

General Information

Core Category Discussed:

Technological/Information Literacy

Current Semester:

Spring 2016

Assessment Process

Nevin Mayer, a group of librarians, and a group of English department graduate assistants who have taught EN 125 assessed a sample of research projects from fall 2015 EN 125 courses.

Attachments Containing Assessment Data and Instructor Feedback

InfoLit Rubric; InfoLit Committee Data 2016

Findings

Prompt: Describe, in words, what your sub-committee has learned about student learning during this assessment cycle. What were the strengths? In what ways did students fail to meet the goals set for them?

To see if students actually apply what we are teaching them about information literacy, we evaluated a sample of 30 research papers from Fall semester 2015 (five each from six sections of EN 125), using the rubric for Information Literacy in First-Year Writing. The Overall Ratings of the Librarian Team and the Writing Assessment Team show that the students in general did not meet expectations (under Score of 3) in the areas of Access, Source Type, Source Suitability, Argument & Evidence, or Ethical Use.

Some general observations of the research papers show that students continue to use the familiar approach of searching the free web for resources rather than exploring scholarly articles and books available through the library. We also noticed that students often do not understand the importance of using sources ethically. Frequently in these papers there were long passages of text without in-text citations or inconsistencies between the in-text citing and bibliography. Selection of “Source Type” also weakened the arguments in some papers. For example, a student arguing for the poetic qualities of a famous folksinger’s art might omit analysis of the singer’s cultural context and audience or examples of lyrics.

Suggestions for Instructors

Prompt: Do any of your findings translate into helpful suggestions for all instructors teaching courses with this designation? Are there areas that need more emphasis? What would be the best mechanism for delivering this feedback? (Possible mechanisms might include an e-mail from the committee, a message delivered at a fall orientation session, a faculty development workshop.) If not obvious, please explain the connection between your findings and these suggestions.

A suggestion for the writing instructors is to use the help of the Library Liaison for the English Department in effectively deploying library resources and services in student coursework. This can be done in a variety of ways, including meeting with the Liaison when creating an assignment, developing online subject guides (LibGuides) of library resources for themes or assignments, and including the librarian as a teaching partner in the classroom or through scheduled research consultations.

Evaluation of Processes

Prompt: Describe, in words, your sub-committee’s evaluation of application and assessment processes. What works well? What needs improvement? (All processes should usefully provide data with a reasonable amount of effort.)

NA

Recommendations for Internal Changes

Prompt: This section pertains to changes that can be made by the sub-committee and the assessment office. What changes, if any, do you need to make to your application or assessment processes or to other aspects of the core designation? If not obvious, please explain the connection between your findings/evaluation and these recommendations.

In Spring 2017, we will need to do a better job of norming the Rubric in order to improve the reliability of our scoring. In addition to norming, we should also

- Create an assessment team that includes both writing instructors and librarians
- Examine the actual assignments given by the teachers
- Study the entire assignment sequence, including the student's proposal, annotated bibliography, and essay.

Recommendations for the Core Committee

Prompt: This section pertains to changes that will require action by the entire core committee (and potentially the faculty). What changes, if any, do you need to make to application or assessment processes or to other aspects of the core designation, including learning goals, rubrics, and curricular requirements and/or structures. If not obvious, please explain the connection between your findings/evaluation and these recommendations.

NA