

Utah State University Library Instruction Program Annual Report for 2010-2011

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I. Introduction

Librarians taught 998 library sessions during 2010-2011, a number consistent with the last several years. The number of total contact hours with students was also typical of recent years (21,206 students). When accounting for students attending repeat sessions for the same class, we reached 12,405 students, a record number and a significant increase from an average of around 10,000 students for the past several years. This might reflect larger class sizes across the university because of budget pressures. The number of sessions for subject-specific classes rose this year, from 150 to 198, also a record. As part of a larger library effort to strengthen the role of subject librarians, the Instruction Program continued to work on improving outreach and better integrating information literacy instruction into the majors. Librarians made some advances in this area, especially in the College of Engineering.

We continued to evaluate our instructional approach in the ENGL 1010 and 2010 program, which still represents half of our teaching output. Librarians also began a major assessment project, using a national rubric to assess student papers in ENGL 1010, ENGL 2010, PSY 3500, and HIST 4990.

II. English 1010 and 2010

Kacy Lundstrom took on the duties of coordinating our instruction for the Writing Program in 2010. Few major changes were made in curricular or instructional approaches during this transition.

Librarians taught fewer ENGL 1010 classes (324 in FY2011 and 413 in FY2010). We worked with the Assistant Directors of Writing to streamline the curriculum and develop a more focused research assignment, based on the Common Literature Experience selection, *Outcasts United*. We experimented with different models of instruction, including individual librarian consultations for short, research-based presentations throughout the semester. These new assignments and lessons yielded mixed results. Individual research consultations were a challenge for librarians to cover, even though they were spread throughout the semester. Librarians logged a total of 360 research consultations (totaling around 106 hours) resulting from the ENGL 1010 *Outcasts United* assignment. This number is probably low because some librarians under-report their research consultations.

Many students also showed a lack of interest in *Outcasts United* and research presentations by the end of the term. Many students and instructors did appreciate the individualized consultations with librarians, but the heavy time investment was probably not worth it,

based upon low student performance, as reported by instructors, on the research presentations.

All but one of the ENGL 1010 graduate instructors participated in the full sequence of lessons in Fall. Many instructors did not include the presentation assignment and individual librarian consultations in the spring semester. Around half of the instructors dropped one of the classroom visits, in which librarians introduce and model the development of research questions. One instructor declined to participate in library instruction entirely in Spring, the first time this has happened in some years.

Instruction for ENGL 2010 followed trends from previous years. Two out of 20 instructors did not participate in library instruction at all. The average number of library sessions per section was 2.3 in the Fall and 2.8 in the Spring. The most common lesson was the library research day, followed by a general introduction to the research process, developing research questions and narrowing topics. There have been few changes to these instructional approaches in recent years. A few librarians and English instructors experimented with problem-based learning elements, but most instruction focused on developing persuasive researched essays, from topic exploration through finding and evaluating sources.

Librarians began a large-scale assessment of ENGL 1010 and 2010 during FY2011 (see the Assessment section for more details). We anticipate making potentially significant changes in our instructional approach once all of the data has been analyzed in the coming year.

III. Other Course-Related Instruction

Subject-specific library instruction sessions reached a record level (198 sessions) in FY2011. This increase was gratifying because subject librarians have been working to collaborate with departmental faculty and reach more students in the majors. Pamela Martin did an excellent job of expanding instruction in the College of Engineering (COE). In FY2010 only one COE department participated in library instruction. In FY2011 all but one department participated. There was a 100% participation rate for departments in the College of Education and Human Services and the College of Natural Resources. See Table 1.

College	Number of Departments	Percent of departments participating in library instruction
College of Agriculture	6	83%
Huntsman School of Business	4	75%
College of Education and Human Services	7	100%
College of Engineering	5	80%
College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences	11	73%
College of Natural Resources	3	100%
College of Science*	7	43%
*Including the WSU-USU Nursing program		

Table 1: Library Instruction by College

Librarians taught 71 Connections sessions, using the same approach as in recent years. Feedback from student evaluations continues to be positive. 71.5% of students said that they would be very likely or likely to ask a librarian for help as a result of the sessions.

