2013-2014 FYW (First Year Writing) 
Course-Integrated Instruction Student Learning Assessment

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Key findings for 2013 - 2014

- There were fewer sections of First Year Writing in 2012-2013, resulting in a smaller number of sessions and students receiving information literacy instruction. There was also a drop in the percentage of sessions receiving infolit instruction, as indicated on the graph, possibly due to the turnover in FYW instructors.
- The percentage of students who are meeting the learning objective regarding location and/or evaluation of information in our sessions remains at 97%.
- We are seeing a steady increase in the percentage of students who are naming evaluation and analysis-related concepts (vs. location-related concepts) as most helpful and prominent in their learning. We hope that this is due to pedagogical emphasis on inquiry and critical analysis in the library sessions.
- More insight is needed, through partnership with WRA instructors, on identifying and addressing threshold concepts – such as why sources are used in composing - that are common to information literacy and the discipline of writing and rhetoric. This work has implications for both student learning assessment and pedagogy for instructors and librarians alike.

Who is receiving instruction?

Fall 2013

Percentage of FYW sections receiving information literacy instruction from a librarian: 56%
Total FYW sections, Fall 2013: 132
Number of sessions receiving information literacy instruction by a librarian: 76

Spring 2014

Percentage of FYW sections receiving information literacy instruction from a librarian: 52%
Total FYW sections, Spring 2014: 140
Number of sessions receiving information literacy instruction by a librarian: 73

Academic Year 2013-2014

Percentage of FYW sections receiving information literacy instruction from a librarian: 55%
Total FYW sections, 2013-2014: 270
Number of sessions receiving information literacy instruction by a librarian: 149
Approximate percentage of all first year MSU students receiving infolit instruction: 53%
Approximate number of FYW students receiving instruction (27 students/class): 4,023
Number of MSU first year students, 2013-2014: 7,462
Discussion

MSU’s freshman class was smaller this year by about 2,000 students, and there were also fewer sections of First Year Writing, resulting in a smaller number of sessions and students receiving information literacy instruction. There was also a drop in the percentage of sessions receiving infolit instruction, as indicated on the graph, possibly due to the turnover in FYW instructors.

The percentages and numbers of students represented in the statistics are approximate for the following reasons: There are some additional first year students receiving information literacy instruction from a librarian in the Lyman Briggs, RCAH, and James Madison colleges, as well as some ESL classes. The vast majority of students in the FYW classes are first year students; there is, however, the occasional upperclassman. In the spring semester, there will be a small percentage of students who will have had FYW twice (WRA 1004 and a second WRA 100 level).
What are FYW students learning?

**Information Literacy Session Learning Objective:** As a result of this class, students will be able to locate and evaluate different types of information in order to stimulate inquiry and use the information effectively in their assignment.

**Question 1: What was the most helpful thing you learned today?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year 2013-2014</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>new places to find information</td>
<td>735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strategies to evaluate information</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>physically getting around the building</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new ways of thinking about a research focus</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

This question measures the perceived helpfulness of the session. The majority of the students perceived information about locating resources over evaluation strategies to be most helpful. The numbers are continuing to come closer together; we hope this is due to a pedagogical choice to emphasize inquiry. It would be helpful to ask this question again after the students have completed the semester to compare perceived with actual helpfulness of the library session.
Question 2: What are you most likely to do differently after today’s class?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year 2013-2014</th>
<th>Year Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Look for information in new or different places</td>
<td>598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically visit the library more often</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take a closer look at sources before using them</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use different keywords to search for information</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examine more closely how information sources relate to and affect my project</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Learning Apparent** | 1419 | 97.5%
**Learning - Location Outcome** | 1070 | 75.4%
**Learning - Evaluation Outcome** | 349 | 24.6%
**No Learning Apparent** | 36 | 2.5%

### Intended Behavioral Change

- **Learning - Location Outcome**
  - Fall 2011: 86.9%
  - Spring 2012: 92.6%
  - Fall 2012: 86.4%
  - Spring 2013: 82.8%
  - Fall 2013: 77.0%
  - Spring 2014: 70.0%

- **Learning - Evaluation Outcome**
  - Fall 2011: 13.1%
  - Spring 2012: 7.4%
  - Fall 2012: 19.6%
  - Spring 2013: 17.2%
  - Fall 2013: 20.0%
  - Spring 2014: 29.5%
Discussion

This question measures student learning through behavior change, although it is *intended* and not actual change at this point. The results indicate that although the focus of the library session is evaluation and inquiry, students are still learning about basic information literacy skills such as where to look for information, using library resources, and search strategies. The majority of students still intend to primarily change their behavior in relation to locating sources with the minority primarily in relation to evaluating sources, but the numbers are getting much closer over time, mirroring Question 1, again, hopefully due to a pedagogical choice to emphasize inquiry. It also shows that 97% of students feel that they learned something related to the session outcomes.

Question 3 (part 1 of 2): What kind of source do you think you’re most likely to look for after today’s class?

![Graph showing the most likely sources looked for over three years.](image)
Question 3 (part 2 of 2): How do you think that source will most help you with your project?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude toward using sources for research</th>
<th>2013-2014 Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It will improve the quality of my project</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It will be relevant to my project</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's a type of source that is required for my project</td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's easy to find</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It will help me form new questions and new ideas</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It will lead me to other sources</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It will help me see how different writers address the subject matter</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate Need</td>
<td>1202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larger Process</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

The second part of this question highlights the attitudes of FYW students in regard to how sources will contribute to their research project. The conceptual difference highlighted by this question compares a view of source use as a response to a requirement or immediate need (purple) with a view of source use as integrated with the larger composition process (green). The inquiry-based design and pedagogy of the library sessions is intended to help move students from the immediate need frame to the larger process frame which represents a threshold concept (or a foundational “why”) for research and the discipline of writing. Assignment design and requirements also play a large role in this conceptual shift, and it would be interesting to also ask about this concept at the beginning and end of the semester to see if a measurable shift occurs.

It appears that in contrast to questions 1 and 2, we are actually seeing an increase in the immediate need fulfillment purpose for sources and a decrease in the larger process purpose. Since there are so many variables that impact this data, it is impossible to pinpoint the cause. If I had to venture a guess, I would propose that the numbers might be tied to an increased number of variations in the disciplinary literacy assignments over the time represented.