

# INFORMATION LITERACY FOR GLOBAL LEADERSHIP: CONSTRUCTING A PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITY TO ADDRESS A GLOBAL CRISIS UTILIZING GLOBAL LITERACIES AND ACRL STANDARDS

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## INTRODUCTION

According to Massey (2011), librarians have been teaching the importance of using information resources for quite some time. Information resources may have changed in appearance, but presently, the knowledge of how to acquire and use them appropriately is needed more than ever. Association of Colleges and Research Libraries (ACRL) has developed the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education, a set of five standards expressed in measureable outcomes for assessing the information literacy skills of students in higher education. This set has been fully endorsed by the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) and adopted by Regent University Library (RUL).

ACRL (2000) defines “information literacy” as a set of abilities requiring individuals to “recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively, the needed information.” Today’s graduates from k-12 schools, public and private colleges need access to information more than ever. In fact, it has been suggested that “information literacy” functions to support both personal and academic goals. In a phone conversation, the Library Director of Pima Community College, West campus stated,

“Information literacy could be described as a “life skill” that will serve a person throughout their careers and personal lives.”

– J. LaBuda , personal communication, February, 2011

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Moreover, research shows that in order to meet the needs of our students, information literacy competencies should be incorporated across curricula, in all campus programs and services. Therefore, collaboration between faculty, librarians and administrators must be established and maintained.

## ROLE OF LIBRARIANS

I believe that the role of librarians has increasingly become more complex and challenging for librarians in higher education. I would also agree with Massey (2011) that librarians have a significant role to play in enhancing information literacy programs in an academic setting thus ensuring the legitimacy and future institutional support of library instruction. Whether it is taught or not, many academic institutions are calling for librarians to have knowledge of learning theories, learning styles, curriculum development and be trained how to teach – and exhibit the qualities of a good teacher. Parker J. Palmer, author of *The Courage to Teach* stated that “good teaching cannot be reduced to technique, but good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher...know who you are.” (Palmer, 2007, p. 10).

In 2011, I was asked to develop the information literacy module of the Teachers Scholar Program (TSP), a one-year long professional development course created to prepare all new faculty to be able to teach with a global focus. For me, it was an opportunity to contribute to the Quality Enhancement Program (QEP) initiatives and collaborate with Regent’s Center for Teaching & Learning. Frankly, it was also a time to think more deeply about what teaching meant to me as a librarian, and how I might help promote information literacy and global literacies to new teaching faculty. As a librarian/educator, it was equally important for me to remember “that we must not only find an approach to teaching that respects the diversity of

teachers and subjects” (Palmer, 2007, p. 13).

## **QEP & GLOBAL LEADERSHIP**

Like other academic institutions accredited by The Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), Regent has an ambitious and rigorous QEP in place. A look at its vision to become a leading global Christian university, and the motto “Christian Leadership to Change the World,” it is understandable why “globalism” is so important to its mission. Regent has nationally recognized graduates – governors, senators, award winning teachers, founding pastors, well-known screenplay writers, winners of American Bar Association Awards, including university presidents. A closer look reveals that Regent has highly-trained faculty from around the world, 39 denominations are represented by faculty, students and staff, while the students represent all 50 states and 82 different countries, including a population rate of 35% ethnic minorities.

The purpose of Regent’s QEP is to increase global competence of students. To achieve its goal, there are three objectives:

- Increase global learning in academic programs,
- Enhance faculty expertise in global teaching & learning, and
- Become a leading resource for global learning.

Regent’s QEP has four student outcomes that will help it to achieve the overall goal:

- See – global perspective,
- Connect – intercultural engagement,
- Learn – information literacy, and
- Lead - global leadership.

The QEP goals and outcomes impact all faculty and students at Regent, including the staff and surrounding community – providing opportunities to interact in global diverse settings, and participate in global activities that contribute to the preparation of global leadership. Another important aspect is the Regent’s Global Leadership and Entrepreneurship (GLE) program, which focuses on preparing the students to think, act and lead as global leaders. With this in mind, I decided to do a literature review on global leadership before creating the information literacy module for the TSP.

## **INCLUDING INFORMATION LITERACY IN THE TSP**

Upon doing a literature review, I came across an article by Jeffrey S. Brooks and Anthony H. Normore (2010). In the article, the authors argued that contemporary educational leaders must develop global literacy in nine specific knowledge domains: political literacy, economic literacy, cultural literacy, moral literacy, pedagogical literacy, information literacy, organizational literacy, spiritual and religious literacy, and

temporal literacy; and more importantly, how the nine literacies were interconnected. I marveled over the abstract word, “glocalization” defined as having a meaningful integration of local and global dynamics. Brooks and Normore refer to Weber (2007) who sees the word as being relevant to education, but still absent in journals of educational leadership. After reading the article, I concluded that I would use it to build the information literacy module for the TSP.

## **COLLABORATION**

Since the Director of the School of Global Leadership and Entrepreneurship, and the Assistant Vice President of Online Learning and Instructional Technology spearheaded the TSP, I contacted them to let them know about the articles and the ideas I had for developing the course. Both of them were pleased with the articles and my ideas for developing the information literacy module for the TSP.

In examining the TSP already in place, I learned that the participants had already discussed learning theories, learning styles, and Bloom’s taxonomy; learned how to integrate faith from a biblical perspective into all curriculum; used the latest technologies; and much more. The posting of questions and threads to the discussion board was expected, as well as completing assignments to submit into folders. More importantly, the TSP course included a learning module from each department on campus, making it an interdisciplinary project. This further confirmed my need to think about global literacies as the theme for the information literacy module.

## **OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES**

Although I had only one week to teach the information literacy module, I believe it was a great opportunity for future collaborations. Below are the objectives and outcomes for developing the information literacy module.

### **Learning Objectives:**

Faculty will identify, evaluate, use and generate information from a global perspective in both their pedagogical practices and research activities. Upon completion of this module, Teacher-Scholars should be able to:

- Develop a sound understanding of what constitutes information literacy (ACRL Standards & AAHE).
- Understand how information literacy is important to their discipline.
- Incorporate information literacy skills into their scholarship and practice.
- Demonstrate how to incorporate information literacy into their course assignments.
- Become familiar with a variety of literacy perspectives.
- Identify global sources of discipline specific

information.

**Related Teacher-Scholar Program Outcomes:**

This module contributes to the fulfillment of the following program goals. Participating faculty members will:

- Feel welcomed and valued in the Teacher-Scholar (TSP) learning community.
- Feel supported by the TSP as they move towards the goals of their professional development plan.
- Value excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service.
- Develop enriching and inclusive faculty relationships in TSP.
- Integrate faith from a Biblical perspective in all aspects of University work.
- Foster innovation, integrity, and excellence through their teaching and scholarship.
- Integrate their knowledge of global literacy domains into their teaching practice and scholarship.

**PREPARATION FOR THE INFORMATION LITERACY MODULE**

Prior to creating the module, I read several articles on educational leadership. Next, I created the matrix on the nine knowledge domains with descriptions of the expected norms for leadership skills and student outcomes, and how to apply the other areas to create a pedagogical activity for students. I also prepared a matrix of the ACRL Standards regarding graduate and undergraduate students, along with a blank matrix form that can be used to select ACRL performance indicators and outcomes to formulate a pedagogical activity. Below is an example of the matrix focusing on “political literacy” and how it can be utilized to teach information literacy (See Figure 1).

**IMPLEMENTING THE INFORMATION LITERACY MODULE**

On many campuses today, administrators, faculty and librarians alike are concerned about helping international students to succeed in their academic studies. In a brief article by Badke (2011), he further iterated how international students

continue to need support and urges staff and faculty alike to be sensitive to that fact. Since we have a fair number of international students on our campus, and I had recently conducted a library orientation to a new group of international students, I thought the topic might be a good way to start the course. I also included the essay “One Hundred Percent American” by the well-known anthropologist, Ralph Linton. Both of these writings brought fruitful discussions and postings on the discussion board. Two short videos on the education of women and girls in Senegal also led to good discussions.

