

## Library Instruction Component for First Year Seminar

*Required within each First Year Seminar is a library instruction component. This document briefly presents Francis A. Drexel Library's goals for the seminar. Please contact Lisa Molinelli, Instruction and Outreach Librarian (lmolinel@sju.edu, 610.660.1913) or Anne Krakow, Head of Public Services (akrakow@sju.edu, 610.660.1906) or for questions or further information.*

### Defining Information Literacy:

Information literacy can be defined as the skills needed to “recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information.”<sup>1</sup> Within the rapidly changing paradigms of information creation and retrieval of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and with the exponential growth of information and documents accessible to the average learner, information literacy becomes a vital skill not only for educational settings, but for navigating, throughout one's lifetime, the vast and unfiltered “infoglut”<sup>2</sup> of media outlets and information silos in today's world. The library instruction component for SJU's First Year Seminars aims to set students on the path to information literacy.

### Goals of the First Year Library Component:

Within the First Year Seminar Library component, we have two major goals:

1. Teaching students how to critically examine common types of media and information that they come in contact with every day
2. To give them a very basic introduction to types of materials they will be expected to find in the academic library during their college careers.

### Instruction Session Content:

We plan to design activities and discussions around some of the following media and tools:

- Website Evaluation: Who can create them? How can you tell if a site is a reputable source? How can you tell if the information is factual and objective or carries a bias? What's the difference between information found on the open web vs. information found in library databases?  
Activities/Outcome: Students will examine websites chosen by the librarian and discuss the reputability and usefulness of the information on each site, giving examples to support their argument.
- Plagiarism: What is plagiarism? How can it be avoided? What happens if you plagiarize?  
Activity/Outcome: Students will be able to identify types of plagiarism and ways to avoid it.

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<sup>1</sup> American Library Association. (1989). Presidential committee on information literacy: Final report. Chicago: American Library Association.

<sup>2</sup> Luke, A., & Kapitzke, C. (1999). Literacies and libraries: Archives and cybraries. *Curriculum Studies*, 7(3), 467-491.

- Information Cycle: How does information “travel” over time? What’s the difference between the depth of information about a news event on Twitter vs. a news magazine or books on the same event? How do these different sources relate to primary and secondary sources?  
Activity/Outcome: Students will be able to identify when best to use different sources of information within the information cycle and learn more about the difference between popular and scholarly sources of information.
- Primary vs. Secondary Sources: What is the difference between primary and secondary sources? How do you tell the difference? When would you use a primary or secondary source?  
Activity/Outcome: Students will be able to identify primary and secondary sources in the course of an in-class activity.
- Popular vs. Scholarly Sources: What is the difference between a popular source and a scholarly source? How do you tell the difference, especially online in library databases and on the open web? Why is it important to use scholarly sources in your papers?  
Activity/Outcome: Students will be able to recognize scholarly and popular sources and understand their role in academic research.

Within these discussions, we will include a very basic and brief introduction to the types of resources they are expected to use at the college level. We plan to make these classes dynamic and interactive so that students can fully and actively participate in their own learning. To that end, one hands-on activity will always be included in a First Year Seminar instruction session. Activities are customizable to particular disciplines and topics, and can be supplemented by lessons regarding the information needs of a particular course. We ask that faculty teaching the seminar work with their liaison librarian to develop the instruction so that it suits the needs of their particular class.

### **Assessment:**

The Library has designed a pre-test to assess students’ prior knowledge. The pre-test will be posted online and is to be completed before the class, in the student’s own time. In class activities will provide assessment of what students have learned in their library instruction session. Each test will be very short, and shouldn’t take longer than five minutes to complete.