



Information Studies Program Assessment of Student Learning, 2005-06

Program Mission Statement:

The Information Studies department assists students in becoming lifelong learners by teaching them research and critical thinking skills. It provides students with the opportunity to explore how information and knowledge shapes their lives, their community, and the world. Students become critical users of information, learning how to situate information and knowledge in a diverse global environment. In addition to courses offered to liberal arts students, the Information Studies department offers degree and certificate programs that train students to work in libraries at the paraprofessional level.

Program Learning Outcomes:

At least ninety percent of the students taking INFS 1000: Information Literacy & Research Skills spring semester 2006 will achieve a grade of 70% or higher on the comprehensive INFS 1000 final examination project. The class average score on the INFS 1000 Pre/Post-Test will increase by at least thirty percentage points. Ten subject faculty members will embed the assessment of information literacy in their classes using information literacy assessment rubrics and will report their results.

Outcomes Assessed During 2005-06:

Five outcomes were assessed on the INFS 1000 comprehensive final examination project. The outcomes were assessed using common final exam guidelines and grading rubric. See Appendix A for exam project guidelines and the grading rubric.

- Specify the dimensions of a research topic. Clearly state the scope of your research topic. Develop an appropriate working thesis statement and research questions for your topic. Take appropriate steps to narrow and focus your research topic.
- Develop and articulate a clear research strategy. Clearly articulate the process used to locate and identify resources, documenting the appropriate use of basic and advanced search procedures.
- Identify and use appropriate keywords and subject headings to assist in locating resources.
- Select resources that are appropriate for your research topic and demonstrate why each resource was a good choice and how it supports specific aspects of the topic.
- Evaluate each resource according to specific criteria, such as credibility, authority, accuracy, and reliability.

A common one hundred point true/false, multiple choice, and short answer pre/post test was used in eight sections of INFS 1000 spring semester to assess students conceptual knowledge and skills related to information literacy.

Ten faculty members will use information literacy assessment rubrics to assess information literacy skills in their subject classes. See Appendix B for the pre/post test.

Benchmarks: (what did you assess last year and did it relate to this year's?)

The department assessed students in all sections of INFS 1000 using the same final examination project that we did last year. The way we scored the exam project was somewhat different as we refined our assessment rubric based upon last year's assessment report. The outcomes assessed were the same, however. The 2004-2005 assessment report is available on the Information Literacy course web page at <http://www.minneapolis.edu/library/courses/infs1000/support.htm>.

Assessment Methods Used:

We used a final examination research project with a standardized grading rubric and grading sheet to assess students in all section of INFS 1000.

We used a true/false, multiple choice, short answer Pre & Post Test in all sections of INFS 1000.

Ten faculty from six disciplines developed information literacy assignments and assessment rubrics to use in at least one of their classes.

Student population assessed:

Eight sections of INFS 1000: Information Literacy & Research Skills during spring semester 2006.

Students in six subject disciplines were assessed using rubrics developed by subject faculty in consultation with Tom Eland, Library & Information Studies Department.

Description of the process:

Faculty from eight sections of INFS 1000 used a common grading rubric to score five information literacy competency areas on the final examination project. Faculty then added the totals from each competency area. Scores for each area were broken down by percentage points, 90 – 100% A, 80 – 89% B, 70 – 79 % C, 60 – 69 % D, 59% and below F.

Faculty from eight sections of INFS 1000 used a common pre-test and post-test to assess the conceptual knowledge and skills of students. The scores were tabulated for each student and a class average was calculated. The class averages were combined to create a program average for both the pre-test and post-test.

As a part of the campus project to embed information literacy instruction and assessment into subject courses, Tom Eland worked with ten faculty members from six different disciplines to assess information literacy knowledge and skills. The faculty developed assignments and assessment rubrics that were used with students and a final assessment report was generated. Faculty met together three times over the course of the semester. The initial meeting established the guidelines for the project. At the second meeting faculty shared their experiences developing their assignments and assessment rubrics. At the final meeting faculty shared their results and experiences.

Objective:

The objective for the INFS 1000 final comprehensive examination project is that at least 90% of the students who complete the final exam pass it with a score of 70% or higher. An additional goal is that at least 80% of the students score 70% or higher in each of the five competency areas.

The objective for the INFS 1000 pre/post test is that students move at least 30 percentage points.

The objective for the faculty participating in the embedded information literacy assessment project is that all faculty complete the project and submit a final report.

The Results:

INFS 1000: Information Literacy & Research Skills Final Exam Project

Results Summary:

One hundred sixteen students were assessed using a common grading rubric spring semester 2006. Of the 116 students, 90.7% completed the final exam project with a score of 70% or higher. This result can be broken down further: 42.4% of students completed the exam project with a score between 90 – 100% (A); 26.6% completed the exam project with a score between 80 – 89% (B); 21.7% of students completed the exam project with a score between 70 – 79% (C).

