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Information And Media Literacy: Integrating Literacies Into Library Instruction

ABSTRACT

Media literacy is a critical skill, a subset of information literacy, that at this point in history is more important than ever. Students entering higher education generally receive information literacy instruction at the lower division level. However, the skills taught at this level are rudimentary and geared toward introducing students to scholarly and peer-reviewed sources. Conversely, students have relied upon more popular resources in K-12 education and may not have the evaluative skills to more responsibly consume, and ethically use, popular, news, and social media content. Current instruction methods silo instruction between scholarly and peer-review sources for academic use separately from media consumption in everyday life. This separation is problematic as students may achieve academic information literacy and still fall prey to misinformation, they find online and in social situations. While the Association of College and Research Libraries Framework addresses the need for a set of information literacy abilities, the National Association for Media Literacy Education takes this further with their core principles. At California State University, Bakersfield, media literacy is integrated into several information literacy opportunities. However, it is in full-term information literacy instruction, where we most fully develop the concepts and techniques specific to media literacy.

KEY WORDS

Information literacy. Media literacy. Higher education. Social media. Misinformation. Information literacy skills. Information literacy standards. Media literacy standards. Library instruction.

1. Introduction

Until recently, media literacy, the skill set dedicated to critically evaluating print and visual media, has been siloed in communication studies. Students of the discipline are instructed in this skill set to encourage and develop professional ethics and critical understanding of how people communicate. However, with the growth of social media, decrease in traditional news consumption, and transition from written to visual methods of communication, it has become imperative that all students are well versed in media literacy skills.

In recent years, media literacy has been integrated with information literacy in the higher education curriculum. Despite this addition, there are still limits upon which types of media and information students have learned or been instructed to apply these skills to; while students may develop mastery of media literacy skills in the academy, it is still disheartening to see how many of them fail to apply these same standards to their own information and social media consumption.

The goal is to get students to understand that the sharing and consumption of information is a practice in ethics and trust. There is a need to demonstrate what is at stake, and in the current global climate, the reliability of information producers and facts is literally a matter of life and death. Teaching students the importance of evaluating their day to day media consumption is not something that can be taught in passing. In a typical one-shot for information literacy, librarians and instructors have between 15 and 75 minutes to impart onto students how to search for information, and to evaluate it for peer review and scholarship, and how to access said information. It is often impossible to do all of this will, with active learning, in this amount of time.

In a full-term information literacy course, it is possible to take time out to teach students the differences between information they use in the academy and information they consume for personal and business reasons. Appealing to their sense of right and wrong, their ethics, and their understanding of the law helps frame the implications of misinformation, media bias, and fake news.

2. Literature Review

Definitions of information literacy are varied, but most include the concept of information discovery, evaluation, creation, and responsible use. The standards for information literacy in higher education have been guided by the Association of Research & College Libraries since 1957 when a committee developed its „*first real set of 'Standards for College Libraries' to enjoy the consensual support of the profession.*"[1] Since then, IL standards have undergone multiple revisions as developments in technology, new information formats, and new avenues of information creation have been formed. Most notably, in 2000, an ACRL committee finalized work on the „*Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education,*" which set out skill-based performance indicators and specific learning outcomes. The standards were widely used, translated, and globally distributed. In 2012, at the recommendation of a review task force, the ACRL Board approved an extensive revision of the standards, which resulted in the 2015 adoption of the *„Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education."*[2] The Framework, consisting of six different frames or concepts, pushed IL forward from a specific set of learning outcomes and moved it forward into a more conceptual understanding of information literacy with

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[1]   *ACRL History.* [online]. [2020-04-05]. Available at: <http://www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl/history/history>.
[2]   Ibid.

more capacity to enhance student learning and critical thinking skills. The Framework defines information literacy as „*the set of integrated abilities encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning.*"[3] Herakova, Bonnet, and Congdon explore the important relationship between information and media literacy and state that „*engaging and furthering information literacy is key to the civil dialogues assignment – from deciding on and researching an issue, through critique of information and messages, to the ethical participation in learning communities.*"[4]

In the course of the last twenty years, media literacy has been redefined to include the rapid changes to the media landscape: from television and print culture to a panorama of sources from the physical to the, mostly, digital including both print and visual formats. Institutions like Alliance for a Media Literate America[5], Center for Media Literacy[6], Accrediting Council of Education in Journalism and Mass Communication[7], National Communication Association[8], National Association for Media Literacy Education[9], and Partnership for 21st Century Skills[10] have attempted to generate a concise definition with an accompanying set of competencies and learning outcomes. Scholars Renee Hobbs and W. James Potter have published extensively on the cultivation and application of media literacy pedagogy. In 2010, both scholars published on „*The State of Media Literacy*" where they debate the definitions, issues, and themes related to media literacy.[11]

The nexus of media literacy is critical thinking, but there is much debate on the focus of this particular „*literacy*."[12] Many argue that media literacy should extend beyond the functional aspects of searching for and identifying forms of media that are more closely associated

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[3] *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education.* [online]. [2020-04-05]. Available at: <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework>.

[4] HERAKOVA, L. et al.: Centering Information Literacy (as) Skills and Civic Engagement in the Basic Communication Course: An Integrated Course Library Collaboration. In *Basic Communication Course Annual,* 2017, Vol. 29, No. 1, p. 114.

[5] See: ROGOW, F.: Shifting from Media to Literacy. In *American Behavioral Scientist,* 2004, Vol. 48, No. 1, p. 32; THOMAN, E., JOLLS, T.: Media Literacy-A National Priority for a Changing World. In *American Behavioral Scientist,* 2004, Vol. 48, No. 1, p. 23.

[6] THOMAN, E., JOLLS, T.: Media Literacy-A National Priority for a Changing World. In *American Behavioral Scientist,* 2004, Vol. 48, No. 1, p. 24.

[7] CHRIST, W.: Assessment, Media Literacy Standards, and Higher Education. In *American Behavioral Scientist,* 2004, Vol. 48, No. 1, p. 92-94.

[8] Ibid., p. 95.

[9] BAYLEN, D., D'ALBA, A. (eds.): *Essentials of Teaching and Integrating Visual and Media Literacy: Visualizing Learning*. Cham, New York : Springer International Publishing Switzerland, 2015, p. 15.

[10] THOMAN, E., JOLLS, T.: Media Literacy-A National Priority for a Changing World. In *American Behavioral Scientist,* 2004, Vol. 48, No. 1, p. 20-23.

[11] See: POTTER, W.: The State of Media Literacy. In *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media,* 2010, Vol. 54, No. 4, p. 676-678; HOBBS, R.: Improving Reading Comprehension by Using Media Literacy Activities. In *Voices from the Middle*, 2001, Vol. 8, No. 4, p. 419-425.

[12] See: ROGOW, F.: Shifting from Media to Literacy. In *American Behavioral Scientist,* 2004, Vol. 48, No. 1, p. 31; THOMAN, E., JOLLS, T.: Media Literacy-A National Priority for a Changing World. In *American Behavioral Scientist,* 2004, Vol. 48, No. 1, p. 20; LUKE, C.: As Seen on TV or Was that My Phone? New Media Literacy. In *Policy Futures in Education,* 2007, Vol. 5, No. 1, p. 50; VAN DE VORD, R.: Distance Students and Online Research: Promoting Information Literacy through Media Literacy. In *Internet and Higher Education,* 2010, Vol. 13, p. 170; KELLNER, D., SHARE, J.: Critical Media Literacy: Crucial Policy Choices for a Twenty-First-Century Democracy. In *Policy Futures in Education,* 2007, Vol. 5, No. 1, p. 59; FLEMING, J.: Media Literacy, News Literacy, or News Appreciation? A case Study of the News Literacy Program at Stony Brook University. In *Journalism and Mass Communication Editor,* 2014, Vol. 69, No. 2, p. 149; VRAGA, E., TULLY, M.: Effectiveness of a Non-Classroom Media Literacy Intervention Among Different Undergraduate Populations. In *Journalism and Mass Communication Editor,* 2016, Vol. 71, No. 4, p. 440; MAKSL, A. et al.: The Usefulness of a News Media Literacy Curriculum. In J*ournalism and Mass Communications Educator*, 2017, Vol. 72, No. 2, p. 230.

with information, digital, and technology literacy.[13] The most accepted definition of media literacy tends to align with Hobb's 2001 definition: „*…accessing, analyzing, evaluating, and communicating.*"[14]

