We are drowning in information, while starving for wisdom. The world henceforth will be run by synthesizers, people able to put together the right information at the right time, think critically about it, and make important choices wisely. – E.O. Wilson, American biologist, theorist, naturalist, and author

Individual or Group Proposing Topic

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Overview of Topic

Identify the proposed topic and provide a brief explanation of the issue the QEP would address. Include a brief description of the target population, structure, strategies, and/or foci, as applicable.

The current information ecosystem is unlike any other experienced by college students. Inundated by an endless stream of information from a myriad of sources (Facebook, Twitter, and podcasts, to name just a few), students are the consumers and eventual creators of “knowledge.” In effect, students not only need to be able to access information, but to evaluate it, select what is most appropriate for their needs, and then interpret and integrate it in a socially and ethically responsible way. Increasingly, our role as educators is to ensure that these students are equipped to discern which of these sources are legitimate, so that they can make informed decisions in all aspects of their lives and especially as engaged and responsible citizens. To address these issues, our QEP proposal seeks to embed information literacy concepts into the curriculum as a timely and necessary initiative for the University in its mission to educate lifelong learners for the Texas workforce.

According to the Association of College and Research Libraries, information literacy is the ability of an individual to “recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information.” Furthermore, the ACRL indicates that the “uncertain quality and expanding quantity of information pose large challenges for society. The sheer abundance of information will not in itself create a more informed citizenry without a complementary cluster of abilities necessary to use information effectively.”

Although the ACRL has replaced the Information Literacy Standards for Higher Education with the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education as of July 1, 2017, their original arguments for the need to focus on information literacy still hold true today. They argued in Information Literacy Standards that

information literacy forms the basis for lifelong learning. It is common to all disciplines, to all learning environments, and to all levels of education. It enables learners to master content and extend their investigations, become more self-directed, and assume greater control over their own learning. An information

1 Additional title suggestions include: Enhancing Information Literacy: Evaluating, Synthesizing, and Communicating Information Using Credible Sources; CSI at SHSU: Critical Scholarly Inquiry or Critical Source Investigation; IDEAS about Information: Interpretation, Discernment, Evaluation, Analysis, and Synthesis (or some other words...)

2 ACRL available at http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/informationliteracycompetency

3 ACRL, Information Literacy Defined, 2000
literate individual is able to: determine the extent of information needed; access the needed information effectively and efficiently; evaluate information and its sources critically; incorporate selected information into one’s knowledge base; use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose; and, understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally.

(Source: http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/informationliteracycompetency)

As this skill is important to all undergraduate students, we propose a multi-faceted program that includes embedded course modules, a dedicated website that includes tutorials, FAQs, and other instructional material, a speaker series, student contests, and special events focusing on information literacy. We envision a scaffolding of embedded modules building from freshmen courses to senior capstones that develop the skills outlined by the ACRL, specifically the identification and determination of information, the ability to access, evaluate, and use this information, and ultimately become a more informed generation. Faculty will be aided in this process by the creation of a curriculum guide or journal as described in the Resource section below. The “Generation Informed” theme will be continued and enhanced through a series of guest speakers and special events that highlight the value and importance of being an informed consumer of information.

Recent Research and/or Best Practices

Provide a description of the recent research and/or best practices within the field. Include a brief summary of the importance of the topic to higher education in today’s environment.

Research informs us that while librarians are well equipped to address information literacy, the concept becomes muddy when traveling to other disciplines (Purdue 2003). Thus, what is information literacy to some becomes critical thinking to others. In addition, faculty may argue that developing information literacy skills are not part of their particular curriculum. However, many of the tasks and assignments require students to employ information literacy skills. Ultimately, the student learning objectives for each are more similar than they are different (Armstrong 2010).

