

## Application for ACS Information Fluency Project 2001

### 1. Title: Integrating Information Fluency into the Humanities

#### 2. Leaders:

Madeline Clark, student

Mary Fairbairn, library faculty

Cort Haldaman, IS

Melinda Menzer, faculty (English)

Furman University

#### 3. Brief abstract of the project:

The four of us will work together to integrate information fluency into the freshman Humanities sequence at Furman. We have chosen this course because not only does it reach 100 students a year, it also is taught by 10-12 different faculty members across the humanities; we hope, therefore, to develop faculty interest in information fluency by presenting it in this forum.

The model for our plan comes from the group at Mount Holyoke that spoke at the ACS IF symposium this spring. We will focus our attention this summer on, first, sharing our expertise in our different fields and, second, developing a plan to incorporate information fluency into the course. Menzer, as an instructor in the course, and Clark, as a recent student participant, will familiarize the group with the course's purpose, strengths, and weaknesses; Fairbairn and Haldaman will suggest possibilities for how the library and IS can support revisions. One of the course's current weaknesses is that its lecture format encourages student passivity; we hope that incorporating the goal of information fluency into the course will give us insight into how we can make the students more active participants in their own education, perhaps as producers of web or other computer-oriented projects that will teach them how to evaluate, synthesize, and produce information.

By the end of the summer we will produce a proposal for the Humanities faculty to show them how information fluency can be incorporated into the course, including a syllabus for the fall term which will give specific assignments and course readings that will teach information fluency as part of the goals of the course. The Humanities faculty are in the midst of a revision of this sequence, so now is the ideal time to reshape the course in this way.

#### 4. Rationale:

This course impacts a large number of students and faculty on the Furman campus and could give us our first opportunity to encourage faculty in particular to get interested in IF. A number of other ACS institutions, including Davidson and the University of the South, offer similar courses, and our successes (and failures) could be useful to others. We plan to present our results at next year's IF symposium and at one of the deans' meetings.

#### 5. Preliminary description:

Our work will be done in the summer and fall of 2001. We will plan a weekend retreat for early summer so that we can completely focus our attention on this topic and develop a strategy for revising the course. We plan to put some, if not all, of our suggestions into place in the fall, during

the first of the three parts of the Humanities Sequence and to have Clark assisting as a IF teaching fellow.

Since we are not doing a workshop, we have no specific agenda, strategy for recruiting, or target audience.

6. Plans for follow-up and evaluation:

We will present our work to the ACS IF symposium next year and ask for feedback. We will, of course, be evaluated by the students in the Humanities course, and we will add questions to the standard evaluation to elicit specific information from them. Ultimately, our work will be evaluated by our peers by their decision to incorporate our ideas into the sequence and into Humanities courses in the future.

7. Plans to disseminate results:

Our course will be on the web for others to see, and, as noted above, we hope to present our work at next year's symposium. On Furman's campus, we will have a dinner or open forum (as part of our faculty development program) to talk about our work with our colleagues.

8. Preferred time of year: N/A