producer of information or to access information as a consumer is influenced by socio-economic status.</p>	<p>Because scholars use existing paradigms for hypothesis building, methodological design, and interpretation, they will often fail to see what does not fit into these paradigms. They will investigate the kinds of questions their theories and methods can best answer and they will interpret their results from their existing worldview.</p> <p>Should they fail to produce the expected outcome, they may blame themselves—not the paradigm—for their failure. In this way, certain kinds of knowledge and knowledge processes are reproduced.</p>

3. Information Has Value

Information possesses several dimensions of value, including as a commodity, as a means of education, as a means to influence, and as a means of negotiating and understanding the world. Legal and socioeconomic interests influence information production and dissemination.

Sociological Eye (3a) Sociology as a distinctive discipline that investigates the social roots of everyday life, including micro and macro phenomena	Social Structure (3b) The impact of social structures on human action	Socialization (3c) The relationship between the self and society	Stratification (3d) The patterns and effects of social inequality	Social Change and Social Reproduction (3e) How social phenomena replicate and change
<p>The value of information is dependent, in part, on the social contexts in which it is used, e.g.:</p> <p>As a commodity: Information is produced, collected, sold, and/or suppressed by organizations and corporations.</p> <p>As a means for education: Institutions provide differential access to information and promote some ideas over others as “correct”.</p> <p>As a means to influence: Information may be framed in a particular way to use as propaganda</p>	<p>The ability to control production of information itself as well as the platforms for the production and dissemination of information is primarily concentrated by powerful media and technology systems. Even where information is produced by individuals, it is owned by private corporations (e.g., on social media platforms, transfer of copyright agreements).</p> <p>Under evolving regimes of surveillance capitalism, we must also be concerned with the commodification of personal information and the ramifications for personal privacy.</p>	<p>Creation of information is perceived as self-expression, but is monetized and monitored. This self-expression in a social information environment is also tied to producing social belonging.</p>	<p>In our modern economy, information has monetary value and therefore is protected through intellectual property rights. Certain laws allow universities and other research institutions to retain the licenses for products developed in basic research (e.g., the Bayh-Dole Act). This may impact the kind of research universities choose to do.</p> <p>The monetary value of information also incentivizes large corporations to control it (e.g. journal aggregators) and limit its distribution. This, in turn, restricts who can participate in a scholarly conversation.</p>	<p>Social movements with the potential to effect change may be aided by social media, but the terms of use and algorithms that impact what information is seen are set by private ownership.</p>

4. Research as Inquiry

Research is iterative and depends upon asking increasingly complex or new questions whose answers in turn develop additional questions or lines of inquiry in any field.

Sociological Eye (4a) Sociology as a distinctive discipline that investigates the social roots of everyday life, including micro and macro phenomena	Social Structure (4b) The impact of social structures on human action	Socialization (4c) The relationship between the self and society	Stratification (4d) The patterns and effects of social inequality	Social Change and Social Reproduction (4e) How social phenomena replicate and change
<p>Sociologists examine the world and ask questions specifically about the nature of social structures' and practices' (e.g. institutions, social groups and interactions, ideologies, social categories) influence on human life experience. Their intellectual inquiries presuppose that social life and social realities matter to understanding and explaining the human experience and why individuals and societies behave in particular ways.</p>	<p>Expert knowledge is shaped by institutional systems such as peer review and established research methodologies and practices are subject to oversight by Institutional Review Boards.</p>	<p>The standard practices of research in a given field are learned from disciplinary authorities, where certain kinds of inquiry are prioritized or bracketed as irrelevant to a given discipline.</p> <p>Scholarly inquiry is a social process, undertaken in interaction with other scholars' ideas (see: Scholarship as Conversation) and/or in interaction with other people (e.g., lab science, interview studies, journal reviewers and editors, etc.).</p>	<p>Patterns and effects of social inequalities determine if certain lines of inquiry are even regarded as valid scholarly pursuits. The opportunity of individuals to pursue academic research is itself influenced by these patterns of social inequality.</p> <p>Paradigms like Collins's "matrix of domination" (1991) and Crenshaw's "intersectionality" (1991) give us analytical tools that address the intersecting and overlapping nature of these social inequalities, including those of race, class, gender, ability, and sexuality.</p>	<p>Every day, scholars encounter phenomena that cannot be explained by existing theories. This drives the production of new scholarly knowledge.</p> <p>These anomalies instigate scientific/scholarly revolutions only when they question the fundamental principles upon which knowledge paradigms are based (Kuhn 1962).</p> <p>Additionally, the practice of critical self-reflexivity (Bourdieu 1992) in knowledge production allows one to identify and analyze how social forces act upon oneself, allowing one to attempt to change in light of this new knowledge.</p>

