



Information Studies Program Assessment of Student Learning, 2006-07

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 completing INFS 1000: Information Literacy & Research Skills fall and spring semester 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 twenty-five percentage points.

Outcomes Assessed During 2006-07:

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 the grading rubric.)

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.
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.
3. Identify and use appropriate keywords and subject headings to assist in locating resources.
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.
5. Evaluate each resource according to specific criteria, such as credibility, authority, accuracy, and reliability.

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

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

The department assessed students in eight sections of INFS 1000 fall semester, and sections of INFS 1000 spring semester using the same final examination project that we did in 2005-2006. The exam project was assessed using a common rubric. The department assessed students using a pre/post test spring semester. The department used the same assessment tools, however, this year we included assessment of students in both fall and spring semesters for the final examination project.

Assessment Methods Used:

We used a final examination research project with a standardized grading rubric and grading sheet to assess students in a total of fourteen sections of INFS 1000 fall and spring semesters.

We used a true/false and multiple choice pre/post-test in six sections of INFS 1000 spring semester. The pre/post test was given online through Desire2Learn.

Student population assessed:

Fourteen sections of INFS 1000: Information Literacy & Research Skills were assessed fall and spring semester.

Six sections of INFS 1000 students were assessed using a pre/post-test spring semester.

Description of the process:

Faculty from fourteen 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 six spring semester 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.

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.

The objective for the INFS 1000 pre/post test is that students move at least 25 percentage points.

The Results:

INFS 1000: Information Literacy & Research Skills Final Exam Project Results Summary:

Break down of the 181 students that completed the final competency exam project:

- **92.6%** of students completed the final exam project with a score of 70% or higher.
- 37.8% of students completed the assessed outcomes with a score between 90 – 100% (A)
- 31.8% completed the exam project with a score between 80 – 89% (B)
- 23.0% of students completed the exam project with a score between 70 – 79% (C)
- 3.4% of students completed the exam project with a score between 60 – 69% (D)
- 4.0% of students completed the exam project with a score below 50% (F)

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: 95.6%

Grade break down:

A 90 – 100%: 78 students (43.1%)
B 80 – 89%: 66 students (36.5%)
C 70 – 79%: 29 students (16.0%)
D 60 – 69%: 6 students (3.3%)
F below 59%: 2 students (1.1%)

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: 92.3%

Grade break down:

A 90 – 100%: 61 students (33.7%)
B 80 – 89%: 61 students (33.7%)
C 70 – 79%: 45 students (24.9%)
D 60 – 69%: 10 students (5.5%)
F below 59%: 4 students (2.2%)

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

Students passing this outcome at 70% or higher: 94.5%

Grade break down:

- A 90 – 100%: 63 students (34.8%)
- B 80 – 89%: 58 students (32.1%)
- C 70 – 79%: 50 students (27.6%)
- D 60 – 69%: 2 students (1.1%)
- F below 59%: 8 students (4.4%)

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: 95%

Grade break down:

- A 90 – 100%: 75 students (41.4%)
- B 80 – 89%: 57 students (31.5%)
- C 70 – 79%: 40 students (22.1%)
- D 60 – 69%: 6 students (3.3%)
- F below 59%: 3 students (1.7%)

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: 85.6%

Grade break down:

- A 90 – 100%: 65 students (35.9%)
- B 80 – 89%: 46 students (25.4%)
- C 70 – 79%: 44 students (24.3%)
- D 60 – 69%: 7 students (3.9%)
- F below 59%: 19 students (10.5%)

INFS 1000 Pre-Test and Post-Test Results:

The combined pre-test and post-test scores of students in six spring semester sections were averaged. The total points possible for the pre/post test is 100. The average pre-test score was 58.8 (F). The average post test score was 71.7 (C). Students moved a total of 12.9% points from the pre-test to the post-test.

Break down by class section:

	Pre	Post	Movement
Section 01:	68	76	8% points
Section 03:	49	53	4% points
Section 04:	60	74	14% points
Section 05:	52	74	22% points
Section 29:	64	83	19% points
Section 30:	60	70	10% points

Observations about the scores:

The department exceeded its assessment targets for the final competency examination project. The department did not meet its target related to the pre/post test scores. One reason for this outcome is that many students that completed the pre-test did not complete the post-test which skewed the final results. Both the pre-test and post-test scores were significantly higher than last year because of a change in two questions that are heavily weighted. This drove the total scores upward because students were able to guess the correct answers. The department will rework the questions to reduce students' ability to guess the correct answers.

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 course 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. The department has gone over the pre and post test questions and has modified unclear answers. Faculty teaching INFS 1000 will penalize students who do not complete the pre and post tests which will provide students with an incentive to complete the tests.

The faculty will use the post test results to identify areas of the course that students performed below expected levels and use the information to rethink how we present the material. Faculty will require students to familiarize themselves with material before each class session through required readings and online database tutorials. We hope that this will better prepare students to engage the concepts when they come to class.

Submitted by: Thomas Eland, Information Studies Department Coordinator.

