

May 22, 2002
Progress report to the Associated Colleges of the South
Information Fluency Project Grant
2001/02 grant cycle

Rollins College is conducting a pilot instructional program in information fluency for first-year students. Instructional teams were formed to teach three sections of an introductory information fluency course. A report has been submitted on behalf of the first team. The report that follows describes the success of the second team. A third team-taught class will be offered to first-year Spanish Language students in the fall of 2002. At that time the grant administrators will submit a final report on the project.

The teaching team for IFT 101B: Information Fluency, taught spring, 2002, consisted of Giovanni Valiante (Department of Education), Carolyn Carpan (Olin Library), Linda Watson (Department of Information Technology and Webmaster), and Ted Panebianco (Student Intern). The course was integrated with Prof. Valiante's EDU 272: Educational Psychology class.

The team began meeting early in the preceding semester to develop goals for the course, identify information fluency skills to be taught, and select methods of instruction. Further, strategies were developed for integrating information fluency skills into the educational psychology class. Students would be required to write research paper on a topic in educational psychology and to create a PowerPoint presentation on their topic.

The team divided the responsibilities for the classes between the three instructors. Prof. Valiante introduced students to the use of the American Psychological Association's documentation style and the critical thinking skills required for selecting a research topic and writing a research paper. Information literacy skills were introduced to assist students in identifying, locating, and retrieving information, and evaluating information sources. Prof. Carpan taught the students how to use the Olin Library's ERIC, ProQuest, and PsycINFO databases to locate information on their topics. Students also learned how to evaluate the information they found on the World Wide Web. During class sessions in the IT Instructional Classroom, students had the opportunity to gain hands-on experience searching the databases and the Web. Linda Watson taught presentation techniques using PowerPoint and web design software. The student intern attended all classes and assisted the students as necessary with their database searching and PowerPoint presentation design. He was also available "on-call" to assist students with their course assignments.

At the end of the course, students submitted their research papers and presented their research findings to the class using Web based PowerPoint presentations. Their final projects integrated all of the Information Fluency skills taught during the course.

The team members hope the project will lead to a required information fluency class for all first-year students. They also suggest that the library and the instructional technology department use a variety of activities to encourage faculty to incorporate information fluency into their courses.