

# Librarians as Key Partners: Information Fluency and the First-Year Experience

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## Defining Information Literacy (aka Information Fluency)

From the Association of College and Research Libraries' [Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education](#), 2000:

Information literacy is a set of abilities requiring individuals to “recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information.” [American Library Association, 1999]

\*VCU's University College program uses the term “Information Fluency” when referring to the standards above. This presentation will reflect this agreed upon term to indicate “Information Literacy” as outlined above.

## VCU's University College Mission:

The VCU Compact is our pledge to create a shared undergraduate experience that enhances student engagement and learning, fosters a sense of community, and emphasizes the development of a set of skills essential for educational and professional successes and lifelong learning.

## VCU's University College: Core Curriculum Goals:

### Focused Inquiry UNIV 111 & UNIV 112

- **Writing proficiency:** courses provide students with substantive and sustained writing experiences to further develop their writing and thinking competencies.
- **Critical thinking:** courses encourage critical self-awareness, helping students apply critical thinking strategies to foster more disciplined approaches to learning.
- **Information fluency:** courses help students navigate library-related services (on-line and on-site) as well as evaluate the legitimacy of sources of information.
- **Oral communication:** courses provide students with opportunities to express and develop their oral capabilities
- **Ethical and civic responsibility:** students reflect on their culturally-inherited values, thinking critically about the relationship between these values and global context

# **VCU Libraries**

## **Learning Outcomes for Information Fluency in UNIV 111, UNIV 112 and UNIV 200**

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The curriculum as it pertains to information fluency for UNIV111, UNIV112, and UNIV200 is presumed to build progressively based on previously acquired skills and knowledge. Learning outcomes from UNIV111 and UNIV112 should be reinforced by faculty and librarians.

### **UNIV111**

Students should be able to:

- Identify service points in Cabell Library in order to seek assistance and information as needed.
- Navigate the VCU Libraries Web page in order to increase students' awareness of VCU Libraries' online presence.

### **UNIV112**

Students should be able to:

- Identify source materials including books and articles using VCU Libraries Search in order to investigate and refine a research question.
- Use VCU Libraries Search to find and distinguish among types of sources, including scholarly, substantive, popular, and sensational sources, and assess their credibility and appropriateness in order to investigate and refine a research question.
- Access appropriate sources by distinguishing between print and online items available via VCU Libraries.
- Distinguish between different formats of information--such as books versus articles, institutionally acquired versus free Internet searches, and print versus online--in order to locate or access appropriate sources.

### **UNIV200**

Students should be able to:

- Increase proficiency in areas outlined in UNIV112 information fluency learning outcomes.
- Develop a topic-relevant search strategy related to a research question in order to search library resources effectively.
- Locate books and articles using VCU Libraries Search's advanced features in order to investigate and refine a research question.
- Distinguish between VCU Libraries Search and discipline-specific databases in order to select most appropriate resources and maximize relevant results.
- Identify academic disciplinary origins of materials found via VCU Libraries Search.