Thus, this topic is important in several ways. First, it will provide students with the necessary skills to realize a successful academic career. Second, it will provide graduates with the skills for lifelong learning, one of SHSU’s core missions. And last, it is important to the larger academic community, including faculty, staff, and administration. As Jarson (2010) argues, acquiring information literacy is the responsibilities of all faculty, not just librarians and should be approached in a holistic, integrated manner. The approach should include curricular models that include course-integrated library instruction and discipline-specific information literacy (Jarson 2010).

The following provides examples of best practices within the field:

Institutional Data

Provide a description of the institutional data that supports the need for the proposed topic.

Institutional Data

The NSSE 2016 Engagement Indicators and NSSE 2016 Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons provides both raw data as well as theme reports based on student survey data. This data indicates that students are making little or only a modest progress in set of Engagement Indicators (EI) focusing on higher-order learning, reflective and integrative learning, learning strategies, and quantitative reasoning. SHSU Freshmen average below our THECB peers in 3 of the 4 categories and the differences are statistically significant. As seniors, there is no difference in the levels (see NSSE 2016 Engagement Indicators, p 3-7). While this shows an improvement over the course of their collegiate experience, we argue that we should see our students performing better than our THECB peers. In addition, in spite of this modest improvement in the skills listed, the NSSE data also reveals that there is no improvement in the scores on the question that is at the heart of this proposal – “How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in being an informed and active citizen?” (see NSSE 2016 Frequencies and Statistical Comparisons, Question 17j).

Non-Institutional Data

Project Information Literacy (http://www.projectinfolit.org/) includes analysis of over 11,000 students from 57 colleges and universities. These students were interviewed and/or surveyed to investigate how students “find, evaluate, and use information for their course work and for addressing issues that arise in their everyday lives” (Head 2013, 472). The study indicates that students rely on the same resources and patterns regardless of the assignment and/or task. They rely on a small set of information sources and are driven by efficiency and predictability. Thus, even though the student has a vast array of information resources available at their fingertips, they rely on the same information source for schoolwork and tasks associated with everyday life.

Resources Needed for Implementation

Provide a general description of the anticipated resources (i.e., faculty, staff, equipment, technology, space, workshops, etc.). It is not necessary to estimate dollar amounts at this time.

While there is a need for new resources, significant campus infrastructure exists to support the successful implementation of the Information Literacy QEP. This summary of resources reflects additional staff and resources proposed to plan, development, implement and assess the QEP.

- **QEP Director.** A two-course reassignment supported through adjunct hiring for the QEP Director.
- **Administrative Support.** Administrative support assumes 20 hour per week.
- **Website Creator/Editor**
- **Faculty Council:** QEP Director working with a faculty council will coordinate the program. The director will integrate the efforts of several existing centers on campus including PACE, Writing Center, Library, Graduate Studies, and Writing in the Disciplines. These centers will support the QEP. The QEP Director and the members of the faculty council will actively work to improve information literacy at SHSU.
- **Mini-Grants to Faculty for Module Development.** QEP Director and Faculty Council will send out Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit bids for module development, and evaluate completed proposals for mini-grant funding. The requirements and specifications for RFP QEP Mini-Grants will be developed based on the student learning outcomes as they apply to various disciplines.

- **External Consultant with Expertise in non-class-based QEP/Information literacy modules**

- **E.I.L. Curriculum Journal/Newsletter Editor.** Faculty input into the journal will be strongly encouraged. The journal will highlight innovative practices in curriculum design, active learning pedagogies, co-curricular learning, assessment strategies, interdepartmental collaborations, student achievements related to information literacy, and faculty engagement in the scholarship of teaching, learning, and research related to developing information literacy in students.

- **Instructional Designer& Blackboard Resources**

- **Space:** Increasing participation across the curriculum requires that departments have access to staffing resources that will enhance the capacity of faculty to incorporate information literacy opportunities into their courses to participate more regularly.

- **Faculty Development: Professional Development Committee.** Provides input and assistance in planning professional development experiences for faculty and staff related to beyond the classroom experiences in information literacy. Costs include stipends for faculty who participate outside the term of their contract year, stipends for facilitators, and a modest sum for refreshments. Anticipated costs will have incremental increases to accommodate growth in the number of faculty who will be introduced to the content and use of the QEP resources.

