



ASSESSMENT PROJECT REPORT 2008

Due Date: February 28, 2008

Time Period: Spring 2007 thru Fall 2007

Division Name:

Type of Assessment: check one box only

- Classroom (one instructor assessing learning in one course)
- Course (multiple instructors assessing learning in the same one course)
- Program (multiple instructors assessing learning in two or more courses)

Faculty members who participated in this assessment:

Shelle Witten, Cinthya Ippoliti, John Chavez, Muriel Mullane, Dixie Klatt, Pam Rigg, Karen Anderson, Paula Crossman

Learning outcome(s) assessed:

- The student will be able to determine the nature and extent of the information needed.
- The student will be able to access needed information effectively and efficiently.
- The student will be able to evaluate information and its sources critically and incorporate selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system.

What assessment strategy did you use? Attach a copy of the assessment tool.

We utilized a research journal which asked students open ended questions about their research assignment

What challenges did you experience implementing this assessment tool?

We experienced a variety of challenges. Although faculty were very supportive in distributing the research journal after the students had had library instruction, not all of the students in each class completed the assessment.

Timing was also an issue. We could not determine how much content students had forgotten between the time of the library session and the time they turned in the research journal. Alternatively, sometimes the journal was distributed right after the library session, which would address the students' short-term retention, but is not the ideal situation for assessing general education concepts and skills.

In addition, despite the fact that students in most cases received extra credit, some did not take the assessment as seriously as they could have, resulting in incomplete or badly filled out research journals

How did you analyze the results of your assessment?

All of the library faculty first met to determine what a 0, 1, or 2 would look like in terms of an answer on the research journal and we manually scored each journal. Here is an example of our rationale for two sample student responses:

DIMENSION 1-Determining Information Need

1. On what aspect of your topic did you decide to focus? Why?

Student 1: I focused on a lot of things, mainly the severity of human impact on global warming what we are doing to contribute, how it affects the earth, ways to reduce it and ways to remedy past damage

Student 2: Consumerism/over consumption and spending

How to score: The first student tried to articulate the information he/she was seeking whereas the second student merely listed some issues regarding the topic. The first student would get a 2, the second a 1

2. Describe the ways in which your topic evolved or changed as you worked on your paper. Be specific!

Student 1: Some of the ways that my topic evolved include: learning how serious the effects are it made me shift to what people can do or are doing to help

Student 2: In my mini-papers I thought the causes were impossible to find/know, but I found a lot more than I thought

How to score: Again, the first student lists specific ways in which the topic has evolved, whereas the second student mentions something, but not in enough detail-scores would be 2 and 1

3. What (additional) kinds of information might you need to include? Why?

Student 1: I included the history, government help, corporations' help as well as the proposed solution of my own. Because without knowing what can be done, there's no point in talking about such a serious problem

Student 2: World statistics to show gravity and size of the issue

How to score: This one is a bit more difficult. Both students seem to know that they need additional information, but one provides slightly more detail than the other, so it would be 2, 1

4. Based on what you learned during the research session, what kinds of information will you be researching that you didn't think about? Why?

Student 1: I did research people that had knowledge or expertise not just magazine articles, I need scientific proof

Student 2: Branches of my topic, because I will be able to find specific information to contribute to my essay as a whole

How to score: This question would get 1's for both students-they have an idea as to what other areas they need to explore but they are not clearly stated enough to determine if the students really understand what it is they are still missing

DIMENSION 2-Accessing Needed Information

5. What resources/tools (i.e. databases library catalog, etc.) will you use to find this information? Why?

Student 1: Newsbank, Opposing Viewpoints, Academic Search Premier because they are accredited

Student 2: Ebrary/Ebscohost-good factual info

How to score: Neither one of the students answered the why portion of the question with any detail, so that would get 1's for both

6. What search terms are you planning to use and how did you combine them-what was your search strategy?

Student 1: My plan was to look at newspapers at home, check out books and compile the most thorough and non-biased research I could find

Student 2: Consumerism, global consumption, advertising, over consumption

How to score: This was an issue that the question was not well worded, however the second student did not take the next step and show how the keywords could be connected in a search, so that would earn a 1. The first answer though good, still did not get at how the student ended up searching for information, so this earns a 0

7. Did your search strategy work-did you find what you were looking for? Why or why not?

Student 1: Yes I believe I found great info

Student 2: I did find what I was looking for

How to score: These responses also earn a 1. Both students indicated they found information, but not what kind and how it would contribute to their overall research

8. Did you modify your search strategy at any point? (That is, did you identify more or different resources, more or different search terms, etc?) If so, why and how? If not, why not?