5. Scholarship as Conversation

Communities of scholars, researchers, or professionals engage in sustained discourse with new insights and discoveries occurring over time as a result of varied perspectives and interpretations.

Sociological Eye (5a) Sociology as a distinctive discipline that investigates the social roots of everyday life, including micro and macro phenomena	Social Structure (5b) The impact of social structures on human action	Socialization (5c) The relationship between the self and society	Stratification (5d) The patterns and effects of social inequality	Social Change and Social Reproduction (5e) How social phenomena replicate and change
<p>Sociologists are in a unique position to evaluate the social context in which scholarly discourse occurs – including the power structures that determine (a) who is an expert in a field, (b) where the boundaries of a field lie, and (c) what can be said within these boundaries.</p>	<p>Social structures influence where and how scholarly conversation occurs, e.g. predominantly in the context of peer-reviewed journal publications, books published by academic presses, and disciplinary conferences. The material, cultural, and incentive structures of these contexts influence what and who is incorporated into the conversation.</p>	<p>Participants in scholarly discourse are socialized into contributing to those conversations with respect to particular norms, habits, and expectations of the field.</p> <p>Communities or individuals may use information to challenge or influence dominant social structures and institutions that produce scholarly knowledge.</p>	<p>Members of marginalized social categories have historically been excluded from or sidelined within “the scholarly conversation.” New forms of scholarship (e.g., feminist epistemology, critical legal studies) aim to include these historically marginalized voices by valuing ways of knowing previously rejected by the academy (e.g., <i>testimonios</i> in Chicana Studies). The opening up of established fields of study to the previously excluded also benefits those fields in the form of novel contributions and analyses.</p> <p>Exclusion from scholarly conversations can lead to lack of understanding and distrust of experts and scientific fact, and to the distortion of what is taken as “objective” knowledge to be biased toward dominant groups’ viewpoints and assumptions.</p>	<p>In order for a scientific revolution (i.e. change) to occur, many prominent scholars in a field need to recognize an anomaly for what it is and to view the resolution of this problem as a central one for their discipline. If we think of scholarship as a conversation, the anomaly must come up regularly in this conversation as a key puzzle.</p> <p>If existing theories cannot be adapted to explain the anomaly, scholars must generate new, speculative theories to address it. In the end, this crisis may be resolved with the emergence of a new paradigm—one that treats the anomalous as the expected. This is how knowledge processes change.</p>

6. Searching as Strategic Exploration

Searching for information is often nonlinear and iterative, requiring the evaluation of a range of information sources and the mental flexibility to pursue alternate avenues as new understanding develops.

