# Proficiencies for Information Literacy Instructors

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This document presents the skills with which information literacy instructors should be equipped in order to handle all aspects of instruction effectively. The skills are organized to reflect three major aspects of information literacy teaching: instruction, subject expertise and organization. Each aspect covers a range of crucial competencies in the area. The document addresses information literacy instructors, i.e. all professionals teaching information literacy, as well as persons responsible for planning and organizing information literacy courses. Therefore, the list includes a wide range of skills that should be used selectively depending on the exact role and duties of the person involved in information literacy teaching. Moreover, the skills are designed to apply to a variety of contexts. Each organization and information literacy professional should select and evaluate what proficiencies best suit local needs and meet institutional requirements. For instance, depending on the role played by information literacy professionals within their institutions, they may decide to focus on Instructional skills rather than Leadership and Management skills.

This document should serve as a guideline for information literacy instructors in order to assess their competencies and evaluate the need for further training. It can also be used by organizations to define the qualifications required of information literacy professionals and to design training courses. It is recommended that this document be consulted together with the document "Guidelines for courses in information literacy", which provides the fundamentals for setting up effective information literacy courses.

"Proficiencies for Information Literacy Instructors" is based on the American Library Association's "Standards for Proficiencies for Instruction Librarians and Coordinators" (2007).

## Instruction

### Instructional design and teaching skills

The information literacy instructor

- Plans presentation in advance and manages preparation time for instruction.
- Develops a lesson plan and content adapted to the amount of time and space available.
- Creates learner-centered course content by using active and collaborative methods, integrating appropriate technology and taking into account students' prior knowledge and experience, learning context, language abilities and age group.
- Assists learners to assess their own information needs, to differentiate among sources of information, and helps them to develop skills to effectively identify, locate and evaluate sources.
- Encourages teaching faculty during the class to participate in discussions, to link library instruction content to course content, and to answer student questions.

### Communication and presentation skills

The information literacy instructor

- Communicates in a convincing way by well prepared, structured, and goal oriented presentations as well as by effective use of gesture, facial expression, eye contact, and voice.
- Encourages students to ask and answer questions, facilitates discussion of controversial or unexpected issues in a nonjudgmental manner that helps students to learn.
- Uses common communication technologies to provide assistance to students in and outside the classroom.
- Seeks to clarify confusing terminology, avoids excessive jargon, and uses vocabulary appropriate for level of students.

### Assessment and evaluation skills

The information literacy instructor

- Designs effective assessments of student learning and uses the data collected to guide personal teaching and professional development.
- Reflects on practice and shares teaching experience with other instructional staff in order to improve teaching skills and acquires new knowledge of teaching methods and learning theories.
- Identifies and analyzes factors that measure the impact of library instruction programs on library services, academic departments, and student learning.

## Subject Expertise

### Field and source content knowledge skills

The information literacy instructor

- Keeps current with basic precepts, theories, methodologies, and topics in assigned and related subject areas and incorporates those ideas, as relevant, when planning instruction.
- Uses the vocabulary for the subject and related disciplines in the classroom and when working with departmental faculty and students.
- Identifies core primary and secondary sources within a subject area or related disciplines and promotes the use of those resources through instruction.
- Uses relevant search tools proficiently.

### Information literacy and search strategy skills

The information literacy instructor

- Has a solid knowledge of information literacy theories and practice and keeps current with developments in the field.
- Incorporates information literacy concepts into teaching practice.
- Makes use of and keeps updated with retrieval strategies and information literacy supporting tools [bibliographic software, linking tools, mind map tools, etc.] and promotes their application through instruction.

## Organization

### Integration into Curriculum

The information literacy instructor

- Analyzes curricula in defined subject areas to identify opportunities for the instruction of information literacy competencies.
- Communicates regularly with the persons responsible for curriculum decisions to plan, implement, and control the integration of information literacy competencies within a curriculum, and to anticipate changes.
- Collaborates with classroom faculty to integrate appropriate information literacy competencies, concepts, and skills into library instruction sessions, assignments, and course content.

### Marketing

The information literacy instructor

- Communicates effectively the role of information literacy in academia and the benefit of the instruction on offer for the students and the institution.
- Promotes library instruction services to new faculty, underserved departments and programs, and elsewhere on campus.
- Identifies opportunities and relevant existing events, lobbies to be included in those events, and creates new opportunities and events to promote instruction services.
- Collaborates with graphic designers and Web editors to create effective promotional materials for the print and Web environments.

### Leadership and Management skills

The information literacy instructor

- Documents and reflects instruction activities and needs through statistics, reports, and presentations by referring to local, regional, and national assessment and evaluation efforts.
- Develops short- and long-term goals and objectives taking into account the available resources and the mission of the institution and other relevant campus and off-campus documents in order to improve instruction services.
- Represents the institution and the instruction program in an effective and positive manner and actively seeks instruction opportunities or committee work on a local, regional, national, and international level.
- Collaborates effectively with relevant supervisors to promote and develop information literacy skills instruction on campus and to obtain the necessary means.
- Improves instructional services by supporting and training instruction staff, by anticipation of growth and change, and by creating better facilities.