Reduce > Reuse > Recycle: Teaching ACRL's 5th Information Literacy Competency Standard

Catherine Cardwell, Amy F. Fyn and Carol A. Singer

Overview

Colleges and universities have a growing concern about the increase in plagiarism on their campuses, so they use a variety of strategies to detect and prevent plagiarism, from computer software and honor codes to zero tolerance policies. However, Blum (2009), an anthropologist at the University of Notre Dame, contends that relying on fear tactics is not an effective strategy because it does little to change the understanding of a complex issue. Students live in a world where "sharing and sociability are valued, solitude and selfishness are deplored. . . . Accusations of plagiarism are at odds with the positive value placed on working collaboratively on producing a joint project, making a team effort" (p. 90). Consequently, students have very little understanding of the value placed on citing sources and originality in academic work.

In this environment it is no surprise that the fifth ACRL standard is one that resonates with faculty. Gullikson (2006) published in the *Journal of Academic Librarianship* the results of a study she conducted about faculty attitudes toward the ACRL *Information Literacy Competency Standards*. In her study, the outcome perceived to be most important among faculty is 5.2.f: "Demonstrates an understanding of what constitutes plagiarism and does not represent work attributable to others as his/her own." Given the current concern on college and university campuses about

plagiarism, the importance faculty place on the fifth ACRL standard, and student attitudes about intellectual property, it is essential that librarians find appropriate ways to contribute to discussions about academic honesty and to propose a variety of constructive approaches toward prevention of plagiarism. In fact, Blum insists that this is the best solution for faculty and institutions wanting to raise awareness of academic honesty and related issues.

History of the Course

At Bowling Green State University (BGSU), we created an online course, LIB 2250: *Information Seeking and Management in Contemporary Society*, to improve students' information literacy skills. The course was organized around the five ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. We divided the course into distinct modules that built upon each other. In the final module, we raised awareness about how to avoid plagiarism, while moving away from relying on fear tactics to educate students about appropriate academic behavior.

The University Libraries already offered a self-guided tour to first-year English classes to introduce students to basic information literacy skills. LIB 2250 was intended to build on the knowledge students gained in their first year by improving their information literacy skills and understanding of the information environment. At the time we formed the development team, the rules for general education courses had recently changed and there was now a category that could include an information literacy course. We anticipated that LIB 2250 would be taken by sophomores, who were ready to expand their ability to be good consumers of information and ready to explore the subject-specific resources of their majors. We hoped that LIB 2250 would

***Cardwell** (Interim Vice Provost of Academic Programs),*
***Fyn** (Reference & Instruction Librarian)* and
***Singer** (Reference & Instruction Librarian)*
Bowling Green State University [Bowling Green, OH]

increase their chances of success in upper-division courses that require students to write longer, more research-intensive papers.

From the beginning of the development process, we planned to design a totally online, three-credit hour course, utilizing readings, videos, and other online materials instead of requiring the students to purchase a book. In addition to assigned readings, tutorials and videos, learning activities included participation in discussion board activities and research-based assignments.

CONTENTS OF COURSE MODULE ON STANDARD FIVE

The final module in LIB 2250, *Using Information Ethically and Legally*, directly engages ACRL Standard Five: "The information literate student understands many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally." Standard Five recognizes that students must learn the issues surrounding information usage, specifically the ethical and legal uses of information and its technology.

The primary learning outcomes for the final module are that students will be able to:

• Demonstrate an understanding of intellectual property, copyright, and fair use of copyrighted material.

• Accurately cite sources using the APA citation style guide.

Lecture materials from two library sites along with the Online Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue coach students on how to avoid plagiarism. The BGSU Code of Academic Conduct (Academic Honesty Policy) guides students to specific university policy on plagiarism, including consequences of academic dishonesty.

After learning about avoiding academic plagiarism, students are given three scenarios involving potential plagiarism. These scenarios were taken from Rawson's (2007) lessons on detecting and avoiding plagiarism, available on the American Historical Association's web site.

The scenarios provide a basis for a discussion on whether plagiarism occurred in each scenario. Students may also recommend how instructors and school personnel should respond to the scenario.

Non-academic occurrences of plagiarism are also included in the module materials. For the discussion board activity, students read articles on theft of musical performance recordings, music, sermons, literary plots, and a high profile academic plagiarism case.

These readings broaden the plagiarism conversation by exploding misperceptions of plagiarism as only relevant to written text. Music sampling, the finite ways tunes or words can be combined, or bible verses dissected, are all part of the discussion.

An exercise on identifying plagiarism gives students a chance to see concrete examples of potential errors in writing and to gain practice recognizing appropriate or inappropriate citation or use of material. Most of the questions were taken from exercise three of Rawson's Curricular Materials for History Instructors, from the American Historical Association's web site. A quiz on the module contents rounds out the module and tests understanding of the issues presented.