Sociological Eye (6a) Sociology as a distinctive discipline that investigates the social roots of everyday life, including micro and macro phenomena	Social Structure (6b) The impact of social structures on human action	Socialization (6c) The relationship between the self and society	Stratification (6d) The patterns and effects of social inequality	Social Change and Social Reproduction (6e) How social phenomena replicate and change
<p>The social world shapes our opportunities and strategies for searching and the forms of knowledge that we have access to for exploration.</p> <p>For example, sociological scholarship analyzes search engines as products of human engineering and decisions made by people working in bureaucracies (Halavais 2009).</p> <p>Search engines misleadingly present knowledge as easily attained/accessed and finding answers to questions as a straightforward matter of finding the right keywords, regardless of those questions' complexity.</p>	<p>Search engines act as gatekeepers to information. Algorithms reflect the interests of the owners of technology products and culturally dominant ideologies.</p> <p>Cultural bias impacts how search engines and classification systems are designed (Noble 2018).</p>	<p>Searching is a social behavior that is influenced by different kinds of authorities (e.g. peers, teachers).</p> <p>The sources that an individual will see as relevant are shaped by social position (e.g. race, class, gender).</p>	<p>Development of search strategies considered "expert" require access to particular types of education and experience. However, people to whom traditional academic research experience has not been afforded have their own rich (albeit academically undervalued) research methodologies and traditions.</p> <p>People in marginalized communities may be under- or misrepresented in dominant or "standard" searching systems.</p>	<p>Search algorithms can make discovery of unique or disruptive content difficult. Because most search engines hide the exact algorithms they use from the public, the companies that create them have control over how search is conducted and what users see.</p>

Appendix A: Tools for Assessment

Here, we describe IL assessment strategies appropriate to the discipline by reviewing [existing ASA assessment recommendations](#) and listing resources for those interested in conducting assessments in sociology courses.

Goal and Objective Setting

As the ASA Task Force on assessing the Undergraduate Sociology Major suggests, “to conduct meaningful programmatic assessment, colleagues must move beyond a statement of program mission to the articulation of specific program goals and objectives” (p. 9). The distinction between mission, goals, and objectives is an important one for librarians working closely with sociology departments. A mission statement is typically set at the departmental level, as it “specif[ies] the purpose of the sociology major/program within the overall college or university context” (p. 8). Goals and objectives are narrower, however, and can be set for either the program or course level. At the program and course levels, librarians can work with faculty to ensure that some goals and objectives are related to the SIL concepts described above.

Goals are generally broader than objectives and are achieved in the long term. For example, a SIL goal for a program might be:

Sociology majors should be able to apply the sociological eye to news sources.

The objectives related to this broad goal are specific, realistic, and measurable. The ASA suggests that instructors (and librarians) ask themselves questions like: How do I know if my students have achieved this goal? What would students have to do to achieve it? “The answer to these questions,” they write, “is the content of learning objectives” (ASA Task Force on Assessing the Undergraduate Sociology Major, 2005, p. 9).

We might say that, in order for a sociology major to be able to apply the sociological eye to news sources, they must:

- Have a working definition of the sociological eye.
- Understand the social processes by which news is created.
- Know who creates the news (e.g. patterns in journalists’ education, race, gender) or, at the very least, know how to find this information.
- Acknowledge their own social position as a consumer of that news and, in particular, the sociocultural reasons why they find a story compelling or dubious.

We know we have produced useful objectives when we can easily envision several ways to measure our objectives. For example, we might assign a controversial news article in class and have students discuss the article freely for several minutes before providing more directed discussion questions (e.g. “Who wrote this news piece and why?”). Do students mention the social construction of the information presented without prompting? Do they acknowledge the role of their own social position as readers? After receiving pointed discussion questions, are they able to have a fruitful discussion about who creates the news and why?

Weiss (2002) et al argues that sociologists should also be concerned with the context, process, and effects of assessment. With regards to context, for example, librarians should ask themselves questions about the institutional setting in which their information literacy (IL) goals and objectives are being developed, including “what institutional rewards and sanctions are used to stimulate this work?” (p. 72). Process questions ask who has participated in setting goals and objectives, as well as ways to enhance participation. Here, issues of inclusion should receive full consideration. Have varied perspectives been incorporated during the goal setting process? Which perspectives are missing? For example, to what extent do we want students participating in setting their own learning objectives? Finally, questions of effect ask about the relevancy of the goals and objectives to the work faculty do everyday. For example: “Do the goals and objectives genuinely influence decisions about curriculum, policies, and standards?” (p. 74).