There are those in media studies that argue media production should also be a requirement of media literacy.[15] While this provides for general competencies, it does not provide educators with measurable objectives or outcomes. Thoman and Jolls developed a framework and set of key questions that does; it addresses the social construction of media and meaning, the use of codified language and expression in media, difference of perspective, values, and biases, and the underlying power structure in communication.[16]

Other significant issues related to media literacy include representation, social justice, an educated and empowered citizenry, and livelihood of democracy.[17] Representation and agency are critical, but they are often only taught in relation to higher level media and scholarship.[18] There is still debate on whether more common or mundane forms of media, including television and social media, should be analyzed at this level.[19] Given the volume with which Americans consume information in these formats, whether for entertainment or news, it is important to teach users to apply the same standards of analysis to all formats of information.[20]

In line with the social justice agenda, scholars in media studies and librarianship also contend that inadequate access to technology and information and/or media literacy education further disenfranchises socio-economically challenged populations.[21] At issue too is the need to teach students at all levels to analyze mainstream social, television, and news media with the same

[13] See: THOMAN, E., JOLLS, T.: Media Literacy-A National Priority for a Changing World. In *American Behavioral Scientist,* 2004, Vol. 48, No. 1, p. 20; FLEMING, J.: Media Literacy, News Literacy, or News Appreciation? A case Study of the News Literacy Program at Stony Brook University. In *Journalism and Mass Communication Editor*, 2014, Vol. 69, No. 2, p. 148-149; KELLNER, D., SHARE, J.: Critical Media Literacy: Crucial Policy Choices for a Twenty-First-Century Democracy. In *Policy Futures in Education*, 2007, Vol. 5, No. 1, p. 61; VAN DE VORD, R.: Distance Students and Online Research: Promoting Information Literacy through Media Literacy. In *Internet and Higher Education*, 2010, Vol. 13, No. 3, p. 171.

[14] HOBBS, R.: The State of Media Literacy: A Response to Potter. In *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media,* 2011, Vol. 55, No. 3, p. 45.

[15] See: ROGOW, F.: Shifting from Media to Literacy. In *American Behavioral Scientist,* 2004, Vol. 48, No. 1; THOMAN, E., JOLLS, T.: Media Literacy-A National Priority for a Changing World. In *American Behavioral Scientist,* 2004, Vol. 48, No. 1; KELLNER, D., SHARE, J.: Critical Media Literacy: Crucial Policy Choices for a Twenty-First-Century Democracy. In *Policy Futures in Education,* 2007, Vol. 5, No. 1; HAMMER, R.: Critical Media Literacy as Engaged Pedagogy. In *E-Learning and Digital Media,* 2011, Vol. 8, No. 4, p. 361.

[16] THOMAN, E., JOLLS, T.: Media Literacy-A National Priority for a Changing World. In *American Behavioral Scientist,* 2004, Vol. 48, No. 1, p. 25-27.

[17] See: JONES-JANG, S. et al.: Does Media Literacy Help Identification of Fake News? Information Literacy Helps, but Other Literacies Don't. In *American Behavioral Scientist,* 2019, Vol. 68.; CHRIST, W.: Assessment, Media Literacy Standards, and Higher Education. In *American Behavioral Scientist,* 2004, Vol. 48, No. 1; POTTER, W.: The State of Media Literacy. In *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media,* 2010, Vol. 54, No. 4; HOBBS, R.: The State of Media Literacy: A Response to Potter. In *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media,* 2011, Vol. 55, No. 3.

[18] See: POTTER, W.: The State of Media Literacy. In *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media,* 2010, Vol. 54, No. 4; HOBBS, R.: The State of Media Literacy: A Response to Potter. In *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media,* 2011, Vol. 55, No. 3; JONES-JANG, S. et al.: Does Media Literacy Help Identification of Fake News? Information Literacy Helps, but Other Literacies Don't. In *American Behavioral Scientist,* 2019, Vol. 68.

[19] See: CHRIST, W.: Assessment, Media Literacy Standards, and Higher Education. In *American Behavioral Scientist,* 2004, Vol. 48, No. 1; THOMAN, E., JOLLS, T.: Media Literacy-A National Priority for a Changing World. In *American Behavioral Scientist,* 2004, Vol. 48, No. 1; FLEMING, J.: Media Literacy, News Literacy, or News Appreciation? A case Study of the News Literacy Program at Stony Brook University. In *Journalism and Mass Communication Editor,* 2014, Vol. 69, No. 2.

