Information Literacy Task Force

FINAL REPORT

December, 2011

Executive Summary

During the fall and spring of 2009-2010 ten teaching faculty members and two library faculty members met twice a month to discuss information literacy at CCBC. The charge to this task force was to: determine the needs of CCBC students to effectively seek and use information in their coursework and programs; and to create an information literacy curriculum, institutional plan, and implementation process and schedule. The group reviewed definitions, current activities, core competencies, roles and responsibilities, assessment, curriculum, faculty/staff development, and relevant technological skills.

The task force made the following recommendations:

1. Information literacy is a cooperative responsibility shared between teaching faculty and library faculty. Teaching faculty should incorporate information literacy into all courses to reinforce information literacy concepts. Teaching faculty should become strong information literacy advocates and resources for their students.

2. The General Education Review Board should ensure that the information literacy core competencies are incorporated (are stated clearly) in all of the general education common course outlines.

3. All non-general education courses should contain information literacy outcomes appropriate to the discipline.

4. All faculty should periodically complete professional development workshops on information literacy.

5. Librarians should work with faculty to increase awareness of, to increase understanding of and to stay current on information literacy knowledge, skills and pedagogy.

6. Teaching faculty are encouraged to serve as the information literacy advocate for their department.

7. Information literacy should be incorporated into the college’s assessment plan.
“Remember when all you needed was one skill and you could earn a living? When people were proud to type, operate a lathe, till the soil, teach the three Rs, sell things, work with numbers, and assemble parts to get on with their daily work life? There are still people who do those things, but for a greater number of us, technology leads us a merry chase around the workplace, making life and work more complicated, demanding ever broadening information age skills—where with the blink of an eye, what you did yesterday isn’t valid today. Is there still one skill we can count on, one skill we can master to fulfill our workplace dreams, regardless of what we do? The answer is yes, and that skill is information literacy, which is being able to locate, access, select, and apply information. Being information literate yields information power.”

Tom W. Goad, organizational consultant, trainer and author from his book
Information Literacy and Workplace Performance (2002)

Introduction
During the fall and spring of 2009-2010 ten teaching faculty members and two library faculty members met twice a month to discuss information literacy at CCBC. The charge to this task force was to: determine the needs of CCBC students to effectively seek and use information in their coursework and programs; and to create an information literacy curriculum, institutional plan, and implementation process and schedule.

The task force discussions proved to be lively and enlightening. The discussion topics covered at these meetings included the following aspects of information literacy:

- Definitions
- Current activities
- Core Competencies
- Roles and responsibilities
- Assessment
- Curriculum
- Faculty and staff development
- Relevant technological skills
The results of those meetings have been put forth in this report on the current state of information literacy at CCBC and recommendations on how to more broadly and deeply infuse information literacy throughout the curriculum.
**Information Literacy Task Force Members**

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<th>Lois Artes</th>
<th>Melissa Lane</th>
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<td>Stephanie Briggs</td>
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<td>Barb Hill</td>
<td>Jeanine Williams</td>
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<td>Cynthia Roberts, Co-chair</td>
<td>Gretchen Wright, Co-chair</td>
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**Background**

An information literacy faculty survey was undertaken by CCBC in 2005 to assess the level of information literacy required of our students and the degree to which support was provided (Appendix A). Students were also surveyed to provide triangulated data. Fifty-four faculty responded and 787 students responded. Some of the students had received library instruction and some had not. The conclusions were that more classes should have a research component with the assignments spelled out very specifically, the concept of plagiarism should be taught to all, and more instructional attention should be given to selection of sources and evaluation of websites. A recommendation from the study was that faculty and librarian needed to work more collaboratively to teach “the complex skills of information literacy and to achieve the College’s information literacy goals.”

An additional recommendation came from the CCBC Periodic Review Report prepared for Middle States and dated May 25, 2007, that, “The infusion of information literacy into the curriculum and appropriate outcomes assessment should be addressed as soon as possible.

To respond to these recommendations, the librarians on the three campuses acted to infuse information literacy by:

- offering information literacy workshops for all new faculty
- teaching workshops on College professional days
- developing a web site on information literacy
- creating web-site content on how to create information literacy assignments.

