USC Libraries Information Literacy Outcomes for Undergraduates

These information literacy outcomes are meant to be accomplished over an undergraduate student's career across all disciplines, through librarian and disciplinary faculty efforts in instruction sessions, assignments, courses, and curricula.

The Association for College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Framework provides the following definition of information literacy:

“Information literacy is the set of integrated abilities encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning”

The frames developed by ACRL are listed alphabetically with USC-developed descriptions and outcomes below. These outcomes and frames are an interconnected cluster of core concepts; this linear document is not meant to imply a progression.

Authority is Constructed and Contextual
Authority of information depends on where a source comes from, information need, and how the information will be used. It is both constructed and contextual. Authority should be viewed with an attitude of informed skepticism and an openness to new perspectives, additional voices, and changes in schools of thought.

Outcomes
By the time undergraduate students graduate, they will be able to:
• Identify markers of authority recognized by disciplines, professions, and other communities of knowledge and practice
• Debate the ways privilege influences perception of authority
• Acknowledge that they themselves may be seen as an authority in particular contexts
• Identify authoritative information sources based on information need

Information Creation as a Process
Information can be encountered in different formats, which has an impact on how it is used and shared. It refers to looking to the underlying processes of creation and the final product to critically evaluate the usefulness of the information.

Outcomes
By the time undergraduate students graduate, they will be able to:
• Distinguish between format and method of access, understanding that these are separate entities
• Articulate the capabilities and constraints of various processes of information creation
• Recognize that similar content may be presented in different formats, which may affect interpretation of the content
• Select a source that best meets an information need based on the audience, context, and purpose of various formats
April 16th, 2015

**Information Has Value**
Information possesses several dimensions of value, including as a commodity, as a means of education, as a means to influence, and as a means of negotiating and understanding the world. The flow of information through systems of production and dissemination is affected by legal, sociopolitical, and economic interests.

**Outcomes**
*By the time undergraduate students graduate, they will be able to:*
- Identify publication practices and their related implications for how information is accessed and valued
- Recognize that intellectual property is a legal concept that is socially constructed according to different professions or other communities
- Give credit to the original ideas of others through attribution and/or formal conventions
- Manage personal and academic information online with an understanding of the commodification of that information

**Research As Inquiry**
Research as Inquiry refers to an understanding that research is iterative and depends upon asking increasingly complex or new questions whose answers prompt additional questions or lines of inquiry in any field.

**Outcomes**
*By the time undergraduate students graduate, they will be able to:*
- Formulate questions for research of an appropriate scope, based on information gaps or by reexamining existing information
- Select research methodology(ies) based on need, circumstance, and type of inquiry
- Evaluate information from a variety of perspectives in order to shape their own knowledge base
- Demonstrate persistence, adaptability, and reflection as components of inquiry
- Organize information systematically in order to reflect on inquiry

**Scholarship As Conversation**
Scholarship As Conversation refers to the idea of sustained discourses within communities of scholars, researchers, or professionals, with new insights and discoveries occurring over time as a result of competing perspectives and interpretations.

**Outcomes**
*By the time undergraduate students graduate, they will be able to:*
- Contribute to the scholarly conversation by becoming a creator or critic
- Identify the contribution that particular information sources make within an ongoing conversation
- Describe the way that systems privilege some perspectives and present barriers to others

**Searching As Strategic Exploration**
Encompassing inquiry, discovery, and flexibility, searching identifies both possible relevant sources and how to access those sources. Searching is a contextualized, complex experience that affects, and is affected by, the cognitive, affective, and social dimensions of the searcher.

**Outcomes**
By the time undergraduate students graduate, they will be able to:

- Design searches strategically, considering and selecting systems to search and evaluate search results
- Identify how information systems are organized in order to access relevant information
- Reflect on the search process in order to refine searches and persist in the face of challenges

References:

