The JCC Information Literacy Assessment project consisted of a 20-question quiz. The questions were designed to measure selected student outcomes as outlined by the Association of College & Research Libraries Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education.

Five library outcomes were measured with three questions relating to each outcome. In addition, five questions relating to computer competencies were also included in the assessment quiz.

Each question had an assigned value of ten points, for a possible total of 200 points. For ease of analysis, these results were converted to a 100-point scale. 79 students completed the assessment quiz, which was administered in mid-late April. This is the tenth year the library has performed an assessment project.

Overall Results for all Questions:

For the purposes of this study, a scale for quantifying the results was developed. Students scoring 74 points or above on the 100-point scale met or exceeded the “passing grade.” The scale and the results of the group are outlined below:

**Exceeded Standard (88 - 100 pts.):** 19 students

**Met Standard (74 - 87 pts.):** 22 students

**Approaching Standard (60 - 73 pts.):** 25 students

**Did Not Meet Standard (0 - 59 pts.):** 13 students

This year, 41 of 79 (51%) students met or exceeded the passing grade of 74 and the overall score for the sample group was 85.7.

In 2015, 66 of 118 students (56%) met or exceeded the passing grade of 74 and the overall score for the sample group was 86.

In 2014, 61 of 115 students (53%) met or exceeded the passing grade of 74 and the overall score for the sample group was 86.

In 2013, 60 of 105 (57%) students met or exceeded the passing grade of 74 and the overall score for the sample group was 86.

In 2012, 66 of 100 (66%) students met or exceeded the passing grade of 74 and the overall score for the sample group was 84.9.
New York General Education Results:

To comply with New York State General Education reporting needs, the questions were broken into three groups to enable the campus to report on three outcomes relating to the “Information Management” Gen Ed category.

Perform the basic operations of personal computer use (PC labeled questions)

Exceeded Standard (88 - 100 pts.): 9 students
Met Standard (74 - 87 pts.): 20 students
Approaching Standard (60 - 73 pts.): 24 students
Did Not Meet Standard (0 - 59 pts.): 26 students

Understand and use basic research techniques (RT labeled questions)

Exceeded Standard (88 - 100 pts.): 16 students
Met Standard (74 - 87 pts.): 19 students
Approaching Standard (60 - 73 pts.): 18 students
Did Not Meet Standard (0 - 59 pts.): 26 students

Locate, evaluate and synthesize information from a variety of sources (LI labeled questions)

Exceeded Standard (88 - 100 pts.): 25 students
Met Standard (74 - 87 pts.): 36 students
Approaching Standard (60 - 73 pts.): 12 students
Did Not Meet Standard (0 - 59 pts.): 6 students
2016 and 2015 Results Compared

**TOTAL OVERALL**

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**LI STANDARDS**

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Results for each Library Outcome:

I. **Library Catalog**: It is critical that our students understand that a library’s catalog provides the means to identify and locate books and media resources that a library offers. In our case, the catalog has been nicknamed “*CannonCat*”.

On average 72% of the sample group correctly answered all three questions relating to *CannonCat*. *(2015: 67%)*

- 77% correctly answered that *CannonCat* is the best way to identify books and ebooks on their topic. *(2015: 75%)*
- 78% correctly answered that *CannonCat* is the best resource to consult if they were trying to determine the availability of a specific book. *(2015: 76%)*
- 60% correctly answered a question relating to the fact that *CannonCat* provides call numbers for books. *(2015: 51%)*

**Conclusion:**
Results show a marked improvement in all three areas, especially regarding the use of call numbers as a method for locating print books in the library.

**Proposed Plan of Action:**
Continued emphasis on using both CannonCat and the Discovery Tool to find call numbers. Incorporate activities that reinforce how to use call numbers to locate print books where applicable.

II. **Keywords**: Given the nature of library research tools (Boolean “AND” is generally the default setting in the search interfaces) it is critical that students understand that entering long search phrases (or worse – questions) will provide less than optimal search results (limited to few, if any results due to too many search terms).

