

Closing the Loop:

Operationalizing Three Years of Information Literacy Rubric Assessment Results

Project Summary



Information literacy is a learning outcome for first year seminar (FYS) courses at Hartwick College. With this in mind, librarians designed an information literacy assessment project that is evidence-based (Oakleaf, 2009), authentic, and summative.

In adapting an existing rubric for use in assessing FYS projects that require research, librarians took a broad approach; we wanted an instrument that could assess an annotated bibliography, speech or power point as well as a research paper.

The rubric measures 4 dimensions of information literacy:

- Appropriateness of sources for the assignment
- Sufficiency and use of sources to support the argument
- In-text citations or footnotes, and
- References/Bibliography/Works Cited

Each of these dimensions was measure on a 0-3 point scale, labeled missing, developing, emerging, and proficient.

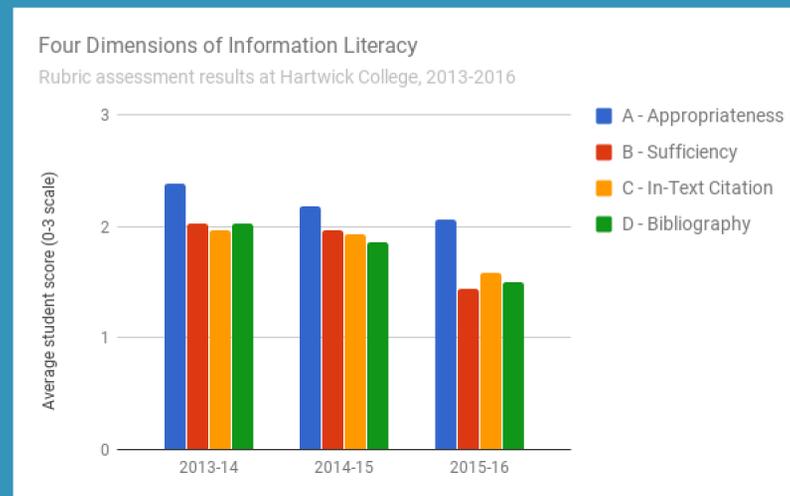
For three academic years, Hartwick librarians worked as a team to score a random sample of FYS work.

	Proficient - 3	Emerging - 2	Developing - 1	Missing - 0
A. Appropriateness of sources for the assignment	Choice of sources appropriate	Most sources appropriate	Poor choice of evidence of required sources	
B. Sufficiency and use of sources to support the argument	Good use of sources to enrich thesis/hypothesis; sources are fairly represented	Adequate use of sources to support thesis/hypothesis	Poor use of sources to support conclusions • Unsubstantiated conclusions • Failure to cite single source • Excessive quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing	
C. In-text citations or footnotes	Quotes, paraphrases, and summaries are followed by in-text citations or footnotes according to style rules, attributions proper whenever appropriate	In-text citations or footnotes are generally used, but there may be some: • inconsistency in style • failure to attribute, or • inaccurate paraphrasing or use of quotations	Consistent major errors in following in-text citation or footnote rules: • failure to cite or incorrect attributions and/or ideas in quotations or summaries • inaccurate paraphrasing or summaries • inaccurate, not accurate, or plagiarism evident	No in-text citations or footnotes are evident
D. References / Bibliography / Works Cited page - allows readers to find and assess sources, and - avoids plagiarism	All sources are listed, and most are formatted correctly according to a single style	Most sources are listed and citations are generally accurate, but some missing citation elements and/or formatting errors	Some sources are listed incorrectly, inaccurately, or are difficult to find	No source list is evident

Results



Students consistently score highest on dimension A, **Appropriateness of Sources for the Assignment**. There are no other obvious patterns in the data.



The results suggest that first year students are already moving toward proficiency in

- Understanding the research requirements of their professors, and
- Identifying and acquiring sources that meet those requirements

Students show less facility with using and citing evidence gathered from research sources.

Common weaknesses include

- Excessive quotation of sources
- Overreliance on a single source, or citing too few sources for a work of that length
- Unattributed facts or unsubstantiated conclusions
- Failure to cite sources appropriately

Changes to Practice



One shot adjustments

- Devote less instructional time to
 - ❖ Searching, and
 - ❖ Authority
- Devote more instructional time to
 - ❖ Incorporating evidence from sources, including signal words, paraphrasing and summarizing, and
 - ❖ Citing sources

Next steps

- Continue to measure student performance
 - Are students doing better following tweaks to the curriculum?
- Using results to forge a deeper collaboration with faculty. Sharing results with composition faculty, for example, sparked a conversation about boundaries that had surprising results

Bonus Question: Did students who got library instruction in their First Year Seminar classes do better? YES, we measured this for two of the three years studied and students had higher rubric scores, on average, with librarian-led instruction

REFERENCES

Oakleaf, M. (2009). Using rubrics to assess information literacy: An examination of methodology and interrater reliability. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 60(5), 969-983.

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