Outcome Objective 1: Specify the dimensions of a research topic. Clearly state the scope of your research topic. Develop an appropriate working thesis statement and research questions for your topic. Take appropriate steps to narrow and focus your research topic.

Students passing this outcome at 70% or higher: 94.8%

Grade break down:

A 90 – 100%: 52 students (44.8%)
B 80 – 89%: 40 students (34.5%)
C 70 – 79%: 18 students (15.5%)
D 60 – 69%: 4 students (3.4%)
F below 59%: 2 students (1.7%)

Outcome Objective 2: Develop and articulate a clear research strategy. Clearly articulate the process used to locate and identify resources, documenting the appropriate use of basic and advanced search procedures.

Students passing this outcome at 70% or higher: 94.8%

Grade break down:

A 90 – 100%: 46 students (39.7%)
B 80 – 89%: 36 students (31%)
C 70 – 79%: 28 students (24.1%)
D 60 – 69%: 2 students (1.7%)
F below 59%: 4 students (3.4%)

Outcome Objective 3: Identify and use appropriate keywords and subject headings to assist locating resources.

Students passing this outcome at 70% or higher: 92.2%

Grade break down:

- A 90 – 100%: 44 students (37.9%)
- B 80 – 89%: 31 students (26.7%)
- C 70 – 79%: 32 students (27.6%)
- D 60 – 69%: 4 students (3.4%)
- F below 59%: 5 students (4.3%)

Outcome Objective 4: Select resources that are appropriate for your research topic and demonstrate why each resource was a good choice and how it supports specific aspects of the topic.

Students passing this outcome at 70% or higher: 86.3%

Grade break down:

- A 90 – 100%: 53 students (45.7%)
- B 80 – 89%: 25 students (21.6%)
- C 70 – 79%: 22 students (19%)
- D 60 – 69%: 8 students (6.9%)
- F below 59%: 8 students (6.9%)

Outcome Object 5: Evaluate each resource according to specific criteria, such as credibility, authority, accuracy, and reliability.

Students passing this outcome at 70% or higher: 85.3%

Grade break down:

- A 90 – 100%: 51 students (43.9%)
- B 80 – 89%: 22 students (19%)
- C 70 – 79%: 26 students (22.4%)
- D 60 – 69%: 7 students (6%)
- F below 59%: 10 students (8.6%)

INFS 1000 Pre-Test and Post-Test Results:

The combined pre-test and post-test scores of students in eight sections were averaged. The total points possible for the pre/post test is 100. The average pre-test score was 49 (F). The average post test score was 78 (high C). Students moved a total of 29% points from the pre-test to the post-test.

Break down by class section:

	Pre	Post	Movement
Section 01:	41	77	36% points
Section 02:	45	72	27% points

Section 03:	60	85	25% points
Section 04:	47	76	29 % points
Section 05:	51	74	23% points
Section 06:	46	82	36% points
Section 30:	53	77	24% points

Embedded Information Literacy Assessment:

Seven faculty members completed the embedded information assessment project and turned in a final report and their assignment and assessment rubrics. The reports and the material were forwarded to the Communication Caucus Chair who will summarize the reports and combine them with the reports submitted by the writing, reading, and speaking assessment sub-committees. Of the seven faculty submitting Information Literacy Assessment Reports four were from English Composition, one from Humanities, one from Reading, and one from Graphic Design.

Observations about the scores:

The department met or exceeded its assessment targets for INFS 1000. We had a 70% completion rate of faculty embedded projects. The INFS 1000 final examination project shows that students complete the course able to demonstrate college level proficiency in information literacy. Students demonstrate this by engaging and documenting the research process. The pre/post test scores show that students made significant movement on their ability to answer conceptual and skills based questions related to information literacy. However, the results show that students are able to score at a higher level when actually doing and documenting the research process, as opposed to answering true/false, multiple choice, and short answer questions related to information literacy concepts and skills.

Completing the Loop: Use of Results (How will you use the results?):

As in the past the Library & Information Studies faculty will use the results to refine the exercises, assignments, exams, and grading rubrics for the course. After discussing the results, and other issues that came up during the year, the faculty is making modifications to all the course assignments, numerous grading rubrics, and the pre/post test. We have put the pre/post test on D2L. Beginning next fall the pre/post test will be given on D2L for every course section. This will allow the test to be scored automatically, with the exception of the last two questions which require students to develop search strategies based upon two research topics.

The faculty will work to achieve an average post-test score above 80%. Faculty will emphasize conceptual knowledge more in lectures and discussions. Much of what is covered in the course is designed to help students succeed in doing and reflecting upon the research process. The success of this approach bears out in the scores on the information literacy final exam project. However, the faculty needs to emphasize the conceptual content of the course more clearly in our lectures and discussions. To be information literate a student must have both high level practical skills as well as conceptual knowledge.

Submitted by: Thomas Eland, Information Studies Department Coordinator.