The ASA cautions that faculty have to care about the results of an assessment for it to be (a) effective and (b) worthwhile. Librarians are in a unique position to convince faculty that there is an important role for IL in the sociology curriculum (see above) and that assessment of this form of literacy is vital to the education of critical thinkers.

Assessment Strategies

It is beyond the scope of this document to review all possible assessments for the discipline. However, it is useful to take a moment to discuss the *types* of assessment that work best for SIL and to explain how some of these might work in practice. Sociological thinking is often iterative, relative, contextual, and self-reflexive. In other words: it is messy. For a discipline with few “right” answers, assessment should be both direct (i.e., testing students’ actual knowledge) and indirect (i.e., asking students to reflect on their own learning). It should also be quantitative (i.e., testing knowledge of facts) and qualitative (e.g. examining students’ thinking processes). Table 1 provides examples of assessments for SIL that fall into each of these types.

Table 1. Assessment strategies by type

Objective: Students should be able to discuss the scholarly impact of a sociological article, including its importance to their research.

	Quantitative	Qualitative
Direct	While visiting class, ask students to break into small groups. They must find out how many times an article has been cited and download a more recent article on this same subject. How many groups came up with a correct number? How many groups were able to download an article without assistance?	In partnership with the faculty instructor, develop an assignment that requires the student to find one of the sources cited in an assigned text. The student must then read this source and reflect on the relationship between the two readings. Is the assigned course reading truly building on its predecessor? If so, how? What questions do these readings prompt? In other words, how would the student plan to continue this scholarly conversation?
Indirect	After an instruction session, ask the students to fill out an online survey asking them how confident they feel doing a cited reference search. In the same survey, ask if they are confident finding articles that have cited the key article (another way of saying cited reference). Ask about their ability to find newer articles on the same topic. The slight variation in question form can help you identify whether students are getting derailed by terminology.	Issue a call for a focus group of sociology majors to come to the library and talk about their experiences using library materials. Ask the group: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In sociology classes, you often hear that two authors are “in conversation” with one other. What does that mean to you? 2. Is there a way you use these “conversations” in your own research? How?

Resources for Assessment

Those interested in reading more about specific assessment strategies for this discipline may find the following resources useful.

1. Bandini, J. Shostak, S., Cunningham, D., & Cadge, W. (2015). Assessing learning in a sociology department: What do students say that they learn? *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 41(3): 414-426.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2015.1018132>
2. Caravello, P.S., Kain, E.L., Macicak, S., Kuchi, T. & Weiss, G.L. (2008). Information literacy: The partnership of sociology faculty and social science librarians. *Teaching Sociology*, 36(1), 8-16.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0092055X0803600102>
3. Hohm, C.F. & Johnson, W.S. (2001). *Assessing student learning in sociology*. American Sociological Association.
4. Lowry, J.H. et al. (2005). *Creating an effective assessment plan for the sociology major*. American Sociological Association.
<http://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/savvy/images/asa/docs/pdf/Task%20Force%20on%20Assessing%20Undergraduate%20Major.pdf>.
5. Spalter-Roth, R. & Scelza, J. (2009). *What's happening in your department with assessment?* American Sociological Association.
<http://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/savvy/images/research/docs/pdf/ASAdeptsybrief3.pdf>.
6. Weiss, G.L., Cosbey, J.R., Habel, S.K., Hanson, C.M. & Larsen, C. (2002). Improving the assessment of student learning: Advancing a research agenda in sociology. *Teaching Sociology*, 30(1), 63-79.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/3211521>