In addition, during 2008 using the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education as a guide, the library instruction coordinators developed a list of core competencies for information literacy for CCBC students. These core competencies, adopted by the library faculty, were then used as a guide to complete a more comprehensive chart which linked the ACRL standard to classroom practices. This chart (Appendix D) is used to guide the instruction program at CCBC.
Current State of Information Literacy at CCBC

Each semester the CCBC Instructional Librarians promote information literacy to faculty through orientations, presentations at divisional meetings and other college forums such as the TLR Fair, New Faculty Learning Community and Professional Development Day. At these professional development sessions faculty members are also informed of new resources and services that the library offers.

Also each semester the CCBC Instructional Librarians promote the instruction program to faculty by contacting faculty individually and sending e-mail letters to faculty to invite them to bring their classes for information literacy sessions. Information literacy sessions are conducted in the library computer labs and in individual classrooms on each campus. All information literacy sessions taught by librarians are tailored toward the students’ assignments and may include how to access the library webpage from on and off campus; how to develop an appropriate search strategy to retrieve the best results; how to locate materials both online and in the libraries; and how to evaluate materials needed for the students’ research.

The librarian instructors are also working towards embedding librarians in various courses. At present, there are two English 101 classes with embedded librarians, that is, instruction librarians who have a semester long presence in a class, creating an integrated library instruction program. In addition, instruction librarians also serve on semester end critique panels for Speech classes.

The librarians also compile Tutorials, Research Guides, Quick Guides and other handouts and class assignment web pages for individual classes as needed.

Information Literacy (IL) Session Statistics for Academic Year 2009/2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>IL Sessions</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Hours of Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catonsville</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>4998</td>
<td>364.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dundalk</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>3133</td>
<td>122.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essex</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>3362</td>
<td>187.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>722</strong></td>
<td><strong>11493</strong></td>
<td><strong>674.65</strong></td>
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</table>

A recent faculty survey was conducted in spring 2011 (See Appendix B). Three quarters or more of the 237 faculty who responded reported that they frequently or often required students to do the following: determine the type of information that is needed to complete an assignment; find information from different kinds of sources; evaluate information and sources for relevance, authority, credibility and timelines; use selected information to complete assignments effectively; and acknowledge the use of another person’s ideas. More important, the same proportions indicated that they provided assistance
frequently or often with these tasks. A copy of the survey instrument with responses is included at the end of this report. These results represent an enormous improvement over the results from the 2005 survey in all of the areas of concern.

Nevertheless, despite the extensive efforts by our fourteen member faculty of librarians, it is clear that in this information rich age, CCBC must continue its efforts by implementing an even more extensive, intentional, and formal instructional program for information literacy. This will require collaboration of the entire college. The recommendations in this report spell out the definitions, mission statement, core competencies, learning outcomes, program outcomes, and implementation steps to achieve this goal.

**Definitions**

The American Library Association (ALA, 2009) defines information literacy as not only the ability to recognize the need for information, but also the ability to find, evaluate, and use applicable information in a principled and conclusive manner (p. 1). Furthermore, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (n.d.) indicates that institutional saturation in information literacy fosters student acquisition of these necessary life skills (p. 43).

We at CCBC accept the following major salient sources as our guides for core competencies for information literate students. These major sources are:


The rapid change in format and delivery of information from print to digital resources created confusion among students and faculty about the connection between computer/digital literacy and information literacy. The concept of information literacy cannot be reduced to the ability to use a computer to search a database.

The following graphic illustrates how the concept of information literacy draws from a number of other literacies to create the multifaceted process of conducting research and effectively using the information discovered.
CCBC Library Instruction Mission Statement

In addition to holding the above definitions of information literacy to be true, the library faculty at CCBC have developed and accepted the following statements:

*The mission of the CCBC library instruction program is to develop information-seeking abilities in the CCBC community. Librarians collaborate with faculty to provide instruction in gathering, evaluating, and applying information for life-long learning. The program promotes ACRL information literacy core competencies, which state that an information literate individual is capable of:

- Identifying the information need;
- Finding the information;
- Evaluating the information;
- Using the information effectively and ethically.