SUGGESTED WAYS TO REPACKAGE MATERIALS FROM THE ONLINE MODULE FOR OTHER TEACHING SITUATIONS

Although we wrote the materials in this module for an online course, they are also appropriate for use in a classroom setting. The lesson plan is divisible and scalable and can easily be modified for use as part of a one-shot library instruction session, as a stand-alone research seminar, as a faculty development workshop, or as a train-the-trainer seminar.

The following are suggested ways to repackage the materials for a variety of teaching situations so that librarians at other institutions are able to contribute to discussions on their campuses. A complete list of links to resources can be found on the LibGuide that accompanies this presentation. Bolded items correspond to categories on the LibGuide, which is available at http://libguides.bgsu.edu/loex2009. For your convenience we have included our plagiarism quiz and an answer key in the appendix to this paper.

One-Shot Library Instruction Sessions (Course-Integrated)

NOTE: When you provide a course-related instruction session, work with the course instructor to integrate one of these ideas.

• Suggestion: Along with a course faculty member, conduct the Identifying Plagiarism Activity. (See **Activities & Assessment**)

• Suggestion: Along with a course faculty member, review the APA guidelines and have students complete the APA Citation Practice Activity. (See **Lecture Materials — Citing sources using APA Citation Style** and **Activities & Assessment**)

• Suggestion: Explore student perception and knowledge of plagiarism by using some of the scenarios from the American Historical Association's website for a discussion on plagiarism [Graduate Students Exercise 2: Discussion Questions, at: http://www.historians.org/governance/pd/curriculum/

plagiarism_exercises.htm#grad]. At the end of discussing each scenario, have the course faculty member reinforce the key issues by exploring how s/he handles plagiarism in classes.

Discussions can involve the entire class, or students can be grouped into sets of four or five, given different scenarios, allow discussion and then have the groups each choose a speaker to report out the scenario and the group consensus. (See **Discussion Boards—Discussion Questions**)

Stand-Alone Research Seminar

• Suggestion: Offer a research seminar on intellectual property to students in the campus community. Once you have a list of participants, send them an email asking them to read the articles listed on the Discussion Board to prepare for a discussion about academic honesty and intellectual property. During the seminar, use the suggested questions to guide the discussion. If you want to reach a broader audience you may want to partner with your campus writing center or other student success office. (See **Discussion Board)**

• Suggestion: Invite students to participate in an online research seminar, which you deliver via a blog or your campus course management software. Have students read articles listed on the Discussion Board. The number of questions you use may depend on the length of the seminar. If you have a large group, you may want to break participants into groups of five. (See **Discussion Board**)

Faculty Development Workshop

NOTE: We recommend that you work with your campus teaching & learning center in order to increase faculty participation.

• Suggestion: Hold a brown bag lunch or workshop for faculty on the topics of plagiarism and intellectual property. Have faculty read all or several of the articles suggested in the discussion board. (See **Discussion Board)**

• Suggestion: Offer a faculty development workshop during which faculty members redesign an assignment or their syllabus in order to increase awareness of academic honesty. To jumpstart the discussion at the workshop, have faculty read Jaschik's (2009) article "It's culture, not morality" in *Inside Higher Ed*. (See **Lecture Materials**)

Train-the-Trainer Seminar

NOTE: Instruction librarians typically focus on teaching students to find and evaluate information. Use the material from the module to expand teaching repertoires.

• Suggestion: In a library instruction meeting, have your colleagues read Jaschik's (2009) article "It's culture, not morality" in *Inside Higher Ed*. Then ask them individually or as a group to figure out ways to join the campus conversation on academic honesty as well as ways to incorporate materials about citing sources and academic honesty into their course-related sessions. (See **Lecture Materials**)

• Suggestion: Read your institution's academic honesty policy and as a group discuss ways that you can contribute to students' understanding of the policy. Then ask each librarian to redesign a one-shot instruction session to include at least some information about the policy. We recommend making this additional material conversational rather than threatening.

• Suggestion: Students live in a world of greater online "socialibility" with blogs, wikis, Second Life, and more. Some students may want to cite information found in one of these sources. Figure out ways or guidelines to help students cite these sources.

Module in a Credit Bearing Course

• Suggestion: Use all of the content and structure as a module in an online course. The materials can also be used in a face-to-face classroom.

REFERENCES

Association of College and Research Libraries. (2000, January 18). *Information literacy competency standards for higher education.* Retrieved from http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/standards/informationliteracycompetency.cfm

Blum, S. (2009). *My word!: Plagiarism and college culture.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Gullikson, S. (2006). Faculty perceptions of ACRL's Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. *Journal of Academic Librarianship, 32,* 583-592. Retrieved from Academic Search Complete database.

