Information Literacy Instruction

English 096

Student & Faculty Survey Assessments

Spring Semester, 2015

29 student-respondents from four English 096 classes

Report submitted by M. Hines, QVCC Librarian, 5/20/15

ENG 096

This developmental course introduces students to college composition. The course:

> "…prepares students for the reading and writing demands in Composition and other college-level courses by integrating reading, writing, and critical thinking. Student writing will focus on understanding, reporting on, reacting to, and analyzing the ideas of others. Texts will serve as models and sources for students to refine their skills in exposition, interpretation, and argumentation. Students learn and practice specific college-level skills through critical reading and writing, class discussions, lectures, group presentations, or workshops" (Course Record).

Librarian Instruction

One scheduled class period during the semester takes place in the library classroom (Danielson campus) or in classroom with computer workstations or a laptop cart (Willimantic Center). A librarian provides information literacy instruction, including the research process, keyword searching and source evaluation relevant to a specific research assignment. Typically, the students have already selected a topic but have not yet begun any research or any assessment of the topic's viability as a research question or thesis. Instruction may include pre-assessment, critical thinking and discussion about the research and search processes, demonstrations of search tools and strategies, instruction or demonstration in source evaluation, and supported hands-on practice. During the last segment of the class time, students begin testing search strategies for their topics and work to find their relevant and credible sources.

Three of the four Eng 096 courses limited student topics to illegal immigration, climate change, education reform, substance abuse, or media violence. Library instruction addressed topic narrowing (including use of Gale's *Topic Finder* tool), transitioning from topic identification to research question or thesis, generating keywords, keyword searching and demonstrations of one or more databases, including *Opposing Viewpoints in Context* and *MasterFILE Premier*. One course added additional co-teaching sessions in which the librarian and instructor worked together to provide students with feedback on thesis statements and signal phrases and provided interactive instruction on MLA citation.

The Assessment – Faculty

In the spring semester of 2015, faculty shared their general perception of student progress in responses to a survey. All four faculty agreed that students made "good" progress narrowing their topics, finding authoritative information, and correctly citing sources. Three faculty reported "good" progress and one described "excellent" progress in the use of credible online sources as well as the use of journals and magazines accessed through library databases. One faculty member reported that students were generally confused when trying to distinguish whether articles found in a library database were published in a book or in a periodical.

The Assessment – Students

Because of differences in the instructors' objectives and in the expressed needs of the students, the four ENG 096 classes each focused on a unique configuration of research skills, with greater or lesser emphasis on particular strategies or tools. Twenty-six students who attended the library instructional and guided-practice session(s) responded to the feedback survey. Their responses are broken down by which skills were included in the session's learning objectives, below. Overwhelmingly, the students reported that the information literacy instruction and guided practice provided by the librarian led to improvement in all of the identified research skills:

- 22 students reported attending a session including <u>topic narrowing</u>:
    - o 21 AGREE or STRONGLY AGREE that because of the library lesson, they are better able to narrow their research topic.
- 15 students reported attending a session including practice and instruction <u>moving from topic to thesis statement to brainstorming keywords</u>:
    - o All 15 AGREE or STRONGLY AGREE that because of the library lesson, they are better able to move from a topic idea to a thesis statement to a set of keywords.
- 24 students reported attending a session including instruction and practice <u>using keywords</u> in research [note: all sessions actually included keyword searching]:
    - o 23 AGREE or STRONGLY AGREE that because of the library lesson, they are better able to use keywords successfully in research.
- 18 students reported attending sessions in which the differences between <u>scholarly journals</u> and popular magazines and newspapers were described and discussed:
    - o All 18 students AGREE or STRONGLY AGREE that because of the library lesson, they are better able to understand the difference between these two types of sources:
- 26 students reported attending sessions in which instruction and guided practice focused on <u>finding relevant articles</u> in library databases
    - o All 26 students AGREE or STRONGLY AGREE that because of the library lesson, they are better able to find relevant articles in library databases.
- 21 students reported attending a session including instruction and guided practice using <u>database tools</u>: searching, filtering, saving, emailing, downloading and printing [note: all sessions actually included database searching and tools]:
    - o 20 students AGREE or STRONGLY AGREE that because of the library lesson, they are better able to utilizes database tools in the research process
- 15 students reported attending a session that included instruction or guided practice in how to cite information sources using <u>MLA formatting</u>:
    - o 14 students AGREE or STRONGLY AGREE that because of the library lesson, they are better able to format a works-cited page according to MLA guidelines.

Student Responses to Open-Ended Question

The question: What ONE research skill would you like to improve with more instruction or guided practice?	A	B	C	D	n = Respondents Commenting
MLA		3	3		6
Database tools: filter, save, print, email		2	1		3
Finding relevant articles		2		1	3
Narrow a topic		1		1	2
keyword searching	1	1			2
Answered "nothing"	1			1	2
Did not answer		1		1	2
refining search strategies when I get too many results in library database		2			2
Journals v. magazines	1				1
Writing		1			1
time management		1			1
how to use the library website better				1	1
"I think I am good after that class."			1		1
"Not sure"					0
Other					0
Total enrolled	14	16	17	12	59
Total responding to open ended question	3	8	5	4	**20**
Total Responding to survey	7	8	6	7	28

Note: despite the instruction, several students listed more than one skill in which they would like additional instruction or guided practice, so the total number of answers is greater than the total number of students responding.

Condensed Item Analysis Report

Filter: Attended Library Instruction

Did you attend class when the Librarian was teaching?

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 1.00
Yes	26	100.00	
No	0	0.00	

Narrowing a topic

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 0.85
No	4	15.38	
Yes	22	84.62	

Moving from a topic to a thesis statement to keywords

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 0.58
No	11	42.31	
Yes	15	57.69	

Using keywords in research

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 0.92
No	2	7.69	
Yes	24	92.31	

distinguishing between journals and magazines

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 0.69
No	8	30.77	
Yes	18	69.23	

Finding relevant articles using library databases

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 0.85
No	4	15.38	
Yes	22	84.62	

Using database tools to save, print, email, filter or limit results

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 0.81
No	5	19.23	
Yes	21	80.77	

Formatting MLA citations

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 0.58
No	11	42.31	
Yes	15	57.69	

3A. Skill - Narrowing a topic

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 2.88
Strongly Agree	7	26.92	
Agree	15	57.69	
Disagree	1	3.85	
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	
Does NOT apply	3	11.54	

SKILL - move from topic to thesis to keywords

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 3.04
Strongly Agree	8	30.77	
Agree	15	57.69	
Disagree	1	3.85	
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	
Does NOT apply	2	7.69	

Skill - using keywords in research

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 3.46
Strongly Agree	13	50.00	
Agree	12	46.15	
Disagree	1	3.85	
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	
Does NOT apply	0	0.00	

Skill - distinguishing between journals and magazines

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 3.15
Strongly Agree	10	38.46	
Agree	12	46.15	
Disagree	3	11.54	
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	
Does NOT apply	1	3.85	

skill - find relevant articles in library databases

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 3.27
Strongly Agree	7	26.92	
Agree	19	73.08	
Disagree	0	0.00	
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	
Does NOT apply	0	0.00	

skill -use database tools to filter (narrow) results, save articles, email, print or download

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 3.35
Strongly Agree	10	38.46	
Agree	15	57.69	
Disagree	1	3.85	
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	
Does NOT apply	0	0.00	

skill - format MLA citations

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 3.04
Strongly Agree	8	30.77	
Agree	12	46.15	
Disagree	2	7.69	
Strongly Disagree	1	3.85	
Does NOT apply	1	3.85	
No Response	2	7.69	

skill - ask the librarians for help in the future

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 3.24
Strongly Agree	12	46.15	
Agree	11	42.31	
Disagree	0	0.00	
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	
Does NOT apply	2	7.69	
No Response	1	3.85	

1. **Did you attend class when the librarian was teaching?**

   O Yes. Please <u>answer all questions</u> on this survey.

   O No. Please <u>skip to question 4</u>.

2. **Fill in a circle for EVERY SKILL that was taught during the library lesson.**

   O Narrowing a topic

   O Moving from a topic to a thesis statement (or research question) to keywords

   O Using keywords in research

   O Distinguishing between scholarly journals and popular magazines

   O Finding relevant articles using library databases

   O Using database tools to save, print, email, filter or limit results

   O Formatting MLA citations for a Works Cited page

3. **How much do you <u>agree or disagree</u> with each of the following statements about these SKILLS? Mark "does not apply" for skills that were <u>not</u> taught in your library class.**

Because of the library lesson, I was better able to…	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Does NOT apply**
• **narrow** my research topic.	O	O	O	O	O
• move from thesis to **keywords**.	O	O	O	O	O
• use **keywords** in research.	O	O	O	O	O
• understand the difference between scholarly **journals and magazines**.	O	O	O	O	O
• **find relevant articles** in library databases.	O	O	O	O	O
• Use **database tools** to filter (narrow) results, save articles, email, print or download	O	O	O	O	O
• Format a **MLA Works Cited** page	O	O	O	O	O
• **ask the librarians** for help in the future.	O	O	O	O	O

4. **What ONE research skill would you like to improve with more instruction or guided practice?**