Aren't We All Trying To Do the Same Thing?:
Four Alberta Post-Secondary Institutions Collaborating to Create an Information Literacy Assessment Tool

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Jessica Knoch, Grant MacEwan University
Michelle Edwards Thomson, Red Deer College
Rebekah (Becky) Willson, Mount Royal University
...Or “Replace ‘Stress’ With ‘Drinking’”

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Ethics

The fine print ...

If you take a clicker, you are agreeing to have the aggregate responses from the polls used in a publication.

Your answer is anonymous and cannot be linked back to you in any way.

You may withdraw from the questionnaire at any time by not answering the question, however, once your response is submitted, we are unable to remove your response from the data set.
To assess **student learning**, how many of your libraries use...

A. Standardized assessment tool (e.g. SAILS, iSkills, ILT)
B. In-house created library-wide assessment tool
C. Librarian created in-class assessment
D. Combination of the above
E. No assessment
Context

• Increasing emphasis on accountability and learning outcomes (Oakleaf & Kaske, 2009)

• Increasing calls for assessment (e.g. Cameron, Wise, & Lottridge, 2007; Fain, 2011; Oakleaf, 2009; Ragains, 1997)

• Lack of assessment tools that meet needs
What is your main barrier to assessing student learning?

A. Time

B. Funding

C. Knowledge

D. Buy-in from institution

E. Other
Background – Pilot Study

• Group meeting - identified shared need for assessment

• Decided to create pilot at Alberta post-secondary institutions
  • Similar scope and size
  • Substantial history with undergraduate ILI

• The pilot is called ILAAP
  • Information Literacy in Alberta Assessment Pilot
Background – Goals

- Establish a shared vision of basic IL skills
- Create assessment tool
- Assess "lower order" IL skills/knowledge based on class content delivered in first and second year one-shot sessions
- Analyze the process in order to determine the potential for ongoing and/or broader use
The Collaborative Process

Benefits for our *Team* and its *Members*:

- Created shared vision of assessment
- Window into each other's classrooms
- Value differing perspectives
- Local solution and local tool
- No chair, rather function as a team
The Collaborative Process

Benefits for our *Institutions*:

- Shared solution to "problem" of assessment
- Shared implementation costs
- A locally produced tool that has already provided each institution with results
The Questionnaire

Our initial questionnaire was a post-test comprised of:

- 2 demographic questions
- 17 summative multiple choice questions
- 2 formative open-ended questions
Methods – Questionnaire creation

Questions for the assessment tool were:

- Created collaboratively
- Mapped to outcomes from ACRL Performance Indicators (e.g. Cameron, Wise, & Lottrridge, 2007; O’Connor, Radcliff, & Gedeon, 2001, 2002; Katz, 2007)
- Focused on skills for first and second year students
- Developed to address a wide variety of IL skills/knowledge delivered by librarians
Methods – Questionnaire Implementation

- WASSAIL was used to deliver the questions in an online environment
- ILAAP team received WASSAIL training
- Librarians were recruited to use the tool in their sessions
- Librarians could request specific questions and view their results
- Librarian feedback was solicited
Sample ILAAP Question

Which of the following searches would give you the least number of results?

A. Children and development
B. Children or development
C. Children and development and media
D. Children or development or media
Preliminary Results - Quantitative

• 918 respondents
• 77 classes

Results:
• 80% could identify type of source from citation
• 77% demonstrated knowledge of basic Boolean operators
• 67% knew where to find the book on the shelf
What is an "acceptable pass" level for IL skills?

A. 50%
B. 60%
C. 70%
D. 80%
E. Other?
Preliminary Results – Qualitative

- Minimize library anxiety
  - "Now I'm not afraid..."
- Learned "how to"
- Points of confusion
  - citation
  - evaluation
  - access
- Process
  - Need time to process info
  - Know where to come back for help later
Lessons Learned

• Practicalities
  o Survey collection and administration
  o Communication

• Research Design
  o Expansion to include second year students
  o Proofreading and revising questions
Question Revision Example

Draft 1: For your paper on the effects of drinking on students, which of the following websites would be most authoritative to use for medical aspects of mental stress:

• Health Canada
• Labatt's
• Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association
• Canadian Alliance of Student Associations

Draft 2: For your paper on the psychological effects of stress on students, which of the following websites would be most authoritative to use for medical aspects of mental stress:

• Health Canada
• Labatt's
• Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association
• Canadian Alliance of Student Associations
Future Directions

- Validate survey questions
- Expand question bank
- Develop a process for rolling the assessment tool out to other libraries
Thanks! Questions?

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References