Jaschik, S. (2009, February 3). It's culture, not morality. *Inside Higher Ed.* Retrieved from http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2009/02/03/myword

Rawson, M. (2007, April 26). *Plagiarism: Curricular materials for history instructors.* American Historical Association. Retrieved from http://www.historians.org/governance/pd/curriculum/plagiarism_intro.htm

Plagiarism Quiz

1. Downloading a paper from the Web and turning it in is not plagiarism.

    a. True
    b. False

2. According to the BGSU Code of Academic Conduct, turning in a paper you wrote for another class is academic dishonesty.

    a. True
    b. False

3. Pretend you wrote down the perfect statistics for your article. However, you don't remember where you found them. What should you do?

    a. Go ahead and use them
    b. Make up a source
    c. Summarize them in the text of the paper
    d. Find the original source

4. It's okay to use anything you found on the Internet because it's all in the public domain and freely available.

    a. True
    b. False

5. If you paraphrase something you read in an article, do you still have to give the source?

    a. Yes
    b. No

For questions 6-10, use the 5th edition of the *APA Style Manual*, as referenced in the readings for this module.

6. According to the 5th edition of the APA Style Manual, which is the correct way of citing a book in a reference list?

    a. Mullen, Thomas, The Last Town on Earth. New York: Random House, 2006.
    b. Mullen, T. (2006) The Last town on earth. New York: Random House.
    c. Mullen, Thomas. (2006) *The Last Town on Earth*. New York: Random House.
    d. Mullen, T. (2006). *The last town on earth*. New York: Random House.

7. According to the 5th edition of the APA Style Manual, if you were listing a scholarly journal article

in a reference list, which citation would be correct?

    a. Engler, J., et al. (2008, May). Keeping Up With the Joneses: Students' Perceptions of Academically Dishonest Behavior. *Teaching of Psychology, 35*(2), 99-102.
    b. Engler, J., Landau, J., & Epstein, M. (2008, May). Keeping up with the Joneses: Students' perceptions of academically dishonest behavior. *Teaching of Psychology, 35*(2), 99-102.
    c. Engler, Jennifer N., Landau, Joshua D. & Epstein, Maya (2008). *Keeping Up With the Joneses: Students' Perceptions of Academically Dishonest Behavior*. <u>Teaching of Psychology</u>, *35*(2), 99-102.
    d. Engler, J., Landau, J., & Epstein, M. Keeping Up With the Joneses: Students' Perceptions of Academically Dishonest Behavior. *Teaching of Psychology, 35*(2), (May 2008): 99-102.

8. According to the 5th edition of the APA Style Manual, which of the following is the correct way to list in a reference list a magazine article found using a database?

    a. "How to live to 100". (June 2008). *Glamour, 106* (6), 95. Retrieved June 5, 2008 from MasterFILE Premier database.
    b. How to Live to 100 [Electronic version]. (2008, June). *Glamour, 106* (6), 95. Retrieved June 5, 2008, from MasterFILE Premier database.
    c. How to live to 100. (2008, June). *Glamour, 106* (6), 95. Retrieved June 5, 2008, from MasterFILE Premier database.
    d. How to live to 100. [2008, June]. <u>Glamour</u>, v.106, no. 6, p. 95. Found online in MasterFILE Premier database.

9. According to the 5th edition of the *APA Style Manual*, your list of references should be in order by:

    a. Alphabetically by the author's last name
    b. Alphabetically by the title of the article or book
    c. Ordered by the publication date of the source
    d. Alphabetically by the title of the journal or magazine

10. According to the 5th edition of the APA Style Manual, if you included an article in your list of references that had four authors, how would you list their names?

    a. Smith, J., et al.
    b. Smith, J., Brown, E. M., Jones, A., & Johnson, J. D.
    c. Smith J, Brown EM, Jones A, & Johnson JD.
    d. Smith, James, Brown, Edward M., Jones, Andrew, & Johnson, Julius D.

Answer Key-- Plagiarism Quiz

1. False **(b)**

2. True **(a)**

3. Find the original source **(d)**

4. False **(b)**

5. Yes **(a)**

6. Mullen, T. (2006). *The last town on earth*. New York: Random House. **(d)**

7. Engler, J., Landau, J., & Epstein, M. (2008, May). Keeping up with the Joneses: Students' perceptions of academically dishonest behavior. *Teaching of Psychology, 35*(2), 99-102. **(b)**

8. How to live to 100. (2008, June). *Glamour, 106* (6), 95. Retrieved June 5, 2008, from MasterFILE Premier database. **(c)**

9. Alphabetically by the author's last name **(a)**

10. Smith, J., Brown, E. M., Jones, A., & Johnson, J. D. **(b)**