The college’s ISLO for information competency:

Students will:
“Locate retrieve evaluate, create, and communicate information effectively and ethically to achieve educational, professional and personal goals.”

Los Angeles Southwest College has implemented a variety of instructional and curricular activities to implement its ISLO concerning information competency (IC). Librarians have taken the lead on this ISLO and collaborate with discipline faculty to integrate IC into their courses. Information competency is incorporated throughout the college using the following approaches:

- Credit Library Science Courses – Library Science 101 and 102-Taught by library faculty
- Information Competency Instruction Sessions/Orientations – taught by library faculty
- One-on-One instruction at the Library’s reference desk
- Student Learning Outcomes in English 101, 102, and 103 that target IC skills

During the spring 2014 semester, students will have an opportunity to enroll in selected English 101 and Library Science 101 courses whose course content has been aligned to facilitate students’ acquisition and honing of IC skills.

The library has adopted Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for their IC instruction sessions/orientations. Those outcomes are reflected also in the course student learning outcomes for Library Science 101 and 102. The PLOs follow.

**Information Competency Program Learning Outcomes:**
As a result of classroom and library information competency learning experiences, LASC students will:

1. Differentiate between scholarly and popular literature, primary and secondary research, and current vs. historical research.

2. Develop knowledge of various formats of information sources and how they are produced, organized and disseminated.

3. Create an effective search strategy to locate information in an online source by:
   a. Selecting the correct online database for a search
   b. Identifying key words and synonyms
   c. Using Boolean operators and truncation

4. Evaluate information in order to determine its reliability, validity, accuracy, authority, timeliness, point of view or bias
5. Accurately and appropriately document sources using appropriate citation style guides in order to avoid plagiarism

This matrix demonstrates the instructional experiences provided for students to attain IC program skills and competencies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>PLO 1</th>
<th>PLO 2</th>
<th>PLO 3</th>
<th>PLO 4</th>
<th>PLO 5</th>
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<tr>
<td>Info. Comp. Instruction Orientations</td>
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<td>College-Level English Courses</td>
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<td>Library Credit Courses</td>
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<td>English Writing Center Lab Workshops</td>
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The upcoming section details the library’s and college’s activities pertaining to a cycle of instruction, assessment, and program improvement for its Information Competency Program.

**Instruction**

**Information Competency(IC) Instruction Sessions:**
There was a significant improvement in the library’s Information Competency Instruction program from Fall 2012 to Fall 2013. There was a 118% increase in the number of IC sessions taught by librarians and a 33% increase in the number of students reached. The library was given permission by Administration to hire an adjunct instruction librarian to assist in instructional outreach and teaching activities to compensate for a librarian staffing shortage in fall 2013. The data-collection method for counting the number of students was revised from a count of those enrolled to a count of those in attendance to provide a more accurate picture of instructional reach (Library NIPR, 2013 - 2014)

**Discipline-Based Instructional Outreach:**
The library’s Information Competency Instruction Program experienced significant growth from Fall 2012 and Spring 2013 to Fall 2013 as demonstrated below:

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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S 2013</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the Business/CTE and Math/Science divisions, a collaboration with the professor teaching Environmental Studies/Science accounted for most of the instruction sessions in that area. Particular outreach focus was given to the Nursing program, owing to the emphasis in Nursing, Medicine and other behavioral fields on evidence-based practice. The librarian liaison and nursing faculty will collaborate to conduct at least one information competency session for nursing students each semester, with an assessment at the end of each academic year. Over the last three semesters, there has been incremental improvement in instruction sessions for students taking Behavioral and Social Sciences classes. The most significant increase in instructional outreach was to the English discipline: from one session in fall, 2012 to fourteen in fall 2013, equaling a 130% improvement in efforts to collaborate with faculty. Historically, request for instruction for disciplines in Arts and Humanities has been inconsistent for Communication Studies, Art, Music and Theater classes.

