Information Literacy: “A Learning Thing”

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Information Literacy?

"a new liberal art that extends from knowing how to use computers and access information to critical reflection on the nature of information itself, its technical infrastructure, and its social, cultural and even philosophical context and impact." (Shapiro & Hughes, 1996)

- Fosters CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT with information and information-seeking processes
The complexity of research

Information Literacy Classes

Source: YUL annual statistics.
What’s the Problem?

- Google/Wikipedia
- Cut and Paste Plagiarism
- Information Anxiety/Overload
- Demands of Interdisciplinarity
- Lack of Systematic Pedagogical Attention
Why does it matter?

Enhancing the Research Culture

Enhancing the Student Experience
Collaboration is our watchword…

- Librarians in the Classroom
- Assessment
- Curriculum Integration
- E-Learning
  - Tutorials and Guides
  - Course-specific websites
  - Discipline-specific tutorials
- Graduate Students and Faculty
Testimonials…

“It is a sure sign of success that I am now getting people asking 'meaningful' questions about how to conduct research. Prior to your tutorial with us, it seemed they were not able to even get to the point of asking questions.”

“even the TAs reported that they had learned a few new things”

“I think that information literacy provides an essential critical skill that helps students in terms of completing assignments involving various types of research.”

“the specific focus throughout on finding appropriate materials for graduate level study ... was excellent. The discussion of what does and doesn't get into various databases was very interesting, and should encourage students to reflect critically on the nature of the journals they do cite.”
At its best, IL can help guide students to a critical engagement with research, writing and the life of the mind, as well as the active citizenship that ought to result from such engagement. At its worst, IL is merely a set of skills to enable individuals to ‘manage information’ more efficiently. This last point is not a bad thing -- it is simply not the goal of a university education.” Jeff Purdue (2003)