Appendix B: Sample Student Learning Outcomes¹

Sociological Information Literacy at the Undergraduate Level

Key Cognitive Skills

- Understands how sociology information and research literature are produced and disseminated, and how authority is established.
- Understands a variety of formats of sources, information, and research literature in the sociology discipline (e.g. distinguish between a variety of publications of sociology literature such as journals, book chapters, dissertations, and conference proceedings).
- Understands how sociology information and research literature are formally and informally published, disseminated, and used in the sociology discipline and professions (e.g. the U.S. Census, ethnographies, field notes, artifacts, data sets, conference papers, gray or fugitive literature, scholarly websites, and peer-reviewed scholarly articles).
- Understands how authority in sociology research literature is established (e.g. peer reviewed research articles, highly cited research publications in different research communities).
- Understands issues related to censorship and freedom of speech in the U.S. and in countries/cultures being studied.
- Understands intellectual property, copyright, and fair use of copyrighted material. Obtains and posts necessary permissions from authors and organizations where needed to use copyrighted material in writing or presentations.
- Understands the social consequences of new forms of information technology (e.g. problems of unequal access to information, the uses and meanings of online communities, and the Internet as a tool for doing research and practice).

Key Behaviors for Success

- Reads background sources in anthropology and sociology to increase familiarity with the topic (e.g. *Encyclopedia of Social Issues*, *Sage Encyclopedia of Social Science Research Methods*).
- Identifies and lists key concepts, terms, social theories, culture groups, places, and names related to the topic in preparation for searching for information on it (e.g. uses discipline-focused encyclopedias, *Thesaurus of Sociological Indexing Terms*).
- Selects discipline-specific databases that index sociology research literature (e.g. Sociological Abstracts).
- Uses appropriate sociological and anthropological terminology for searching databases, recognizing the different effects of using keywords, synonyms, and vocabulary from the database's own particular list of subject indexing terms.
- Creates and uses effective search strategies in multiple anthropology and sociology databases using advanced search features, such as Boolean operators, truncation, and proximity searches; refines searches as needed later in the process to obtain additional or missing information.
- Searches for and finds books, scholarly journals, and sources appropriate to the inquiry, such as surveys, interviews, text from online communities, multimedia sources, and data.
- Seeks out knowledgeable individuals in the library, academic department, and community as part of the research plan.
- Recognizes that a large quantity of database search results or information signifies nothing about their quality, and that it is necessary to evaluate the suitability of sources for the project (e.g. hundreds of news articles from *Ethnic NewsWatch* might be less valuable for a given term paper than a handful of scholarly journal articles from *Sociological Abstracts*).
- Uses technologies (such as audio or visual equipment, spreadsheets, and statistical and software packages) for studying the interaction of ideas and other phenomena (e.g. uses software to analyze migration patterns or census data; uses equipment to record or listen to videos and sound recordings of populations studied).
- Reevaluates the nature and extent of the information need to clarify, revise, or refine the question after some initial research, reading, interviews, and work with data and/or a population have taken place.
- Selects the main ideas from texts (e.g. books, scholarly articles, interview transcripts, ethnographies), chooses concepts to restate in his/her own words, and identifies verbatim material that can be appropriately quoted.
- Summarizes the main ideas to be extracted from the information gathered and synthesizes main ideas to construct new concepts.
- Seeks differing viewpoints in alternative databases, books, Web sites, and articles, always evaluating the source of the information or argument, and determines whether to incorporate or reject viewpoints encountered.
- Analyzes the structure and logic of supporting arguments or methodology within a sociology framework, understands what constitutes valid evidence in the discipline, analyzes the reasonableness of the conclusions, and recognizes prejudice, deception, or manipulation.

¹ Appendix B does not attempt to map directly to the *ACRL Framework* and is therefore organized neither around frame nor accompanying knowledge practices or dispositions.