Student 1: No, I knew from last semester how to work the database

Student 2: Yes, I used UN census information and UN Wealth Inequality spreadsheets which I couldn't find through the library, I Googled that info

How to score: This would honestly be somewhere between a 1 and a 2. It would be a judgment call to determine how much the students revised their research strategy and plan once they actually started to search for information.

DIMENSION 3-Evaluating Information

9. Which specific articles, books, web resources did you decide to use? Why? (That is, explain why you chose each source: what makes this an appropriate source to consult at this time and in this situation?)

Student 1: NY Times, Environment, Lancet, Christian Science Monitor, Kenneth Green Book

Student 2: Consumerism in World History-very relevant

The World of Consumption-very good info good author

How to score: These answers would earn a 1-the students identified that the sources they found were good, but not in what way.

10. How did you evaluate the resources you found-what criteria did you use to make sure each resource was credible and useful?

Student 1: CARBS

Student 2: When I did the computer work, I made sure it only received scholarly journals and what not

How to score: Also a 1. Mentioning CARBS and scholarly articles is only half the equation. Applying CARBS is the other-had the students talked about author credentials, currency of resources and bias they would have received a 2.

What changes did you suggest and/or implement as a result of this assessment?

In response to the data which indicated that students were still having trouble with evaluating information, we created a Levels of Credibility handout which allows for a continuum of evaluation rather than a right or wrong approach. This gives us the opportunity to talk about how the criteria working together make a source credible or not instead of simply saying "yes it is credible" or "no it isn't". There are two versions, one for basic and one for advanced evaluation. Another handout we created is VCR (Compare, Contrast, Review) which goes hand in hand with the Levels of Credibility for more advanced evaluation. Both of these handouts are designed to help the student look at the sources as an holistic body of information which supports their argument.

A big project we have undertaken this semester has been to incorporate ILab into the English 101/102 curriculum. Still in its pilot phase, we are experimenting with bringing in this BlackBoard module and making it an integral part of the class over several instruction sessions. We tried this model in three classes during the Fall '07 semester. Two of the classes were FYE Eng 101 and the third was a regular Eng 101 class. ILab consists of a pre and a post test as well as a Virtual Workbook which provides exercises for students to fill out after the face to face instruction session. Our first round of assessment shows an overall 30% increase in scores from the pre to the post test indicating that students are benefiting from this hybrid model of instruction. We are hoping to incorporate this model into more classes in the Fall of '08.

How has your understanding of and involvement in assessment been enhanced this year?

We hope to continue growing a culture of assessment and integrate it into our everyday teaching and learning experiences. Utilizing pre and post testing has finally given us a way to get useful feedback as to what Information Literacy skills and concepts the students are actually learning in addition to what they already know coming in to the library sessions.

How has your progress in assessment been limited this year?

One of the biggest problems we have faced is that many instructors choose to administer their own Information Literacy assessment. This in and of itself is a wonderful development, but we have found problems with scoring and reliability issues. We are always happy to collaborate with faculty who wish to integrate assessment into their curriculum, but we have been unsuccessful in some instances. Results therefore have been skewed and the data is unreliable. We are uncertain of the tools and methods faculty are utilizing and how they themselves are scoring the results.

The rubric continues to be a problem as well. It is an artificial and fairly limited way of looking at Information Literacy. There are other ways of assessing the various outcomes which are more flexible and tailored and which measure what students can or should be able to do (create a search, evaluate a resource etc.) as opposed to what they should know which is far more abstract and difficult to measure.

How can additional progress and participation in the assessment of student learning be facilitated?

We would like to implement a standardized form of assessment to test across the college for Information Literacy. The Information Communication Technology test is a task-based tool that has already been implemented at Phoenix College and we are anxious to hear the results. By utilizing this nationally normed tool we would standardize the data we gather as well as the methodology which would yield the most valid and valuable information in order to help us move forward in assessing as much of our student population as possible and in the most efficient manner possible.

Thank you for completing this report. Please send it to your Division Chair by February 28, 2008.