[20] JONES-JANG, S. et al.: Does Media Literacy Help Identification of Fake News? Information Literacy Helps, but Other Literacies Don't. In *American Behavioral Scientist,* 2019, Vol. 68, p. 12-14.

[21] HAMMER, R.: Critical Media Literacy as Engaged Pedagogy. In *E-Learning and Digital Media,* 2011, Vol. 8, No. 4, p. 360.

lenses applied to print media and film in order address issues in identity politics, representation, and equal treatment in government and society.[22] Many assume that these digital natives are familiar with the concepts of media literacy because of their demonstrated proficiency with the technology, but that is not the case.[23] Students need faculty in all disciplines, and by virtue of their role in information literacy, librarians, to teach them these skills and provide them access to information.

3. Methods of Instruction

The ACRL's Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education (the Framework) was created in 2015 to re-invigorate the previous standards for information literacy, and push student understanding away from just a set of learned skills, and forward into a more conceptual and dynamic understanding of information literacy.[24] The Framework allows for instructor creativity and does not dictate specifically how librarian instructors should address each of the frames within their own instruction, but instead provides examples and possibilities for how to extend each of these frames into the classroom. Librarian instructors at California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB) began incorporating the Framework into all aspects of the information literacy program including one-shots for general education courses, subject orientations, workshops, and full-semester library courses.

Currently, librarians at CSUB offer a one-unit, full semester, general studies course on information literacy, which is offered during the academic year, and also during both winter and summer sessions. Prior to 2016, the library's GST 1110 course, Research Sources and Skills, had been taught as a face-to-face class, but in 2017 it was moved to a fully online course. Moving to online allowed a reevaluation of the syllabus, and the Framework was implemented into nearly all aspects of the course. Two different librarian instructors have taught the class since 2017, both devoting significant time to media literacy concepts and the importance of information literacy skills in day to day life. The challenges of teaching media literacy within short, traditional library instruction sessions will be compared to that of the more in-depth instruction found within full semester library research courses.

While the vagueness of the Framework has often been seen as a negative, in reality it allows librarians to extend information literacy concepts beyond traditional academic instruction and provides an avenue for the incorporation of media literacy concepts into the same classroom atmospheres that they are used to teaching within. At CSUB, librarians addressed these topics in a variety of different ways including First-Year-Experience orientations that dealt with Fake News and evaluation, within English research and composition courses, library sponsored workshops on identifying fake news, plagiarism, and the evaluation process, and within full-semester library courses. It is within these full-semester library courses that the implementation of the Framework can be most thoroughly expanded and media literacy concepts and skills can be built upon

Traditional information literacy courses place a significant focus on academic research with the end goal of instilling in students the skills needed to find, evaluate, and responsibly use information within the confines of scholarly or academic work. Students at the university level are often immediately immersed into the rigors of academic research with librarians playing a significant role in the development of early information literacy skills.

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[22] HAMMER, R.: Critical Media Literacy as Engaged Pedagogy. In *E-Learning and Digital Media,* 2011, Vol. 8, No. 4, p. 360.

[23] KIVILUOTO, J.: Information Literacy and Diginatives: Expanding the Role of Academic Libraries. In *International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions,* 2015, Vol. 41, No. 4, p. 309-310.

[24] *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education.* [online]. [2020-04-05]. Available at: <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework>.

First-Year-Experience courses are a common place to introduce freshmen to the library, its services and resources. While the general orientations, scavenger hunts, and library tours that are often utilized in these courses can provide awareness of the library, more in-depth instruction within them is not easily done. As FYE courses continue to grow, librarians assigned to each of these sections prioritize the exploration of the library resources over other components of information literacy or media literacy. As students progress through their majors, subsequent librarian visits and instruction may begin to incorporate deeper evaluative skills and even include components of media literacy and evaluation of various media sources. The incorporation of media literacy into a librarian's subject area is at the discretion of the librarian and the overall learning outcomes for that particular course or discipline.

Contrary to popular academic research, many introductory speech courses allow students to present on a wide array of topics from the popular to the academic and mundane to inflammatory. In these classes, students utilize a wide variety of sources, but it is difficult to explain, in a fifty to seventy-five minute session, why they should be so careful with the information they present.