- Examines and compares information from various sources in order to ascertain the reliability, validity, accuracy, authority, timeliness, and point of view or bias of a given source (e.g. compares the information in a *Wikipedia* article to the information from a scholarly encyclopedia that has an authoritative editorial board).
- Describes the relative value of different kinds of Web sites (e.g. corporate, scholarly, personal) or different kinds of articles (popular, news, scholarly) on the same topic, in terms of authority and content.
- Recognizes the cultural, physical, or other context within which the information was created and accessed, and understands the impact of context on interpreting the information (e.g. questions and understands whether the researcher had full access to pertinent government sources or to the population studied, whether the researcher encountered censorship or culturally-imposed limitations in asking questions or gathering information, for whose benefit the research was produced, and which data or viewpoint might be missing from the analysis).
- Chooses a communication medium, format, and style that best supports the purposes of the product or performance and the intended audience (e.g. integrates maps, photos of artifacts, and texts of field diaries into a PowerPoint package on a specific archaeological site for a class presentation or to mount on the Internet to educate local residents about a salvage project involving a new highway).
- Uses a range of formats and technologies, incorporating principles of design and communication, in presenting a research project (e.g. creates a study of Polynesian music integrating sound bites and links to photographic images from HRAF and contemporary performances).
- Determines the availability of needed information and broadens the search beyond local resources to obtain materials not at one's own library or institution or online (e.g. borrows material on interlibrary loan; uses resources at other locations, including abroad; and obtains images, videos, text, or sound).
- Defines a realistic overall plan and timeline to acquire the needed information, do the field work, analyze data, or learn new skills.
- Compares new knowledge with prior knowledge to determine the value added, contradictions, or other unique characteristics of the information and take steps to reconcile differences.
- Organizes and integrates content, quotations, and paraphrasing in a manner that supports the purposes and format of the product or presentation (e.g. prepares outlines, oral reports, drafts, videos; uses presentation software; and manipulates/transfers digital text, images, and data for the presentation or product).
- Produces accurate citations and reference lists using the documentation style of the American Anthropological Association, the American Sociological Association, or the American Psychological Association.
- Records systematically all pertinent citation information for future reference (e.g. uses a citation management system such as EndNote or RefWorks, a Word file, or note cards).
- Knows when citation of sources is necessary in order to respect authors' intellectual property rights and accurately indicate where the words and ideas of others have been used.
- Applies appropriate criteria for evaluating both the information and its source.

Sociological Information Literacy at the Graduate Level

Key Cognitive Skills

- Understands issues related to privacy and security of information (e.g. cases in which field notes can be subpoenaed or government funding organizations can demand primary research data).
- Understands the costs and benefits of acquiring the needed information.
- Understands issues related to free versus fee-based access to information, including pertinent inequalities of access in the U.S. and abroad.

Key Behaviors for Success

- Identifies and lists key concepts, terms, social theories, culture groups, places, and names related to the topic in preparation for searching for information on it. Example: uses the discipline-focused encyclopedias, *Thesaurus of Sociological Indexing Terms*, and *Outline of Cultural Materials* of the Human Relations Area Files (HRAF).
- Selects the most appropriate investigative methods for researching the topic.
- Identifies and evaluates anthropological and sociological qualitative and quantitative research methodologies applicable to the project that will provide the kind of data or information needed. Example: fieldwork, participant observation, data analysis, interviews, survey research, literature review, software for linguistic text analysis, and spatial databases for databases that provide the *online text* of journals from many disciplines but which are typically limited in date and/or scope for anthropology and sociology (e.g. *JSTOR*, *Expanded Academic ASAP*, *Google Scholar*), and the companies, organizations, or systems that simply *license* the databases or online text of journals (e.g. CSA, EBSCO, Sage).
- Records systematically all pertinent citation information for future reference. Example: uses a citation management system such as EndNote or RefWorks, a Word file, or note cards.
- Knows when citation of sources is necessary in order to respect authors' intellectual property rights and accurately indicates where the words and ideas of others have been used.
- Demonstrates an understanding of intellectual property, copyright, and fair use of copyrighted material. Obtains and posts necessary permissions from authors and organizations where needed to use copyrighted material in writing or presentations.
- Shares the product of the research, e.g., the report, data, or ethnography, with groups and sponsors in keeping with ethical principles of the AAA or ASA.

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