Librarians nearly doubled the number of sessions with ENGL 1010 concurrent enrollment classes offered through local high schools (44 sessions in FY2011 and 25 sessions in FY2010). The sessions combined lessons on brainstorming research questions, using library databases to search for information, and proper citation. Many also include a local history component and a visit to Special Collections and Archives (SCA). SCA also increased outreach efforts to local community groups and elementary and middle schools. SCA staff led most of the 68 sessions taught for these groups.

IV. LibGuides

LibGuides continues to be the most popular way to extend face-to-face instruction and reach students at a distance. Currently, there are 548 guides in the system, 285 of which are active and published. Librarians have tried to unpublish older LibGuides from previous semesters to streamline the site and keep guides more current. The LibGuides home page received 32,553 hits in FY2011 and guide hits reached a record total of 128,037. Hits per guide were down (238 compared to 277 in FY10). This is probably because this figure is based on all published and unpublished guides and there are now more unpublished guides than in previous years.

There were 207 course guides active during 2010-2011, consistent with last year. Using enrollment figures from each class, we calculated the number of hits per student enrolled. Course guides received an average of 8.83 hits per student, down slightly from 12 in FY10. The most intensively used guides, based on hits per student, are listed in Table 2. The guide for ACCT 6610 received a very large number of hits, suggesting that students were using the guide as their main access point to the resources linked there. Guides for upper-division and graduate courses were heavily used, as in previous years.

Guide	Total Hits	Hits/Student
Accounting 6610	1,547	172
HIST 4990: Political Culture (Jones)	696	46
HIST 4990: US Founding Fathers and the Classical World (Titchener)	576	44
Public Health 5500: Research Sources	287	36
EDUC 6570 - Susan Friedman	1,729	35
Eng 2010 Ballam	710	32
Public Health 5500: Research Sources	403	31
WILD 2000 Wildland Resources Intro	3,411	30
ENGL 2010: Maure Smith	1,078	25
ENGL 2010 Online: Lynne McNeill	826	22

Table 2: Top LibGuides based on hits per student

V. Statistics

There were some notable changes in the distribution of the library sessions across the curriculum, even though the total number of sessions held fairly constant. There was a decrease in the number of ENGL 1010 sessions. Instructors streamlined their approach in Spring semester and dropped, on average, one library visit per section. Sessions classified as Other increased dramatically. These were generally sessions taught by SCA for K-12 institutions and community groups. This might reflect both increased outreach to these groups and more consistent reporting of these sessions. Subject-specific sessions also rose significantly. See Table 3.

	English 1010	English 2010	Connections	Subject	Concurrent Enrollment/ HS	Other
FY 2011	320	298	71	198	44	68
FY 2010	413	277	73	150	25	18
FY 2009	430	269	81	167	22	29
FY 2008	478	354	71	197	21	42
FY 2007	442	380	70	174	18	42

Table 3: Summary of Library Instruction Classes

Departments that have consistently integrated the library into specific courses and assignments continued to participate heavily in library instruction, especially MIS 2200 and several graduate classes in Education. In the College of Natural Resources, the Department of Wildland Resources and Environment and Society brought even more classes to the library for instruction. The English Department requested 34 sessions in FY2011, not including ENGL 1010 and ENGL 2010, compared to 6 last year. This suggests that English faculty find value in library instruction and Erin Davis, the English subject librarian, should be given much credit for her outreach work.

Given the potential for repetitious sessions for students enrolled in multiple classes in an individual major, subject librarians need to further their curriculum mapping and outreach to ensure that instruction is integrated into the major in a way that makes sense.

Department	College	Number of classes in FY 2011	Number of classes in FY 2010
English	HASS	34	6
MIS	BUS	15	19
WILD	NR	14	10
HIST	HASS	11	7
EDUC/TEAL	ED	10	6
SPEECH (LPSC)	HASS	10	3
ENVS	NR	10	6
FCHD	ED	8	10
PSY	ED	8	4

Table 4: Most frequent library instruction sessions, by department

Librarians taught more sessions for RCDE classes using interactive broadcast technology than in previous years (28 in FY11, up from 10 in the previous year).

