

Information Fluency Proposal
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Title of Proposal: Information Fluency instruction for first-year students: a team approach

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Brief Abstract

Rollins College is proposing a pilot instructional program in information fluency for first-year students. The project will foster collaboration among Rollins faculty, librarians, students, and information technologists. The results of the project will be shared across the consortium and to a broader audience through the ACS web page.

We propose to teach a one-credit information fluency course for first-year students. The project will pilot three sections of the course to be taught during the 2001-02 academic year. The course, which will combine online tutorials with in-class sessions, will be taught by teams of faculty, student course assistants, IT staff, and librarians. The content of the course will reflect the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education, which have been endorsed by the ACS guidelines task force. These standards address the categories of preparation, access, evaluation, assimilation, presentation, and ethical use of information. The pilot will employ a variety of methods for enrolling students and assessing results.

Rationale

The purposes of this project are to establish strategies, first, for teaching a one-credit course in **Information Fluency** possibly to be required of all students in the freshman year, and, second, for incorporating information fluency in courses throughout the curriculum.

The goal of the project is to introduce all first-year students to information fluency skills and to provide a basic level of competency. We believe it is critical for our students to learn how information is produced, stored, and accessed. They will use critical thinking skills to evaluate, organize and present information

for their own use and the use of others. In addition, they will come to understand and practice the ethical and legal use of information.

The ultimate goal of this project will be to incorporate information fluency in the curriculum as a general education endeavor. To reach this goal, we will look to ACS for further faculty development over the next three years.

The pilot will benefit the colleges of the ACS by providing a model for information fluency instruction that is both collaborative and portable. The project will demonstrate:

- Use of an online tutorial to provide a baseline of informational skills for a large number of students, while maintaining personalized instruction through in-class sessions.
- Development of collaborative teams to teach all aspects of computer literacy and information literacy.
- Application of the ACRL's information literacy competency standards
- Evaluation through the use of ACRL's performance indicators and the application of measurable outcomes.

Preliminary Description

Three sections of Information Fluency 101 will be taught by teams led by a faculty instructor in collaboration with an IT staff member, a student, and a librarian. Faculty will be selected to participate based on their interest in incorporating and teaching information fluency in their classes. Students selected to participate in the instructional team will obtain internship credit. The subject areas of the classes will dictate the selection of librarians and the proficiency levels of the faculty will determine the assignment of an IT staff member. Each team will collaborate in the teaching of a one-credit course that will be attached to a first-year, required course (either a Rollins Conference Class or a general education requirement).

Although faculty members will be selected based on their interest in teaching information fluency, experience in computer or information literacy will not be a requirement. Each faculty member will work with a member of the IT staff and with a student intern to develop the necessary computer skills. The librarians will assist with content--helping to develop bibliographies, to provide web links to library resources, and to identify links to Internet resources. The entire team will develop the pedagogy for a collaborative approach. Instruction--based on the ACRL performance indicators and measurable outcomes--will incorporate a variety of methods, including online tutorials, PowerPoint presentations, and hands-on, in-class instruction.

The Information Fluency course will include instruction in both computer literacy and information literacy. It will begin with a theoretical component that

welcomes students to the Information Age, discusses what information is and who produces it, and demonstrates how students can use information. It will include some or all of the following skills:

1. Introduction to the basic structure of operating systems (such as Windows), word processing (Word), data base (Access), spread sheet (Excel) and presentation programs (PowerPoint)
2. Introduction to email, the World Wide Web, Web browsers, and search engines
3. Introduction to library resources in all formats
4. Choosing a research topic
5. Developing research strategies and identifying research tools
6. Database searching
7. Legal and ethical issues, such as copyright and plagiarism

Instructional methods for the course will combine online tutorials and in-class sessions. Students will be evaluated periodically throughout the term and will present a final project that documents sources used for research related to their Rollins Conference or general education class.

How long project will last

The project will extend through the 2001-2002 academic year. It will be evaluated in the spring term for approval by the full faculty as a requirement for the following year.

Target audience

The purpose of the project is to pilot a course for first-year students in Information Fluency. Several strategies will be used to advertise the course, which will be taught in conjunction with a required first-year course. A pre-test will be conducted during the summer. Three sections will be offered throughout the 2001-02 academic year to determine the most appropriate method for enrolling students and staffing the course.

Plans for follow-up and evaluation

The final examination, course projects, and a post-test will be employed to assess the course. Students will complete course evaluation forms. Faculty, student assistants, librarians, and IT staff will assess the project by producing a narrative employing the ACRL measurable outcomes for information literacy.

Plans for dissemination of results to ACS and beyond

The results of the pilot project will be presented to the college's academic affairs committee and to the faculty for approval as a required course for first-year students. Course materials will be made available to ACS institutions. The teams will present results at an ACS conference. A final report describing the project may be submitted for publication.

Preferred time of year

Planning activities will begin upon receipt of grant approval. Instruction will take place in the 2001-2002 academic year.