The module consisted of the following initial activities:

- Completing the reading of four articles; posting one original response, and posting one response to a colleague
- Watching two short videos and commenting on them in discussion board posts

After completing the readings and postings, the participants are to:

- Examine the nine knowledge domains for teaching global literacy and choose at least two of them to use in creating a pedagogical activity
- Review the ACRL Standards Matrix and utilize some or all of the standards/performance indicators to develop the pedagogical activity
- Select at least three resources from the library to use in the pedagogical activity
- Using the Pedagogical Activity Template provided, describe the pedagogical activity that will allow students to address a global crisis in your discipline.

**FACULTY PARTICIPATION**

The TSP was a rigorous course, and with busy teaching schedules, not all participants that signed up for the TSP were able to complete all of the modules. The few that continued along in the program and participated in the information literacy module provided great feedback about the topic of teaching international students, and their thoughts on Linton’s essay.

Here are some of their comments:

- I wish I had read the Badke article or something akin

**Figure 1: 9 Knowledge Domains for Teaching Global Literacy**

Domains:	Leadership Skills:	Student Outcomes:	Domain Connections	Information Literacy Standards	Library Global Resources	Faculty/ Student Activities:
1. Political Literacy	Has the knowledge and understanding of the political process and political issues; able to perform his or her role as a citizen, able to demonstrate/transfer skills to the students	Students develops knowledge and skills of global politics; believes they are empowered and demonstrates their ability to make local, national and international decisions	Choose the literacy(s) related to your discipline and develop at least 3 outcomes for your course.	What IL Standards will be applied (very similar to Blooms Taxonomy)	What types of resources are needed? Primary or secondary; reference or research articles	What will faculty have the students do? *(Also, what IL Standards apply?)

to it years ago because it would have alerted me to some patterns I have seen.

- Badke points out that we need to adjust with internationals, and recognize students whose acquaintance with technology comes via “memorization-based patterns of educating students,” who tend to see free inquiry as a “dangerous free for all.” This certainly is an interesting observation and means I need to rethink how students understand research assignments, especially given the complex mechanics of our Blackboard shells.
- As an ex-international student, it was not easy for me to adapt to American educational system although I feel much more comfortable now. Each country has its own “unique” educational system. In teaching the international students, it is absolutely necessary to figure out his/her own way of studying, and country-specific educational methodologies first before we jump to the next step.

From these comments, I can see that many faculty are concerned with finding the best solutions to teach international students. Faculty is usually very busy, and I appreciated their feedback on the articles. Below is a posting sent to them in Blackboard (See Figure 2).

Once the pedagogical activities were completed, the faculty submitted them to folders in Blackboard for me to review. It was very exciting to see how differently each faculty used the readings, videos, matrices, and library resources to develop their pedagogical activity. One faculty participant focused strictly on the fifth ACRL Standard and was explicit in how he applied the performance indicators and outcomes to his pedagogical activity. Another faculty participant applied a performance indicator and outcome from each of the ACRL Standards. About two weeks later, I had the opportunity to meet with one faculty participant to hear about his teaching style and how the information literacy resource materials were used in his classroom. It was exciting to learn about the connections

made between the information literacy module and the student special projects, including internships. The meeting led to the discussion of doing research together in very near future.