The content of library sessions continued to be balanced between skills (such as keyword searching) and processes or concepts (generating search questions). One of the program’s goals is to shift instruction from purely mechanical skills and expand instruction on deeper critical thinking skills, so this balance is heartening. See Table 5. Most of our instruction continues to be hands-on or active learning, but demonstrations followed closely behind. Most sessions continue to include a short demonstration of a tool followed by research time with individualized instruction from a librarian. More than 70% of our sessions included a hands-on component. See Table 6.

Librarians covered all of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Information Competency Standards, but a very small number of sessions addressed Standard Five (ethical and legal use of information). This might be the result of lax recordkeeping by some librarians, and a shift toward faculty, rather than librarians, teaching citation mechanics. Standard One (determining information needs) was included in nearly 80% of sessions. This might reflect librarians’ continued efforts to get students to think more deeply about what they really need to learn about their topics to advance their inquiry, rather than simply using the first few results of a search. See Table 7.

Content	# of classes
Skill	658
Process/concept	613
Disciplinary Tools	263
Orientation	213

Table 5: Content of Instruction

Format	# of classes
Hands-On/Active	709
Demonstration/lecture	539
Tours	57
Other	186

Table 6: Format of Instruction

ACRL Standards	FY 2010	FY 2011
One	604	795
Two	661	680
Three	195	405
Four	184	150
Five	26	7

Table 7: ACRL Standards Covered

Fulltime librarians in the Reference Services Department taught an average of 87 sessions. Librarians from other departments taught 192 classes, another significant increase from previous years, possible evidence of greater outreach by some subject librarians and SCA.

Librarians spent 493 hours prepping for library instruction sessions, averaging half an hour for each hour of in-class time. Librarians recorded 681 research consultations, nearly double the total from last year. Many of these were related to the ENGL 1010 assignment that required individual research consultations. Librarians spent 232 hours on individual

research consultations. Librarians dedicated an estimated 1,723 hours on direct instructional activities in FY2011, a slight increase from previous years.

VI. Assessment

The major assessment project for the year was a snapshot assessment of ENGL 1010, ENGL 2010, PSY 3500, and HIST 4990, using the American Association of Colleges & Universities' VALUE rubric for information literacy. We collected a random sample from nearly every ENGL 1010 (fall semester) and ENGL 2010 class (spring semester) and most of the papers from each section of PSY 3500 and HIST 4990 taught in both semesters. Librarians created several teams to score the papers. We pilot scored papers in ENGL 1010 and 2010 and reached a good level of inter-rater agreement. We also revised the rubric to meet our needs more specifically. We conducted a citation analysis of the papers to see what kinds of sources students cited and how they were accessing the sources. Initial results suggest that students can locate and cite scholarly sources, but they have difficulty defining the scope of their research questions and identifying key concepts and evaluating sources for relevance. Librarians are currently still scoring papers, so complete results will be reported separately next year.

VIII. Goals

The Instruction Program will continue its work on three major goals in the coming year: 1) complete the VALUE rubric assessment; 2) revise the curriculum and teaching approaches in ENGL 1010 and 2010 to address weaknesses in student information literacy skills identified from the VALUE rubric assessment; and 3) continue to work with departments to refine the information literacy plans developed by subject librarians for each major.

We will do the following to achieve these goals:

- Complete the VALUE rubric data analysis and create a report, including recommendations for curricular changes and new approaches to teaching, by Spring 2012.
- Identify other ways to link program data and teaching activities to student learning outcomes, using ACRL's *The Value of Academic Libraries* (2010) as a starting point.
- Work with the Writing Program and with individual departments to develop new approaches to instruction in ENGL 2010.
- Work with the USU Presidential Task Force on the Curriculum on the possible development of degree and major qualification frameworks.