Information Literacy Core Competencies

I. **For 000-Level Course Instruction**, students should be able to
   - Understand library services, e.g. circulation, reference, reserves, media, interlibrary loan;
   - Find library hours, fines, loan periods, staff contact and service policies;
   - Use the Internet to find specific information online;
   - Use general and specific dictionaries, thesauri, encyclopedias, atlases, and handbooks;
   - Use library catalog to find a book by author, title, keyword, and publisher;
   - Locate a book using Library of Congress call numbers
   - Understand what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it;
   - Understand what constitutes a bibliographic citation;

II. **For 100-Level Course Instruction**, students should be able to
• Choose an appropriate topic for research;
• Choose appropriate keywords for searching;
• Understand the difference between magazines and journals;
• Understand and execute a Boolean search;
• Determine what kind of information is an appropriate format;
• Locate full-text information with a bibliographic citation;
• Critically evaluate information by examining authenticity, currency, validity, and reliability;

III. **For 200-Level Course Instruction**, students should be able to
• Choose appropriate subject headings for searching;
• Choose appropriate databases to find information in specific disciplines;
• Understand the difference between subject vs. keyword searching;
• Understand the difference between primary and secondary sources;
• Understand what indexes are and know how to use them;
• Understand intellectual property and copyright issues;
• Write an annotated bibliography;
• Critically select and use information for a variety of assignments.

**Collaboration with Faculty**

While Middle States (n.d.) acknowledges that successful educational programs produce information literate students (p. 40), institutions are free to produce individualized literacy goals and provide requisite staff development (pp. 43-44). In spite of resultant variance in staff development approaches and opportunities, there appears to be a unified movement toward shared participation and accountability in teaching information literacy skills throughout academic communities (Ratteray, 2002, p. 374).

In other words, the responsibility for teaching information literacy does not solely lie with the library faculty and in fact the teaching faculty are now being called upon to shoulder this responsibility equally with their librarian colleagues. Information literacy should be diffused across all discipline areas of the college and reinforced by all faculty—teaching and library. Teaching faculty and library faculty should cooperate to ensure that CCBC students graduate with the fullest information literacy training possible.

With regard to the need for information literacy on campus to extend into all facets of the institution’s primary mission – that of educating its students – it is necessary for the goal of enhanced information literacy to be a collaborative effort between various levels of the institution’s faculty; specifically, library and academic faculty must work together with a clear and common purpose that is supported by the institution’s administration.

Teaching faculty should be advised of the fact that those charged with the administration, operation, and maintenance of the library facilities, including its various components, are faculty members with
whom collaboration is a necessity. This would call for a “shift in frame,” abandoning an outdated model where “library workers” are perceived as being separate and distinct from teaching faculty. Several examples of how the responsibility for information literacy has been shared with course faculty in a few sections of the Accelerated Learning Program or in the Learning Communities is appended to this report.

In a new model where teaching and library faculty recognize the common goal of enhanced ability of students to obtain, work with, and critically analyze the extant information that is available in their various fields of study, collaboration is the only means by which this goal is attainable. The task force, therefore, recommends that steps be taken to create this new culture of collaboration and cohesiveness to the ultimate benefit of the students of CCBC.

**Information Literacy: Student Learning Outcomes**

The recommended Student Learning Outcomes correspond with the three tiers of core competencies stated earlier.

1. **Tier One: College Readiness courses, which would include ACDV and Developmental Education**

For student learning outcomes that are expected to be acquired in K through 12, the following are appropriate for our beginning freshmen:

- Use call numbers to locate materials
- Find books using author, title, keyword and subject headings
- Retrieve periodicals online and in print
- Distinguish between print and e-resources
- Know how to use the interlibrary loan service
- Use reference materials to get an overview of the topic
- Recognize a bibliography
- Understand plagiarism issues

2. **Tier Two: 100 Level General Education courses**

For student learning outcomes that are expected in beginning college level work the following are appropriate for our freshman level courses. These outcomes represent the basic research process.

- Ask a focused research question
- Narrow a broad topic to a specific aspect/Expand a topic which is too narrow
- Formulate a thesis statement
- Identify key words related to the research topic
- Use appropriate commands (such as Boolean operators) for database searches
• Identify types of resources using their corresponding bibliographic format
• Distinguish between popular and scholarly resources
• Distinguish between citation, abstract and full text information
• Evaluate the credibility of the resources based on points of view, accuracy, scope and author credentials
• Summarize key information and abstract major content from resources
• Recognize the differences between citing, quoting and paraphrasing
• Cite sources in an appropriate format

3. Tier Three: Other discipline based courses, 200-Level course instruction

For student learning outcomes that are expected in higher level college work the following research process activities are appropriate for our discipline specific courses:

• Locate and use course specific research guides and databases
• Differentiate between primary and secondary sources
• Evaluate websites based on currency, reliability and validity
• Prepare an annotated bibliography
• Manipulate information found in resources to create a new product (PowerPoint, speech, etc)
• Present new information individually to different audiences
• Present new information in a group setting (collaborative learning)
**Recommendations**

1. **Information literacy is a cooperative responsibility shared between teaching faculty and library faculty.** Teaching faculty should incorporate information literacy into all courses to reinforce information literacy concepts. Teaching faculty should become strong information literacy advocates and resources for their students.