Results for this outcome showed that 69% of the sample group correctly answered all three questions that related to proper keyword selection. *(2015: 67%)*

- 63% correctly selected three keywords from a sentence. *(2015: 64%)*
- 63% correctly answered that including numerous search terms will limit the results to only those that include all of the words, perhaps eliminating some very good resources. *(2015: 62%)*
- 83% correctly answered a question regarding the unofficial definition of “keywords”; that they are words that “search for results that are focused on the main concepts of the research topic.” *(2015: 76%)*
Conclusion:
Averages show an increase from last year. Students are stumbling more over the task of selecting keywords from a research topic sentence but overall are becoming more confident with employing keyword strategies when executing a search in a database.

Proposed Plan of Action:
Continue emphasis on proper keyword selection and use of worksheets and in-class activities to reinforce skill.

III. Authority: The ability to think critically about which sources to use in a research project (or for personal use) is one of the most important information literacy outcomes that our library attempts to teach. Authority is the most important criteria to consider when evaluating an information source.

Results for this outcome showed 89% of the sample group correctly answered the three questions that related to the “authority” of sources. (2015: 92%)

- 98% correctly answered a question where students indicated that level of education, expertise in relation to the subject matter, professional accomplishments, and professional positions held are all indicators of authority. (2015: 96%)

- 83% correctly answered that articles published in a scholarly, peer-reviewed journals have, in general, more authority than articles found on the open Internet, in Wikipedia, or in blogs. (2015: 91%)

- 87% correctly answered a question relating to academic credentials, recognizing a Ph.D. and chairing a department at a well-known university as significant, authoritative credentials. (2015: 89%)

Conclusion:
There have been some slight decreases in this area since last year. However, overall averages show that students continue to be proficient in regards to identifying authoritative resources.

Proposed Plan of Action:
Continued emphasis on the importance of using authoritative resources when conducting research. Incorporate in-class activities and use of worksheets that emphasize appropriate criteria for evaluating information resources.

IV. Databases: The database questions relate to the concept that some article databases are general, including articles on many diverse topics, and other databases are very specialized.
61% of the sample group correctly answered the three questions relating to the nature of specialized databases. (2015: 60%)

- Given four statements about databases, 65% selected the one statement that was correct: “Some databases are specialized, allowing them to provide content on very specific topics and areas of study.” (2015: 65%)

- 48% correctly answered a question that related to investigating specialized databases in the event that general databases fail to provide sufficient articles on a given topic. (2015: 46%)

- 70% correctly answered a question that required students to realize that specialized databases exist. (2015: 70%)

**Conclusion:**
Averages remain relatively steady although students are still underperforming in some areas.

**Proposed Plan of Action:**
Continued emphasis on when using specialized databases would be more beneficial than using generalized databases.

V. **Copyright:** It is important that students understand how to ethically use information and incorporate it into their own research paper without violating copyright and intellectual property laws.

86% of the sample group correctly answered the three questions relating to the ethical use of information. (2015: 88%)

- Given four examples 84% were able to distinguish between informational material protected under copyright and requiring appropriate citation versus that which is not protected and does not require citation. (2015: 87%)

- 78% correctly answered a question about the nature of copyright law as an automatic right that covers any works of authorship the moment it is created. (2015: 82%)

- 98% correctly answered a question identifying movies, photography, painting and music as examples of original works protected under copyright law. (2015: 95%)

**Conclusion:**
Averages have decreased slightly, however, still show that students can efficiently use and incorporate information into their research paper in an ethically manner.

**Proposed Plan of Action:**
Continued practice in relation to this outcome.
Student Satisfaction

This year’s assessment also included an additional question used to determine student satisfaction with their library instruction experience. Overall student satisfaction continues to remain strong.

Final Comments:

On June 25, 2016 the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) Board of Directors voted to rescind the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education in favor of transitioning fully to the new Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education. As a result, we will be redesigning our current assessment project to reflect this change. Our current approach and methods for teaching information literacy on campus are also going through a major overhaul in order to keep pace with current practices.

On reviewing this year’s assessment and considering the changes that will need to be made for next year, it is our feeling that the current PC questions included in the assessment also need to be updated. We also question whether librarians should be responsible for assessing PC skills given that our role is more concerned with helping students use technology to find, use and interact with information and less with teaching basic computer technology skills. We would like to explore other possible collaborations or possibilities for implementing this assessment separately from information literacy.

Submitted by
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