

Information Literacy Standards and Learning Outcomes for First-Year Students

Information Literacy is . . .

- a way of defining and thinking about the Research Process
- a life skill needed for your college career and beyond
- above all, a PROCESS!

The information literate student . . .

1. Knows the nature and extent of the information needed.

- Chooses and focuses a topic.
- Develops a thesis statement or research question.
- Reads background information on the topic.
- Recognizes that knowledge can be organized into disciplines that influence how information is produced and accessed.
- Distinguishes and chooses information intended for scholarly or popular audiences published in books, journal and magazine articles, or on the Internet as appropriate to the topic.

2. Accesses the needed information.

- Knows when to use the library catalog, article and reference databases, or the Internet to find and retrieve print and electronic books and articles, web pages, and other documents.
- Knows how to refine searches by using a range of search strategies, including subject terms, Boolean logic, truncation, advanced search screens, and other aids available in an online catalog or database.
- Understands the organization of information in the physical Library and online.
- Accesses the best available information for the research need regardless of format.

3. Evaluates information and its sources critically.

- Examines and compares information from various sources to evaluate reliability, validity, accuracy, authority, timeliness, and point of view or bias.
- Summarizes main ideas, analyzes structure and logic of arguments, recognizes bias.
- Synthesizes main ideas, reconciles differences, selects usable information from sources consulted.

4. Uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.

- Selects information to include in final product.
- Cites, quotes or paraphrases sources appropriately and accurately.
- Organizes paper, presentation or other project appropriately and effectively.
- Demonstrates whether a hypothesis is valid or a research question has been answered.

5. Uses information ethically.

- Uses standard techniques of quotation and documentation.
- Demonstrates an understanding of what constitutes plagiarism.

Adapted from: Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. Chicago: Association of College & Research Libraries, 2000.