- **Academic Support Tutors.** The workload will increase because of the QEP, thus requiring additional tutors to accommodate demand. Tutors will also need to be trained to understand the unique assignments of the various online modules and how the online modules are being employed. (e.g., Writing Center, Library for research/information literacy tasks required in the modules)

  **AND/OR**

- **Graduate Student TA’s** will contribute to and benefit from the QEP. They will have the opportunity to be trained to assist faculty teaching information literacy and to work with undergraduate students engaged in applying information literacy. Graduate students SLO for participating in the program will be:
  - To acquire and apply pedagogical knowledge and skills concerning the teaching of information literacy and, where appropriate, assist in teaching information literacy skills lessons/modules.

- **Operating budget** includes the costs for a space for the Director of the QEP and the Administrative support person, Website editor, Journal/Newsletter support, Instructional designer, stipends, computing equipment, workshops, copying and other costs.

- **Assessment Coordinator/Assessment Committee/Assessment Costs:** Provides input regarding assessment strategies and issues related to assessment of student performance, such as plans for collecting assessment data and supporting faculty and staff in developing appropriate assessments of information literacy skills SLO.

- **Travel** to attend conferences relevant to QEP subject matter.
**Institutional Participants**

*Identify the likely participants in the project (departments, colleges, support centers, faculty, staff, etc.).*

- Faculty Representatives from every college – identify pertinent discipline-specific information literacy concepts; recommend sample assignments and learning activities for applying these concepts
- Instructors across the university – adapt relevant learning activities and assignments to integrate information literacy concepts into the curriculum
- Subject Librarians – collaborate with faculty to provide instructional support and materials for applying information literacy concepts
- SHSUOnline Instructional Designers – support faculty in developing instructional material and learning modules for the online learning environment
- Academic Support Departments – reinforce general and discipline-specific information literacy concepts with academic engagement programs in and out of the classroom, including
  - Academic Success Center
  - Center for Community Engagement (ACE)
  - PACE
- Student Success Initiative/FYE
- University Marketing and Communications (MARCOM) – develop and implement marketing and communication strategies to raise campus awareness and encourage faculty buy-in
- Institutional Effectiveness – advise strategies to track student performance and measure learning outcomes
- Office of Academic Planning and Assessment

**Possible Outcomes and Challenges**

*What are some of the intended outcomes and how could they be measured? Describe any anticipated challenges with implementation or success.*

We expect that through the information literacy intervention, students will become more informed consumers of information resulting in a more informed and active citizen. We currently collect the data necessary to assess this progress with the NSSE indicators. The CAT test could also be utilized, however, it would need to be expanded to include more students.

There are several challenges to implementation:

- Faculty participation in the embedded information literacy modules.
- Additional testing utilized the CAT instrument
RESOURCES

Information Literacy Websites
- Association of College and Research Libraries
  - 2000 Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education
  - 2017 Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education
    - Framework for Information Literacy Sandbox http://sandbox.acrl.org/resources
    - Examples of instructional materials for teaching and assess learning of information literacy concepts
- Project Information Literacy http://www.projectinfolit.org/
  - Study served as the foundation for the ACRL IL Framework

Relevant QEP Examples
- UMW (Research, Write, Speak) http://academicas.umw.edu/qep/full-qep/
  - Information Literacy rubrics
  - CRAAP test rubric
- LSU (Discover: Undergraduate Research) https://sites01.lsu.edu/wp/discover/about/qep/
  - Discipline-specific adoption examples
  - Stakeholder surveys

Bibliography


Submit Mini-White Papers to Somer Franklin, Associate VP for Academic Affairs and SACSCOC Liaison, via e-mail at somer@shsu.edu, via campus mail at Box 2394 (SHSU), or in person in the Bobby K. Marks Administration Building, Room 208.