Environmental Scan of Critical Analysis and Digital Literacy Engagement (CANDLE) Initiative Programs at the UNCG University Libraries

Introduction

The UNC Greensboro University Libraries have a long history of a very robust and successful instruction program that include a variety of information literacies necessary to student success during their academic career and beyond. These literacies include information literacy, primary source literacy, digital literacy, media literacy, visual literacy, health literacy and data literacy. Librarians and archivists across the Libraries collaborate closely with teaching faculty to develop assignments, instruct students in these literacy skills and assess them at both the undergraduate and graduate level. The Association of College and Research Libraries’ (ACRL) Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education serves as a model and guidance for the program along with other documents such as the the Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy recently approved by a joint ACRL/RBMS and Society of American Archivists task force. Librarians in the Research, Outreach and Instruction Department (ROI) and the Harold Schiffman Music Library (HSML) focus on basic critical thinking and research, information literacy and media skills at the 1st year level and subject-specific skills such as data literacy, digital literacy and health literacy at the upper-level undergraduate and graduate levels. Their sessions provide hands-on active learning opportunities and assignments that focus on the content and skills for their class. Archivists in the Special Collections and University Archives Department (SCUA) teach students fundamental research methods that include critical thinking and the contextualization of information along with primary source and visual literacy. SCUA’s class sessions focus on students’ abilities to interpret, analyze, and handle primary source materials (analog and digital). The Digital Media Commons (DMC) staff instruct students in how to create a variety of visual, media and digital literacy projects such as videos, PowerPoint Presentations, Podcasts and 3D objects. Instruction from all units is provided both face-to-face and online.

To support these initiatives, the University Libraries devote several positions specifically to information literacies and instruction. While all librarians in ROI provide instruction, three positions, Information Literacy Coordinator, First Year Instruction/Humanities and First Year Instruction/Social Sciences focus specifically on these services. Likewise in SCUA, the majority of archivists participate in instruction. The position of outreach and instruction archivist was created to coordinate and teach departmental instruction efforts both on and off campus, focusing on primary source literacy, visual literacy, and information literacy.

In addition to contributing to student learning and faculty teaching, the University Libraries also provide outreach to the community, including public schools, retirement communities, alumni, and civic groups. Additionally, the University Libraries are active in supporting UNCG’s recruiting initiatives. These efforts contribute to learning at all stages of life and offer important engagement in the community.
The University Libraries’ metaliteracy program directly supports many aspects of UNCG’s Strategic Plan. The many instruction programs connect with all the Areas of Transformation -- Student, Knowledge and Regional. And, they support the Health and Wellness and Vibrant Communities Areas of Focus.

Achievements

Curriculum Integration and On-Campus Engagement

- An active and growing course-integrated instruction program. In 2016-17 the Libraries conducted 1,056 class sessions for a 35% increase from the previous year. 18 were taught online.

- Individual and small group research consultations with students and faculty. In 2016-17, 2,330 consultations were provided for a 2.5% increase from the previous year. 915 of these consultations were performed online.

- Hundreds of online research guides, available 24/7, for each major and program at UNCG, specific courses, Special Collections and Archives and a variety of other topics.

- Over 100 online tutorials on topics including general research assistance, subject-specific research, searching databases and citation style guides. All tutorials are on this LibGuide as well as on subject and course guides. The PATH Tutorial, a comprehensive introduction to research, will be completely revamped by fall 2018.

- Assigned liaisons to each academic major and program at UNCG. Liaison work is a major portion of their responsibilities which includes collaborating closely with their departments to develop the students’ metaliteracy skills, create research guides and provide research consultations to the students and faculty in their assigned departments.

- Several librarians and archivists are embedded in classroom instruction and collaborate closely with the instructor of record to develop assignments and assess students’ skills in addition to providing instruction. A librarian role created in Canvas, UNCG’s course management system, offers the opportunity for online embedding.

- Two webinar series for a campus-wide audience: the Online Learning and Innovation Series with the University Teaching and Learning Commons and the Research and Application Series, with 6 webinars per series. A total of 16 will be presented in 2017-18.

- Two librarians were the instructor of record for LIS 200, “Information Use in a Digital World,” in spring 2018.
• One archivist is teaching a new Honors course in 2018 that focuses on archival methods and open source digital tools.

• Librarians from various departments, including ROI, Special Collections and University Archives, Digital Projects, and Technical Services, guest lecture in a variety of Library and Information Studies classes, including Foundations for Library and Information Studies, Information Resources and Services, Digital Libraries, Special Collections, Metadata, Preservation, and The Academic Library.

• Strong service on Faculty Senate Committees related to the curriculum including the General Education Council, the Student Learning Enhancement Committee, the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and the Graduate Studies Committee. Librarians frequently chair these committees. A librarian is serving on General Education Review Task Force for 2017-19.