   **Implementation:**
   - The Office of Instruction should work with the CCBC school deans to identify courses where each level of information literacy tasks are introduced to ensure that all certificate and degree students receive the necessary instruction. Courses should be selected to reach the largest number of enrolled students.
   - Teaching faculty and librarians should collaborate to develop assignments that will insure that information literacy objectives are met.
   - Librarians should develop active learning sessions. They will work with faculty to develop handouts and written exercises to support classes and independent exploration by students.
   - Teaching faculty should periodically attend information literacy appropriate training to refresh their skills and knowledge.
   - Library faculty staffing levels should be evaluated to ensure Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) guidelines are being met.

2. **The General Education Review Board should ensure that the information literacy core competencies are incorporated and stated clearly in all of the general education common course outlines.**

   **Implementation:** General Education--In order to infuse information literacy into the college curriculum the library needs to align information literacy instruction with the student learning outcomes in General Education.
   - A link needs to exist between the work of the Information Literacy Taskforce and the General Education Review Board; therefore, a member of the Information Literacy Taskforce should be charged to liaise between the library and the General Education Review Board.
   - General Education Review Board should address the incorporation of information literacy outcomes in every General Education course and make sure that information literacy is clearly articulated in each General Education course syllabus and common graded assignment.
• Information literacy should be assessed separately in each of the common graded assignments (GREATS). The critical thinking piece of information literacy needs to be assessed and not simply the use of technology. (for example, look at and assess the student’s bibliography)

• General Education faculty should periodically attend information literacy workshops to update their knowledge and skills

• Conduct a survey of General Education faculty to identify the existing assignments that incorporate information literacy outcomes and to determine faculty satisfaction with their students’ work on these assignments

3. All non-general education courses should contain information literacy requirements appropriate to the discipline.

**Implementation:** Curriculum and Instruction Committee - Every major and career program should adopt the same or similar goals and integrate information literacy into coursework. Eventually, all classes on campus will have information literacy goals and assignments that build information literacy skills.

• A library instruction coordinator should be charged to liaise between the library and the Curriculum and Instruction Committee

• Information literacy outcomes should be incorporated into the common course outlines (CCO) under the CCO section “Topics to be Addressed”

4. All faculty should periodically complete professional development workshops on information literacy.

**Implementation:**

• Workshops would be offered through the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and this training would be directed by the Office of Instruction.

• Professional development workshops could include: Information literacy skills and concepts for teaching faculty; librarian collaboration with teaching faculty to provide classroom guidance, materials, instruction and training; and workshops that highlight best practices where teaching and library faculty present successful collaborative classroom efforts

• CCBC should host an Information Literacy workshop on campus bringing in a professional/nationally known speaker and developer (such as Dr. Terry Mech, Library Director at King’s College in Wilkes-Barre Pennsylvania)
5. Librarians should work with faculty to increase awareness and understanding of information literacy skills and pedagogy.

**Implementation:** Librarians should perform the following activities:

- Attend School meetings at least once per year
- Regularly schedule librarian outreach to Schools/Departments to determine training needs, database needs, and conduct workshops to address these needs
- Create a “Faculty Toolbox” for instructors to use when incorporating information literacy principles into their courses
- Work with IT staff to develop a self-paced on-line tutorial on CCBC Information Literacy competencies
- Create library guides for each discipline.
- Using SharePoint and/or Microsoft Outlook, the librarians should disseminate short information literacy tips on a routine basis.
- Create librarian/teaching faculty focus groups that concentrate on the use of technology and the critical thinking aspects of information literacy.

6. Teaching faculty are encouraged to serve as the information literacy advocate for their department.

**Implementation:**

- The Office of Instruction should include the role of departmental information literacy advocate as a possible activity in the College and Community Service section of the APS.

7. Information literacy should be incorporated into the college's assessment plan.

**Implementation:** Assessment—there should need to be assessment instruments designed to test students’ understanding of information literacy.

- GREATS assignments should be assessed for information literacy components
- Librarians should work with LOAAB to develop a method of assessing information literacy based on the library core concepts
- Conduct an Information Literacy LOA Project that in the Fall of 2011 to be administered to all English 101 classes (See Appendix F).
Additional References