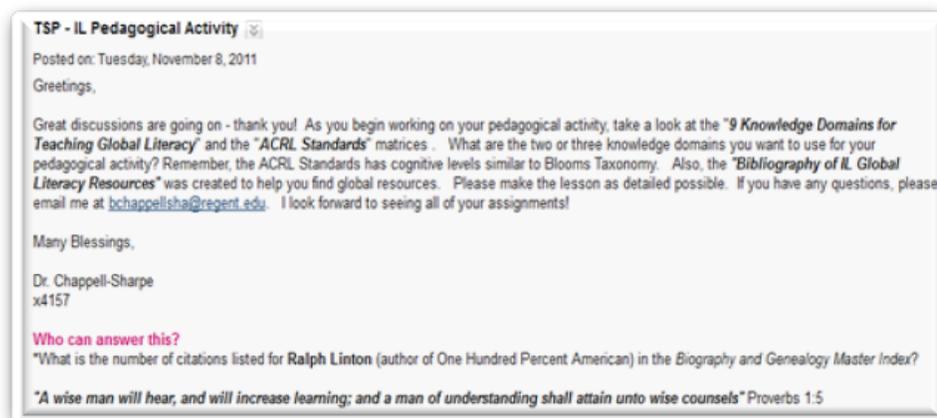
## LIMITATIONS

Although faculty participants were given information on the ACRL Standards, including its website, I knew that this was just an opportunity to start conversations about information literacy within a reflective pedagogy for a campus-wide integration in the near future. Although revisions were needed on the pedagogical activity, it was important not to assume that faculty does not know the ACRL Standards. However, it was necessary to provide examples on how they could use the ACRL Standards to create student outcomes for their courses. Jeff Purdue (2003) stated that it would be fatal to see the ACRL Standards as a “lock-step process” towards information literacy, and I agree. For me, it is about thinking critically how to relay information to the faculty and students so that they can construct their own meanings of information for further investigation.

## WHAT I LEARNED

Teaching the information literacy module gave me a brief glimpse of what is occurring in the classrooms on campus. It also confirmed that there are multiple ways to teach information literacy. According to Jacobs (2008), “there are central elements within information literacy that lend themselves to developing reflective, critical habits of mind regarding pedagogical praxis.” As librarians, we are seeing the world become increasingly global in every aspect – thus requiring critical and reflective pedagogy. That means the faculty can use our help to bridge the gaps of information to their diverse population; but we must learn to see through different lenses. Collaborative projects – networking with faculty to teach their courses – are just one way to do it. Inviting a faculty to lunch is another way to build a connection. I look forward to getting to know some of the faculty individually on campus, and exchanging ideas about teaching and/or including information literacy into student’s classwork. Being reflective is important because it is important to think critically about teaching information literacy.

Figure 2



In conclusion, teaching is a collaborative effort - one that requires patience, a love for learning and self-reflection. It is courage and conviction that germinates the ability to clearly transmit knowledge to others. If we want our students to be critical thinkers, we as librarians must think critically about pedagogical praxis. After all, information literacy is at the core of lifelong learning.

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## RECOMMENDED READINGS/WEBSITES

1. ACRL (2000). Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. Retrieved on May 18, 2011 from <http://www.ala.org/>
2. Stevens, C., Campbell, P. (2006). Collaborating to Connect Global Citizenship, Information Literacy, and Lifelong Learning in the Global Studies Classroom. *Reference Services Review*, 34(4), 536-56.
3. Four Generations in the Workplace: <http://youtu.be/xWnDBL-QU24>

## SUPPORTING MATERIALS

- Business Literacy – Harvard Business School listed the core competencies for students majoring in Business. <http://www.business-literacy.com>
- Communication Media Literacy – Media core standards (a pdf) by UNESCO.Org <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/publications/Media%20and%20information%20literacy%20curriculum%20for%20teachers.pdf> or [http://www.cpcs.umb.edu/support/student-support/red\\_book/analyz\\_media.htm](http://www.cpcs.umb.edu/support/student-support/red_book/analyz_media.htm)
- English Language Literacy – National Council for English Teachers provide a list of core competencies for college students, visit at <http://www.ncte.org/standards> or visit the Core Standards Organization at <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/english-language-arts-standards> (can examine core English Language competencies for high school graduates)
- General Education Literacy – read the National Survey of America's College Students [http://www.air.org/files/The20Literacy20of20Americas20College20Students\\_final20report.pdf](http://www.air.org/files/The20Literacy20of20Americas20College20Students_final20report.pdf)
- Information Literacy - IF "Information Fluency Initiative" started by the University of Central Florida <http://if.ucf.edu/students/about-if-for-student/>
- Science Literacy - <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/english-language-arts-standards> (links to the science competencies that public school students must master)