Overall, the librarian liaison program, instituted in fall 2012 has facilitated substantive improvements in the amount of instruction to students and the level of collaboration between discipline and library faculty. In particular, the efforts of the librarian liaison for English/Foreign Language, Nursing, and Environmental Studies produced the significant increases seen this past semester (Source: Library Non-Instructional Program Review, 2013 - 2014).

Assessment

Pre-test and Post-tests and the LASC Information Competency Assessment were the primary assessment tools used to inform students’ level of proficiency with respect to the five PLOs (Source: Library Pre-Test and Post-Test forms, Library Pre-Test and Post-Test results). Pre-test and Post-test assessments were utilized in the information competency instruction sessions/orientations and the credit library science classes. The Information Competency Assessment was administered to a sample of students enrolled in English 21 and English 28 in order to establish a baseline for instructional planning. The majority of LASC student test into either basic math or English; data from these English classes provided a viable representative sample from which to measure students’ strengths and gaps in knowledge.

Library Information Competency Instruction Sessions: Pre-Test and Post-Test Results (Source: Library Non-Instructional Program Review, 2013-2014).

After review of the Association of College and Research Libraries’ (ACRL) Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education, librarians selected 5 program learning outcomes (PLOs) that aligned with the College’s Institutional SLO on information competency (ISLO). The ISLO is: Students will: Locate retrieve evaluate, create, and communicate information effectively and ethically to achieve educational, professional and personal goals.

Of the 35 information competency instruction sessions taught, 20 classes were given pre-test/post-test assessments. Librarians explored different options with the timing between
administering the pre- and post-tests to determine if that variable had an impact on students’ retention of information competency skills taught. Review of the data revealed only marginal differences in scores.

On average, there was 13% improvement in students’ scores between the pre- and post-tests. Of the 20 classes, 6 classes demonstrated increases between 4% and 8%; 7 classes between 9% and 15% improvement; and 7 classes between 16% and 30% improvement.

The benchmark goal has been 70% proficiency. Pre-test scores revealed that students in only two sections reached or exceeded the benchmark goal of 70%. Conversely, in the post-test, in 15 classes students scored 70% or higher on the test, resulting in a 650% increase in correct responses. Librarians are consistently teaching the core information competencies and students are demonstrating good understanding of them when assessed immediately after an instructional experience.


**Library Science 102:**

SLO 1) Construct effective Search Strategy… 60% of the students scored 65% or higher. The assessment benchmark was 70% will score…

SLO 2) Evaluate web sites critically… 80% of the students scored 65% or higher. The benchmark of 70% was met.

SLO3) Analyze the legal and social issues…80% of the students were able to successfully paraphrase.

The benchmark of 70% was met. However, only 60% of the students were able to correctly use citation styles. The benchmark was 70%

**Library Science 101:**

SLO 1) Ability to retrieve… Students had problems with constructing a search using Boolean Operators.

SLO 1) manipulate, evaluate, and utilize information…Pretest 58% scored 70% or higher. Post-test 88% of the students score 70% or higher.

SLO2) MLA or APA Citation Style…17% of the students on the pretest scored 70% or higher. Post-test: 86% of the students scored 70% or higher. The benchmark was met.

*Information Competency Assessment Results* (*Source: Information Competency Assessment Results from Survey Monkey Instrument*)

The test instrument was comprised of four informational questions and three questions each for the five PLOs, for a total of nineteen questions. 116 students completed the test: 60 English 21 students and 57 English 28 students. (The numbers recorded on the Survey Monkey test are one off from the reported total. This is likely due to a student withdrawing shortly after starting the test). Not all students answered every question. The questions dealing with PLOs three, four, and
five were consistently skipped ten or eleven times. If administered again, an option to answer “I don’t know” will be added to the answer choices.

