

# IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF STUDENT RESEARCH THROUGH INFORMATION FLUENCY

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Information Seeking



Evaluation

Integration & Citing



## Abstract

Have you encountered a decline in the quality of research being submitted by students within your courses? Are your students able to locate information, but unable to critically evaluate and think about what they have discovered? These dilemmas can be changed into opportunities by integrating information fluency principles into assignments, research papers, and more. This session will describe how faculty can enhance students' information fluency through (1) collaboration with college and university librarians and (2) exposing students to resources, tools, search strategies, and information evaluation concepts. Participants will learn about a tiered approach to information fluency developed for social science courses and consider how this can be adapted to other disciplinary contexts.

## Presented by

Michael Howser - Information Literacy/GIS Librarian  
Miami University - Oxford, OH  
e-mail: [howserm@muohio.edu](mailto:howserm@muohio.edu)  
IM: howsermr (AOL & yahoo)



MIAMI  
UNIVERSITY  
OXFORD OHIO

### Tiers of Information Fluency

Fostering the Information Fluency skills of students requires a multi-course approach where skills are developed in stages rather than attempting to cover too much information in a short period of time. Outline below are some potential tiers of developing Information Fluency skills within the context of the four year college experience.

#### Foundation - (First Year - Sophomore)

- Identify appropriate sources of information based on the information needed
- Cites information in proper style based on course/discipline requirements
- Migrates to structured searching and include boolean logic and truncation
- Explores the perspective/bias of sources
- Utilizes general databases/indexes to locate information

#### Thematic Sequence - (Sophomore - Junior)

- Understands the difference between peer reviewed resources and popular sources
- Utilizes a citation manager to gather citation information to build research archive
- Cites and utilizes information appropriately with usage of footnotes/in-text citations
- Advanced search techniques are utilized including boolean logic and truncation
- Migrates from general to discipline specific databases/indexes to locate information
- Research information is incorporated into multiple formats
- Explores the basics of copyright law to ensure information is being used appropriately
- Develops familiarity with basic statistical and/or geographic data resources

#### Capstone (Senior)

- Uses advanced searching techniques, thesauri, and other tools to focus searching
- Utilizes citation searching resources to identify other frequently cited works
- Cites and utilizes information appropriately with usage of footnotes/in-text citations
- Discipline specific databases/indexes are utilized to locate information
- Blends research within multiple formats to expand upon current research
- Understands copyright law and uses information ethically regardless of format
- Incorporates statistical and/or geographic data within research

## Fostering Information Fluency Development through Assignments

### Scenario 1

You are a first year student taking Anthropology 101, a course which focuses on ethnographic research of modern and aboriginal peoples and cultures of the world, you are given the following assignment. How could you modify this assignment to foster the development of information fluency skills?

#### Anthropology 101 Assignment

Within this assignment you will be conducting an ethnographic study of a culture group that you select and include within your research the following:

- Must present an overview of the social life, marriage, and economic system of the group
- Utilize 3 scholarly sources within your research paper.
- Paper should be 7-10 pages

#### Anthropology 101 Assignment - Revised

## Fostering Information Fluency Development through Assignments

### Scenario 2

You are a junior student taking Geography 301, a course which explores the development and implications of the urban landscape on humans and the environment, you are given the following assignment. How could you modify this assignment to foster the development of information fluency skills?

#### Geography 301 Assignment

Explore a topic related to the Urban environment discussed within this course and develop a research paper that incorporates multiple scholarly sources, presents an overview of the topic and incorporate evidence that explores the social/cultural implications of the topic on human development.

- Utilize at least 5 sources
- Paper should be 10-15 pages

#### Geography 301 Assignment - Revised

## Fostering Information Fluency Development through Assignments

### Scenario 3

You are a senior student taking a capstone in Sociology, which is *NOT* your major. How could you modify this assignment to foster the development/incorporation of information fluency skills?

#### Sociology 499 Paper

Explore a topic of your interested related to the field of sociology. Present a balance of research, case studies/statistical/geographic data as appropriate for your topic. This paper will be due at the end of the semester during the time of the final exam. Outlined below are the minimum requirements of the paper:

- Incorporates a variety of scholarly resources
- Paper is at least 15 pages in length
- Includes a minimum of 6 sources

#### Sociology 499 Paper - Revised

## Fostering Information Fluency Development - Faculty/Librarian Collaboration

### Scenario 1

Based on the assignment scenario you explored how could the assignment be improved by faculty and librarian collaboration? What sources/resources should be included?

### Scenario 2

Based on the assignment scenario you explored how could the assignment be improved by faculty and librarian collaboration? What sources/resources should be included?

### Scenario 3

Based on the assignment scenario you explored how could the assignment be improved by faculty and librarian collaboration? What sources/resources should be included?

## Fostering Information Fluency Development - Resources

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