

Academic Librarian Curriculum Developers: Building Capacity to Integrate Information Literacy across the University

Purdue University (Clarence Maybee), University of Nebraska, Lincoln (Catherine Fraser Riehle), and University of Arizona (Maribeth Slebodnik) propose a three-year project (July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2022) to enable academic library professionals to become curriculum developers. The project team requests \$249,625 in support from IMLS. Academic libraries have promoted information literacy on university campuses, yet they have been unable to integrate it widely into curricula. Applying a learning design model that underscores the role that information plays in the learning process, the project enables academic library professionals to collaborate with classroom instructors to create and evaluate disciplinary assignments in which students learn to use information.

Statement of Need

Academic libraries have an important role to play in meeting the imperative that students are able to learn and work in digital environments, including evaluating information encountered on the Internet ([Horizon Report, 2017](#)). This work is essential, as students leaving the university are frequently unable to meet employers' expectations for evaluating and analyzing information and data in the workplace ([Project Information Literacy, 2012](#)). Yet, a survey of North American library professionals (n=217) indicates that while information literacy is viewed as a key contributor to success in the workforce (97%), only 25% felt that their existing efforts effectively support the institution's information literacy needs ([Proquest, 2016](#)). A growing number of scholars contend that preparing graduates who are able to use digital information in workplace situations requires teaching them to use information in disciplinary and professional learning contexts.¹ However, graduate programs in library and information science do not adequately prepare library professionals for teaching or curriculum design roles.² While library professionals' roles currently involve consulting with instructors to connect them to resources ([ARL SPEC KIT 349](#)), working collaboratively to develop curricula requires developing teaching and learning strategies that highlight the role information plays in the learning process. Expanding upon smaller efforts, the current project provides academic library professionals with specific skills and tools to collaborate with classroom instructors to create and evaluate disciplinary assignments in which students learn to use information.

Project Design

Academic library professionals will learn to assume the role of curriculum developers, whose work is guided by: 1) a collaborative approach, 2) scholarly insights, 3) awareness of the broader context, and 4) reflective practices.³ Piloted at Purdue, the project utilizes an informed learning design model developed by Dr. Maybee. Library professionals and instructors collaborate to create assignments that focus simultaneously on learning disciplinary content and information skills and practices.⁴ The learning outcomes of the course will determine the information skills students need to learn. A unique aspect of the project, participants will expand their ability to conduct research evaluating the effectiveness of assignments designed to teach students to use information in disciplinary learning contexts.

Recruitment Plan

Academic library professionals at each of the three institutions have identified prospective instructors with whom to collaborate in this project. Both library professionals and instructors will receive a \$1000 honorarium for participation. The curricular aims of the libraries and academic departments at each institution will inform participant selection. Library professionals at each institution will work with

¹ For example see: Bruce, C. (2008). *Informed learning*. Chicago: ACRL.; Lloyd, A. (2010). *Information literacy landscapes*. Oxford: Chandos.

² Westbrook, T. & Fabian, S. (2010). Proficiencies for instruction librarians: Is there still a disconnect between professional education and professional responsibilities? *College and Research Libraries*, 71(6), 569-590.

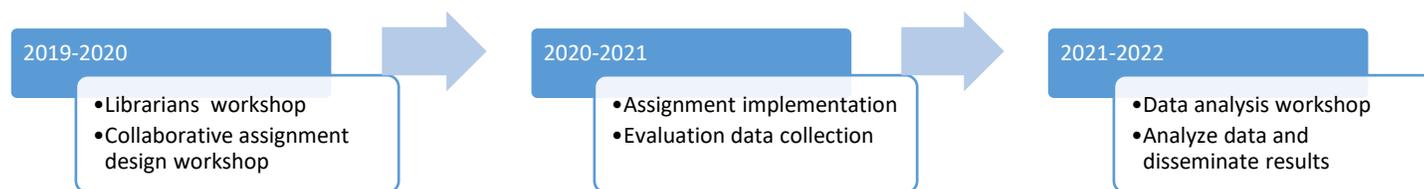
³ Fundator, R. & Maybee, C. (forthcoming). Academic librarians as informed learning developers. In K. Ranger (Ed.). *Informed learning applications: Insights from research and practice*. Emerald.

⁴ Maybee, C., Bruce, C.S., Lupton, M., Pang M.F. (in press). Informed learning design: Teaching and learning through engagement with information. *Higher education research & development*.

instructors to identify introductory, research methods, or communication-focused courses with the greatest potential for advancing student information literacy.

Project Timeline & Activities

In the first year, the project team will build on materials developed in the 2018 pilot to develop the workshop series, recruit participants, and conduct the first workshop introducing the theoretical design framework and research methodology. In summer 2020, the project team will provide workshops at each institution in which the participating academic library professionals collaborate with classroom instructors to integrate information literacy into disciplinary course assignments. The workshop schedule will optimize instructor availability. During the second year of the project, the instructors will implement the new assignments in their classrooms, and the academic library professionals will collect evaluation data from students about their perceptions of what they gained from completing the assignment. In the final year, members of the project team will support the library professionals in analyzing collected data and disseminating the results. Project evaluation will include collecting data via focus groups with participants after each workshop to inform adjustments supportive of participant success. The project culminates with a symposium in which library professionals and instructor collaborators will share their design experiences developing, implementing, and evaluating assignments.



Project Team

All members of the project team have extensive experience collaborating with classroom instructors to develop curricula, including the creation and implementation of Instruction Matters: Purdue Academic Course Transformation (IMPACT), a campus-wide program to enhance undergraduate courses.⁵ Dr. Maybee has led Purdue Libraries' involvement in IMPACT since 2012. He is a faculty member with ACRL's Immersion program, a weeklong intensive retreat for academic library professionals to develop their teaching.

Diversity Plan

Recruitment will prioritize participation by library professionals from under-represented minorities and/or early in their career. The theoretical framework used specifically emphasizes the benefits of inclusivity and leverages multiple perspectives in learning design.

Broad Impact

The project provides an evidence-based platform for extending information literacy support of post-graduation success of undergraduates by offering a model to integrate discipline-specific information literacy into curricula. Disseminating the results of the project to the broader academic library community will comprise two strategies: 1) providing participant funding to support presentations at national academic library conferences, such as ACRL and LOEX, and 2) hosting a culminating symposium with a target audience that includes academic library administrators and information literacy thought leaders.

Budget Requested

The total budget for this project is \$249,625. Our estimated budget breakdown includes: \$36,000 for honorariums for library professionals, classroom instructors, and advisors; \$89,352 for a graduate staff personnel (salary and benefits); \$18,000 for domestic travel for staff; \$16,000 for conference expenses (food, room rentals, etc.) and the final year symposium; \$20,000 for participant travel costs to conferences and symposium; and 55% indirect costs of \$70,273 (University's negotiated indirect cost rate).

⁵ Maybee, C. (2018). *IMPACT learning: Librarians at the forefront of change in higher education*. Oxford: Chandos.