Instructors for the campus' introductory public speaking course will schedule one-shot library instruction to not only provide students with access to functional information literacy instruction, but also for assistance in identifying and evaluating information appropriate to the subject and format of the speech the students develop. The functional literacy portion of the class mimics that provided to the freshmen composition students. Depending on the number of sessions allocated to the librarian, this content is covered in thirty to forty-five minutes both to provide time for the discussion of source evaluation but also because most of these students have completed or are co-enrolled in freshmen composition when they take public speaking. They will generally meet with librarians twice in their first year to learn how to search for, access, and retrieve resources from the library and the open web.

What makes these one-shots different from the freshmen composition classes, and from most other information literacy one-shots, is the need to emphasize the evaluation of popular and mainstream media sources. Within communications and media studies, students receive in-depth instruction in the construction, purpose, and codification of media and messaging. In this first course, they need instruction on differentiating the different formats of information so they can learn when to use them. In this instruction, students learn to retrieve, identify, and evaluate information from news sources, data and public opinion polls, blogs or social media content, government documents, and scholarly and/or peer-reviewed sources. Given that students meet with the librarian for only one or two sessions, all of this information is condensed to fit class sessions of 50 to 75 minutes.

There is not enough time to provide depth of analysis of these forms of information, and so students are reduced to evaluating sources from short, prescriptive checklists. It becomes the course instructor's duty to provide students instruction in the more in-depth, critical analysis of context, subtext, intent, and meaning. It is necessary in these situations for instruction and library faculty to work together to provide these students with the basic tenets of media literacy to complete their course. Anecdotally, it is rare to see many of these students develop the broader awareness of their personal consumption of information in any of these terms. More often than not, students still seek out the convenient rather than the complex and credible.

At CSUB, General Studies 1110, Research Sources and Skills, is taught every term and incorporates the basics of information literacy for academic research. In recent semesters, however, the course has begun to incorporate more aspects of media literacy as well. Librarian instructors differ in their approaches and coursework, but the course objectives are the same and include the following:

- Develop basic information literacy skills.
- Demonstrate critical thinking and information literacy.
- Evaluate contexts, attitudes, values, and responses to different audiences.
- Identify and use research tools appropriate to their immediate information need(s).

- Apply a variety of search strategies and techniques to retrieving resources relevant to their immediate information need(s).
- Find diverse, reputable sources for an academic research paper.
- Use logical reasoning, at the appropriate level, to develop and organize ideas.

One librarian's approach to teaching the GST course has been to use the Framework to guide the trajectory of the class. Early coursework pulls in traditional information literacy skills and develops searching and evaluating skills with a focus on authorship, audience, information creation and value, and scholarly conversation. Student assignments begin with a focus on reference materials and background information, and focus on the frames four and six, which address research as inquiry, and searching as a strategic exploration. This theme is carried on throughout the entire course even as other frame are developed and explored. Early assignments include academic sources from reference databases to show early on the purpose of background research, and include quick comparisons between Google searches and database searches. As students learn the basics of database searching, the importance of information creation as a process is explored and clear distinctions between scholarly, trade, and popular material are made. Once students are able to locate possible articles and resources on the topics they are exploring, the first frame, Authority is Constructed and Contextual, is addressed. Students take three of their resources and take an in-depth look at who the author is and identify profession, credentials, and previous writings that may help the student understand who is writing their resource and whether or not it allows them to have more confidence in the „*authority*" of the item. Students are also asked in a discussion post to explain who their authorities are in each of their individual majors and interact with each other to see how different majors hold different types of „*authorities*" on their topics.

As the different frames are introduced and explored, the topic of media literacy is introduced during the second half of the semester. At this point, students have explored differences in information quality and authorship from databases and open web searches, and when news or other media sources are explored, it is a basic expectation that students would vet out the resource, look at how it was created, who created it, and why the source may or may not hold credible weight. Two weeks are devoted to this topic, and the first introductory assignment asks students to read the Stanford History Group's report that describes students' ability to discern the credibility of information online as „*bleak.*"[25] Students are asked to describe how they get their news information and how they think they would fare in a similar study. The following week explores false information in different platforms including social media, and moves students towards an understanding that even within the onslaught of information we receive in our daily tech filled lives, they have the ability to recognize red flags and treat information sources with a healthy sense of skepticism before using the information.

After the library instruction coordinator realigned the goals and objectives for the general studies information literacy course with the ACRL Framework, adapting the assignments was not difficult. What was more difficult was migrating readings and lecture content from face-to-face to online-only instruction. With the addition of Credo Instruct! videos and tutorials, existing lectures were modified, recorded, and posted in print and video formats for students to access. In lieu of one required textbook, students were assigned chapters from various composition textbooks, information literacy guides, handbooks on media literacy, and journal articles. The intent of the course is to provide students with sufficient time to see information literacy skills modeled, read about or hear them explained from a practical and theoretical perspective, and engage in active learning strategies to cultivate mastery.

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[25] WINEBURG, S. et al.: *Evaluating Information: The Cornerstone of Civic Online Reasoning.* [online]. [2020-04-09]. Available at: <https://stacks.stanford.edu/file/druid:fv751yt5934/SHEG%20Evaluating%20Information%20Online.pdf>.

Another librarian's approach to the course is, for the most part, self-paced, and students complete assessments to measure retention in addition to assignments requiring them to both demonstrate mastery of the more procedural aspects of information literacy and evaluate the information they locate. These readings and tasks support the learning outcomes related to identifying appropriate databases and resources, using logical reasoning, and applying different search strategies as needed for those resources and the topic.

The course is divided into eleven modules over sixteen weeks. Students begin, in the first six modules, with the basic definitions, processes, and procedures involved in research. They learn the vocabulary associated with information literacy; they learn a little about computer operations and indexing; and they learn a lot about organization. Despite the perception that digital natives have a better understanding of how to use technology, this content is sometimes difficult for students to digest because they often think of research as a single transaction.[26] Information literacy instruction is fraught with obstacles like this: students want or settle for what is found quickly, easily accessible, and not too difficult (or too long) to read.[27] While, at this point, students are not required to read and evaluate the information they locate, they are required to refine and repeat their searches in different venues to gather as many diverse sources as possible.

Once students build confidence in their ability to search for and retrieve information, they move to the more conceptual issues associated with evaluation of sources. This is where students begin to apply aspects of both information and media literacy. Within the confines of information literacy, students research the author's affiliation, expertise, and previous publications. They investigate the publication: its publisher, editorial board, and affiliated associations. They also evaluate the information objects for currency, accuracy, and reliability of the cited sources. Students in familiarized with the concepts of authority, bias, and peer-review. Within the context of media literacy, students investigate the information object in the context of the author's experience, goals, agenda, and/or purpose.

In a typical one-shot instruction session, these concepts are explained in less than 30 minutes and, if time permits, students have the opportunity to evaluate an artifact they found themselves. Though more typically, students follow along with their instructors as the process of evaluation is demonstrated to the class live or via tutorial. In one-shot instruction, this aspect of information literacy is still procedural. In a term-long course, this instruction takes place in the course of a week or two with exercises in choosing and evaluating multiple information resources for author credibility, reputation of the publication, and the quality of the sources cited in the work, among other concepts.

Another advantage to providing longer term information literacy is the time devoted to exploring information in different formats. This specifically draws from media literacy as students are introduced to the concept of different formats for different messages or intent. For instance, blog and social media posts are very different from news broadcasts or newspaper articles, though they are both often used to disseminate the news. Discussing the different use cases for each format, and the implications of such, can be done in a one- or two-week unit on information sources where it would likely be glossed over or omitted from one-shot instruction. In classes where writing and crafting an argument are important, the teaching faculty may well provide that context, but in an upper division course, it is more likely that students will be limited to the use of scholarly and/or peer-reviewed books and articles. Such limits may be necessary to teach students about scholarship, but they do not teach students how to apply critical thinking to media consumption outside the academy.

26 KIVILUOTO, J.: Information Literacy and Diginatives: Expanding the Role of Academic Libraries. In *International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions,* 2015, Vol. 41, No. 4, p. 309-310.
27 VAN DE VORD, R.: Distance Students and Online Research: Promoting Information Literacy through Media Literacy. In *Internet and Higher Education,* 2010, Vol. 13, No. 3, p. 171.