The data produced the following average percentages for each PLO:

PLO 1: identification of information types – 50%
PLO 2: identification of information formats – 58%
PLO 3: effective search strategy – 37%
PLO 4: evaluating information – 61%
PLO 5: avoiding plagiarism – 85%

Analysis of the data revealed that students reached the benchmark goal of 70% in PLO 5 only. Also, students had difficulties developing an effective search strategy to locate books and articles. This was observed in data analyzed in the Library Science 101 and 102 courses as well. With respect to the other three PLOs, while there is work to do, the percentages show student growth towards understanding the concepts in those areas. In discussions among the librarians, the area dean, and the English Department Chair, they were perplexed by the high percentage of correct answers regarding plagiarism; challenges with plagiarism abound in most courses that require essays or research papers. Upon further review, it was deduced that generally students understand what plagiarism is but still need more skill in paraphrasing, summarizing, quoting, and documenting sources to avoid the practice. As a result of the analysis, librarians will focus more effort on helping students to develop effective search strategies and will collaborate with discipline faculty to improve the issues related to students plagiarizing. By the end of this academic year, they will create two authentic, performance-based, exercises and assessments to help improve students’ knowledge of citing (e.g. quoting and paraphrasing) and documenting sources (Source: LASC Information Competency Assessment Results).

Information Competency Program Improvement Strategies for 2013-2014

IC Instruction Sessions/Orientations

- Increase outreach to faculty in the Arts & Humanities Department, particularly in Music and Theater Arts by 50% from the number of sessions completed in fall 2013 in order to help more students learn basic and discipline-specific search and evaluation strategies
- Generally, focus outreach efforts on programs/disciplines that require students to conduct library research (e.g. courses from disciplines in Arts & Humanities, English/Foreign Language, and Behavioral and Social Sciences departments)
- Continue the collaboration with Nursing to conduct instruction sessions each semester. Assess effectiveness and plan for improvements at the end of spring 2014.
- Share pre-test and post-test results with faculty from the departments that had librarians conduct information competency library instruction sessions to help improve learning in targeted areas
- Approach discipline faculty with the idea of including the five post-test questions on students’ final examination to examine whether students have retained knowledge learned in the research skills sessions.
Information Competency Assessment

- Create two authentic, performance-based, exercises to help improve students’ knowledge of citing (e.g. quoting and paraphrasing) and documenting sources

Library Science 101 and 102

101:
- More class time needs to be devoted to SLO 1. The focus should be on comprehension of the use of the Boolean Operator “and” to connect ideas and identifying keywords for an effective search strategy.
- To improve results of SLO3, Citation Style, more class time and homework practice needed to be devoted to this subject.

102:
- To improve SLO outcomes more scaffolding techniques such as group exercises and in-class assignments are needed for greater retention and understanding.
- Classroom Assessment Techniques such as the One Minute Paper will be utilized to quickly assess if students are grasping concepts.
- More time on MLA/APA citation style in class and homework assignments

English Department 101, 103 Assessments

In fall 2013, the English Department assessed SLOs for their 101 and 103 level courses, both of which contained elements of information competency. English 101’s SLO 3 states: “The student will, avoiding plagiarism, use research methods and tools in academic coursework.” This SLO was assessed in spring and summer, 2013 and was combined with two other SLOs because all dealt with analyzing and evaluating texts along with writing college level essays. Applying a rubric resulted in 57% of students scoring as highly proficient; 27% proficient; 12% marginally proficient; and 4% not proficient. 84% were either highly proficient or proficient.

English 103’s SLO 3 states: “Write a 2000 word researched essay, integrating sources effectively and using correct MLA style including in-text document and Work Cited Page.” Again, applying a rubric resulted in 45% of students scoring as highly proficient; 35% as proficient; 13% as marginally proficient; and 7% as not proficient. 80% of students scored as being either highly proficient or proficient.

In both courses students met the library’s benchmark of 70% proficiency. English Department faculty identified the linked English 101 and Library Science 101 courses scheduled for spring 2014 as an effective improvement strategy for those SLOs.