• Assigned liaisons to student organizations to assist in marketing Libraries’ resources and services and to support co-curricular programming.

Community Engagement and Outreach

• Since 2013, SCUA has been scheduling programming for the Well Spring Retirement Community on topics that include history of photography, rare books, cello music, UNCG history, and “fake news.” On average, University Libraries have averaged 3-4 sessions per semester.

• Sessions on health literacy in collaboration with Healthy UNCG both on campus and in the community.

• Participation in UNCG’s McNair Scholars, a program to recruit minority students to attend graduate school. Librarians and archivists will provide instruction and each Scholar has an assigned librarian or archivist mentor.

• Participation in the Middle College at UNCG. In 2016-17, librarians met with 12 Middle College groups, including all groups of freshmen, juniors, and seniors. In 2017-18, we instituted once monthly visits in the fall (juniors) and spring (sophomores and seniors) to help them prepare for their final projects in the Pathways class. Freshmen will visit continue to visit once in the fall for an introductory session. Starting in 2017, SCUA has also been included in tours and instruction.
Metaliteracy workshops for Guilford County high school and middle school students. In 2015, SCUA developed a community instruction program that averages 18 individual class sessions per semester.

Starting in August 2018, SCUA will be spearheading a new initiative that offers professional development workshops for Guilford County teachers. The workshops will guide teachers in the use of metaliteracy in their curriculum.

Information literacy instruction for visiting public school students. In 2016-17 ROI librarians taught 11 classes for groups from Reidsville High School (IB), Grimsley High School (IB), Western Guilford High School (AP Research), and Oak Ridge Military Academy in 16-17. During the visits of the Grimsley High students and the Western Guilford High students, SCUA also taught instructional sessions using primary sources.

Workshops on finding quality information sources for a variety of community groups including parents of middle school students attending the American Association of University Women’s Tech Savvy program, middle school students in collaboration with a local organization, Onward, and UNCG alumni attending their Reunion.

ESL teacher education students from Shanghai Normal.

Faculty Development for Metaliteracy

The University Libraries work with teaching faculty to provide development programs in order to foster collaborations and enhance the metaliteracy program. These opportunities are often in collaboration with the University Teaching and Learning Commons (UTLC):

11 Information Literacy Course Development incentive stipends awarded to teaching faculty since 2016. These awards support instructors in revitalizing courses to more intentionally integrate information literacy and research. Instructors collaborated closely with librarians, archivists, and Digital Media Commons staff to develop assignments, provide instruction, and assess students’ work. 4 additional stipends will be awarded in spring 2018.

In 2016-17, 6 librarians provided or participated in 14 face-to-face or online faculty development workshops on a variety of topics including:

- Open Access Educational Resources
- Online course development
- Information literacy in first-year courses
- Video production and pedagogy
- Digital literacy
Professional Development for Librarians

The Libraries ensure that their faculty receive professional development in order to keep their skills and knowledge up to date. Librarians are supported to attend regional and national conferences and workshops such as ACRL’s Immersion Program, LOEX, the Innovative Library Classroom, Annual Conference of the National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students and the Georgia International Conference on Information Literacy. Within the Libraries, the Information Literacy Coordinator provides regular workshops for colleagues and the Online Learning Librarian provides monthly instructional technology workshops: https://uncg.libguides.com/libinstructionaltech.

Assessment

The Libraries regularly assess student work guided by established student learning outcomes.

- Over ⅓ of the classes conducted in 2016-17 assessed the session using LibGuides Polls, Google Forms and Google Sheets for group source evaluations, email records for relevant sources, one-minute papers, polls and surveys. Also in 2016-17, 8 ROI librarians assessed students’ final products using rubrics. More information on information literacy assessment is in the 2016-17 Information Literacy Instruction and Assessment Report.

- In the effort to show the Libraries’ impact on student success a pilot study was conducted in 2016-17 that compared grades between students who received instruction and those who did not. A positive correlation was discovered. This study is being repeated in 2018.

Recent Selected Publications, Presentations, and Professional Involvement by Libraries’ Faculty

Jenny Dale is a presenter for ACRL’s “Engaging with the ACRL Framework” RoadShow.


Natalle, E., and Crowe, K. (2012). Information literacy and communication research: a case study on interdisciplinary assessment.” Communication Education, 62(1) 97-104. (This project won UNCG’s Student Learning Enhancement award in 2012.)

Gorman, K.P., and Smith, K. (2017). Teaching the teachers: bringing archival materials and methods to the k-12 classroom. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section of ACRL/ALA, Iowa City, IA.


Robison, M., Grigg, K., Ivins, T., McAllister, K., and Bishop, C. (2017). The library can do that? library services for transfer students. Paper presented at the 15th Annual Conference of the National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students, Atlanta, GA.


April 2018