The real challenge in information and media literacy instruction is conveying to students the implications for ethics in information use and creation. In an information literacy one-shot session, students may be reminded to cite their sources or to only use the resources from the library, but the larger discussion of why is avoided out of a lack of time. In this version of the general studies course, two modules are dedicated to information ethics in the academy and in everyday life. This may be the only time outside a communications, sociology, or political science class where students are schooled in the implications of their own personal communication and consumption of media.

In the unit on information ethics in the academy, students are provided with content related to ethics, intellectual property and copyright concerns, and the campus academic integrity policy. Students review this content and are assigned readings related to violations in professional ethics in the news. Students are asked to evaluate the violation, usually cases of plagiarism or fabricated data, based upon the following criteria:

- How does the context of the information change once you know it is plagiarized or fabricated?
- What could happen to information consumers who do not know the information is plagiarized or fabricated?
- What were some of the consequences for these behaviours?
- How many people do you think plagiarize or fabricate data often?
- What are some of the motivations for plagiarizing or fabricating data?
- Are there situations where these activities are acceptable? Explain.
- Why do you think people are so concerned about these issues?
- How do issues like these apply to education?
- How do issues like these apply in everyday life?

In a face to face seminar, these questions would be part of an ongoing dialogue amongst the class. In the online environment, these questions can be answered individually or via a discussion board. In a one-shot instruction session, unless this was the only topic of discussion, this level of analysis does not happen. In terms of reinforcing basic skills across the curriculum and over time, this is one of the more contentious issues in the academy. In their 2015 article, Kashian, Cruz, Jang, and Silk report, *„[s]tudents need more instruction on plagiarism and seem to appreciate it when they receive it.“*[28] If faculty librarians teach information acquisition, evaluation, and citation, it stands to reason that responsible use of that information should also be a talking point. In the context of media literacy, the creation of information is just as important at the use and interpretation of information. Media literacy focuses on the intent, subtext, and implications of the medium and the message; this also includes the ethical conditions under which the information was created and used. It illustrates the power structure and agenda setting inherent in communication.

The last content module of the course focuses on the ethical use of information in everyday life. Students are asked to read reports on the creation and effects of fake news. They are provided social media examples of fake news, bias, misinformation, and satire. With the criteria they learned to apply to information for academic purposes, students are asked to evaluate these information objects they would normally encounter in their daily lives. Upon evaluating the objects, students are asked to consider, and respond, how accepting and/or sharing this information might affect themselves and others. Students are taught to fact check non-academic information with the hope that this level of self-reflection and agency will deepen their awareness, and even skepticism, of the encoded messages in the media they consume daily. This last

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[28] KASHIAN, N. et al.: Evaluation of an Instructional Activity to Reduce Plagiarism in the Communication Classroom. In *Journal of Academic Ethics*, 2015, Vol. 13, No. 3, p. 252.

module is meant to address the issues of social justice, informed citizenry, and democracy that are so ingrained in media and cultural studies. Without the time and platform to explore these forms of media in opposition to media created for academic or research purposes, most students would not encounter these critical literacies outside a communications or social science classroom.

4. Discussion of Limits in Instruction

There is no argument that information and media literacy are important to student success in or out of the academy. However, at CSUB, there is no general education requirement for coursework in information or media literacy. It is required that faculties integrate the concepts of these skill sets into their own curriculum. While this does support the reinforcement of these skills, it remains undetermined how many faculties actually orient students to the skill sets in the first place. When librarians are consulted to provide instruction, it is often as a result of the students demonstrating to faculties that they do not have these skills, i.e. students are unable to select, evaluate, and synthesize appropriate information for the required assignment. The time allocated to the librarian, is insufficient to introduce students to the necessary skill sets and for them to develop mastery. In tandem, not all disciplines integrate library instruction, so students receive inconsistent training in developing these critical literacy skills.

5. Conclusion and Future Research

At CSUB, the librarians recognize the need for further integration of research and evaluation skills. The unit has developed successful relationships with several departments, across the university. Librarians regularly participate in teaching and learning activities with various campus institutes and centres to better hone their teaching skills but also to make teaching faculties aware of the skills sets and services the library faculty provides with regards to instruction. To better serve the whole campus population, the library needs to investigate developing its own learning community to draw together faculties from all disciplines in defining a single set of information and media literacy competencies outside of each discipline's professional guidelines so students receive consistent messages about information consumption. To further facilitate consistency, the library is also investigating other methods for delivering subject-specific information literacy instruction to students, for elective credit.

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