Appendix A: INFS 1000 Final Exam Grading Rubric

Requirement	Insufficient (D or F level)	Basic (C level work)	Proficient (B level work)	Advanced (A level work)
<p><i>The student specified the dimensions of the topic appropriately.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Clearly state the focused topic.</i> • <i>Developed an appropriate working thesis.</i> • <i>Took appropriate steps to narrow and focus the topic.</i> <p>(20 Points Possible)</p>	<p>Topic has an imprecise or unclear focus. The focus needs to be narrowed or clarified.</p> <p>Thesis statement does not clearly state a focused topic, lacks precision. Thesis statement does not clearly lay out the main ideas and issues.</p> <p>Research questions are too broad or vague and do not adequately focus the topic.</p> <p>(Points)</p>	<p>Topic has a discernable focus but lacks precision.</p> <p>Thesis statement addresses the topic but needs more precise focus and precision. There is an argument but it needs to be more clearly stated.</p> <p>Research questions address the topic but need more focus and precision.</p> <p>(Points 14, 14.5, 15, 15.5)</p>	<p>Clear focus on the topic which is adequately precise.</p> <p>Thesis statement that is clear and focused and adequately precise. The argument is adequately stated and precise.</p> <p>Clear, focused and adequately precise research questions.</p> <p>(Points 16, 16.5, 17, 17.5)</p>	<p>Very clear focus that is precise, appropriately narrow, and well articulated.</p> <p>Thesis statement that is very well focused and concise. The argument is clear, focused and well stated.</p> <p>Very clear, concise and well focused research questions.</p> <p>(Points 18, 18.5, 19, 19.5, 20)</p>
<p><i>The student had a clear articulate research strategy.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Clearly articulated the process used to identify and locate resources.</i> • <i>Used search techniques appropriate for the topic.</i> • <i>Used specific and effective search techniques.</i> <p>(20 Points Possible)</p>	<p>Research process is not clearly stated or is confused in its application. Research process does not adequately take account of the topic focus and is much too broad in application.</p> <p>Consistent mistakes are made in applying basic search techniques. Confusion related to application of search terms and search techniques.</p> <p>(Points)</p>	<p>Research process is articulated but needs more focus and clarity.</p> <p>Basic search techniques are adequately applied but no or little demonstration of advanced search strategies, or errors are made in the application of search techniques.</p> <p>(Points 14, 14.5, 15, 15.5)</p>	<p>Clear research process that adequately takes account of the issues related to the topic.</p> <p>Clear use of basic and advanced search techniques. Minor errors in application of search techniques, or lack of connection in search strategies across library resources.</p> <p>(Points 16, 16.5, 17, 17.5)</p>	<p>A clear, concise, and well focused research process that takes into account all the relevant issues related to the topic.</p> <p>Used basic and advanced search techniques very well and has applied the search techniques consistently well across all the library resources.</p> <p>(Points 18, 18.5, 19, 19.5, 20)</p>

<p><i>The student identified keywords and subject headings that were appropriate to the topic.</i></p> <p>(10 Points Possible)</p>	<p>Keywords and subject headings were not useful for the topic focus. Misapplication of keywords and subject headings. Shows a lack of understanding of what subject headings are and how they are to be used.</p> <p>(Points)</p>	<p>Some useful keywords and subject headings that relate to the research focus. Keywords and subject headings may be too broad or need to be combined to be effective.</p> <p>(Points 7, 7.5, 7.75)</p>	<p>Many useful keywords and subject headings that clearly relate to the research focus. Indication that the keywords and subject headings have been combined in useful ways to help focus searching.</p> <p>(Points 8, 8.5, 8.75)</p>	<p>Very useful keywords and subject headings that clearly relate to the research focus. Located sub-headings and connected them appropriately with main subject headings. Combined keywords and main and sub-headings in very useful ways to help focus searching.</p> <p>(Points 9, 9.5, 10)</p>
<p><i>The student selected resources that were appropriate for the topic and demonstrated how each resource supported the thesis statement and research topic.</i></p> <p>(20 Points Possible)</p>	<p>Most resources selected were not appropriate for supporting the topic focus. Little to no consistency in the selected resources and the research topic focus.</p> <p>Little or no demonstration of the appropriateness of resources for topic relevance, or confusion related to resource relevance.</p> <p>(Points)</p>	<p>Most of the resources selected are appropriate for the topic.</p> <p>Demonstration of the appropriateness of resources for topic relevance is adequate for most resources.</p> <p>(Points 14, 14.5, 15, 15.5)</p>	<p>All of the resources selected are appropriate for the topic.</p> <p>Demonstration of the appropriateness of resources is well documented and clearly stated. Good level of detail provided concerning relevance of resources to thesis statement, research questions, and topic focus.</p> <p>(Points 16, 16.5, 17, 17.5)</p>	<p>All of the resources selected are very well focused on the topic or specific sub-aspects of the topic.</p> <p>Demonstration of the appropriateness of resources is very well documented with in-depth analysis of each resource. Clear and detailed explanation of how each resource supports the thesis statement, research questions, and the various aspects of the topic focus.</p> <p>(Points 18, 18.5, 19, 19.5, 20)</p>
<p><i>The student evaluated each resource according to specific evaluation criteria. The student provided clear and specific evaluations.</i></p> <p>(20 Points Possible)</p>	<p>Little or no evidence of evaluation of the resources. Attempts at evaluation were not based on any criteria but were mere assertions of credibility without evidence to support claims.</p> <p>(Points)</p>	<p>Clear evidence of evaluation of most of the resources, but evaluation lacks depth.</p> <p>(Points 14, 14.5, 15, 15.5)</p>	<p>Clear evaluation of resources based upon specific criteria of authority, reliability and bias.</p> <p>(Points 16, 16.5, 17, 17.5)</p>	<p>Strong and in-depth evaluation of all resources based upon specific criteria. Clear understanding of the bias, authority, reliability, and credentials of the author, publisher, or web site sponsor.</p> <p>(Points 18, 18.5, 19, 19.5, 20)</p>