A significant part of our duties as librarians working at a multicultural, urban campus is teaching students, particularly incoming freshman, information literacy and research skills. Many freshmen come to Portland State University with little or no experience with library research; they are unable to locate books within the library and identify and locate academic journal articles, skills critical to success at the university.

Working in conjunction with high school teachers in the Portland Metro Area, our goal is to develop a course for college-bound seniors that would introduce them to the concepts of information literacy and provide hands-on practice in the skills of academic library research.

Desired outcome for the students:

- Learn to assess the quality of information found online including the World Wide Web
- Learn to use the web effectively
- Understand the research process
- Learn to search indices and databases for research topics
- Locate books/journals in a library

Topics to be explored:

1 – Understand the computer and Internet

2 – Understand what a library database is and how to use one

3 – Use a library Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC)

4 – Learn basic search methods; finding info resources (print and electronic)

5 – Use library services (reference, circulation, interlibrary loan)

6 - Learn cooperative learning models, allowing heterogeneous groupings of students to work together collaboratively

7 - Learn higher-level problem-solving skills while also reinforcing basic skills

8 - Create interactive learning environments built around real-world problems; be adaptable to a variety of learning styles

9 – Learn that for any topic there is more than enough information in the college library on the topic

10 – Learn that librarians are here to teach you the how-to of locating materials/resources

11 – Learn how to write a citation

We hope to have eight 55 minute sessions over a two-month span in the computer lab with time to work on these skills and concepts. Learning information literacy means learning to think critically. We can hope to improve this process. Learning to think critically allows one to question, to seek alternatives, to interpret inferences and to seek further information. Competent use of information can benefit society.

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Oregon Civic Solutions:

Information Literacy Instruction to Secondary Institutions - Proposal for Individual Grant

Motivation for Participating

A significant part of our duties as librarians working at a multicultural, urban campus is teaching students, particularly incoming freshman, information literacy and research skills. The most pressing issue we face when teaching incoming students is the fact that they have had little or no experience with library research or with libraries at all. The result is that many freshmen come into Portland State University with no information literacy skills; they unable to locate a book within a library, much less able to identify and locate academic journal articles for research, a skill critical to students success within the university.

What we propose is developing a course for college-bound seniors attending high schools in the Portland Metro Area, with an emphasis on underperforming schools. Our goal would be to introduce students to concepts and skills of academic library research. Students will be taught skills such as

- Locating books/journals in a library
- Searching indices and databases for research topics
- Assessing the quality of information found online including the World Wide Web

To ensure effective learning outcomes, we will work with teachers and high school librarians to integrate student assignments into our coursework.

After the course is completed, we will develop an instruction kit for high school librarians to provide them with a framework to create information literacy programs for their schools. We will also evaluate our experiences and outcomes from the course to provide PSU librarians and faculty the awareness and knowledge of students' information literacy levels.

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Information Literacy Instruction to Secondary Institutions - Proposal

Enhancing K-12 Education/Faculty Development

As an information-based society, today's students need to be acutely aware and educated on the theories and issues of information literacy. Information is not only readily available from your home computer, it is copious and comes from a wide variety of sources. What used to be hours of looking through volumes of indices and card catalogs now seems to be replaced by a few taps on a computer keyboard. However, the relative ease of finding information is not without its drawbacks: where do students begin their research and how do they assess the information as being accurate? How do we prevent students from completing assignments based on information found quickly via a Google search, without regard to the quality and source of the information? We believe that is becoming increasingly critical to introduce information literacy and research concepts at the secondary level, particularly for college-bound students.

Educating students in library research and information assessment will prepare them for the rigors of academic research in the university setting. The goal is to prevent students having to undergo extensive remedial instruction to begin research; librarians will able to provide students with research support more attuned to their coursework.

The class also lays the groundwork for students to critique online information by providing heuristics and techniques to evaluate information, skills critical when performing research away from campus. Students who do research at home will need guidelines that to help them effectively assess the quality of information they find online. This is especially important for students living in rural areas, a group with less access to large academic libraries and greater dependence upon online resources.

Finally, we hope to use the grant to provide better service and access to students and faculty. The results of our work will better prepare librarians in their efforts to provide high-level bibliographic and information literacy instruction to both incoming and continuing students. We will share our experiences with campus faculty on how information literacy issues impact not only the assignments and projects they design, but how they develop their curriculum.