LIRT's Top Twenty for 2012

The Top 20 Committee of the Library Instruction Round Table met virtually through the year to select the top articles dealing with bibliographic instruction and information literacy. Listed below are the winners for 2012 along with selected annotations. Special thanks to the Committee for their work this past year:

Christopher Granatino (University of California, Santa Barbara)
Joe Hardenbrook (University of Wisconsin – Green Bay)
Jennifer Nardine (Virginia Tech University)
Jo Oehrli (University of Michigan)
Mary O'Kelley (Grand Valley State University)
Yvonne Mery (University of Arizona)
Wayne Finley, Vice Chair (Northern Illinois University)
Wendell G. Johnson, Chair (Northern Illinois University)

Bailey, J. (2012). "Informal Screen Casting: Results of a Customer-Satisfaction Survey with a Convenience Sample." *New Library World*, 113.1: 7-26.

> Jody Bailey surveyed 103 faculty, staff, and students at the University of Texas, Arlington, to describe their use and acceptance of informal screencasting in response to information seeking. Most of the participants reacted positively to the experiment, but preferred to receive email instruction rather than screen shots in answer to their questions. Bailey believes the shortcoming of the study was that it did not include a representative sample of the university community (participants were recruited via email, so the data pool is a convenience sample). However, after an extensive literature search, Bailey believes that the study was the first to survey screencasting as an instructional tool. WJ

Birdsong, L. & Freitas, J. (2012). "Helping the Non-Scholar Scholar: Information Literacy for Lifelong Learners." *Library Trends*, 60.3: 588-610.

> The Information Literacy Initiative at the University of Washington's Information School is a program designed to engage patrons that sometimes fall outside of the traditional academic paradigm. The target audience for this initiative includes adult learners, not pursuing credits or a degree, who need either first-time information literacy training or a refresher course on new concepts and technology. This article outlines the fundamental mission statement of the initiative, a core definition of information literacy, and thoughtful analysis of how this program can support targeted clientele groups and their work environments.

The article also includes a review of existing programs, sample lesson plans, and models for a curriculum that targets adult learners. CG

Bottorff, T., & Todd, A. (2012). "Making Online Instruction Count: Statistical Reporting of Web-Based Library Instruction Activities." *College & Research Libraries*, 73.1: 33-46.

Although most information literacy librarians dutifully gather statistics for face-to-face instruction sessions, what do you do with online sessions or embedded classes? This article reviews the literature on the reporting of instruction statistics and then moves into a survey conducted by the authors. Interested in seeking information on how other libraries collect statistics, the authors centered their survey around three components: 1) Instruction delivered via online courseware 2) Instruction delivered via a librarian-lead online course 3) Instruction delivered via online tutorials. Findings indicate that there is no consensus on how libraries collect and categorize the data. As online education grows, a further emphasize on standards for information literacy data collection will be needed. JH

Detlor, B., Booker, L., Serenko, A. & Julien, H. (2012). "Student Perceptions of Information Literacy Instruction: The Importance of Active Learning." *Education for Information* 29.2: 147-161.

In this article, the authors investigate how students perceive active learning as part of information literacy instruction. Specifically, the authors look at how active and passive learning affect three outcome areas: psychological, behavioral, and benefit. Responses from over 300 full-time undergraduate business students enrolled in at a university in Canada were collected and analyzed. Student responses indicate that active learning has positive effects on all three outcome areas including a decrease in anxiety when using online library resources and an increase in time saved when searching for information. The authors also found that the amount of time students spent receiving active information literacy instruction did not impact the benefit. That is, students who received more than 30 minutes of instruction did not have more positive perceptions of their learning than those who received at least 30 minutes. The authors conclude that passive information literacy instruction should be eliminated and replaced with active learning instructional techniques. YM

Detmering, R. & Johnson, A. (2012). "'Research Papers Have Always Seemed Very Daunting': Information Literacy Narratives and the Student Research Experience." *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 12.1: 5-22.

As part of the growing movement to incorporate reflective narrative into educational experiences, librarians Detmering and Johnson of the University of Louisville have collated stories written by students about their research efforts.   Textual analysis reveals how these students' perspectives affect their approaches to research as well as their sense of agency in the research process.

Detmering and Johnson discuss four of these narratives in depth, plumbing the language use and story construction to better understand how undergraduate college students see the research process in sometimes surprising ways. The authors find value both for themselves and other educators with regard to understand the student perspective on research, and also for the students creating the narratives, who have the opportunity to distance themselves from the act of research enough to observe and learn from their own behavior and to solidify their own questions about the definition and purpose of research. JN

Edwards, M. E. & Black, E. W. (2012). "Contemporary Instructor-Librarian Collaboration: A Case Study of an Online Embedded Librarian Implementation." *Journal of Library & Information Services in Distance Learning*, 6.3-4: 284-311.

Using a small study sample (seven students), an online embedded librarian sought to measure how the graduate students in an eight week, online, educational technology research class were affected by the librarian's inclusion in the course. This was a mixed methods study using a pre and post-assessment of information literacy self-efficacy, citation analysis, and participant reflections. Librarian field notes and a debriefing session with the instructor also informed the study. The study found that the students had an increase in self-efficacy and used high quality sources in their annotated bibliographies throughout the course. This increase was actually attributed to the students' interactions with the content that the librarian provided rather than due to their interactions with the librarian. Because the study was completed with a small sample size of a very specific population (non-traditional learners who may have had prior experience with library research), it may be hard to extrapolate the findings to other settings. In addition, the librarian did not have an instructor role in the course which may have influenced the result. One may conclude that in some cases, librarians may want to focus on improving content that they provide to the online students in similar settings rather than improving the librarian-student interaction. JO

Finley, W., & Waymire, T. (2012). "Information Literacy in the Accounting Classroom: A Collaborative Effort." *Journal of Business & Finance Librarianship*, 17: 34-50.

Accounting is more than just numbers. It's about the government, law, and business: important disciplines for focusing on information literacy. The authors – an accounting professor and a business librarian – collaborated to address students' information literacy skills. Their assignment required students to research a current accounting-related issue and analyze federal and state legislative committees involved with the issue. Students gathered sources from academic articles, government documents, and other resources. The purpose of the assignment was to get students to find and incorporate credible, valid, and accurate sources of information. The article details the significant instructional component created by the librarian and provides an analysis of students'

bibliographies. Projects such as these will help address gaps in students' information literacy skills. JH

Gross, M., Latham, D. & Armstrong, B. (2012). Improving below-proficient information literacy skills: Designing an evidence-based educational intervention.´ *College Teaching*, 60.1: 104-111.

This article describes the development of the Attaining Information Literacy (AIL) project. Researchers at Florida State University investigated the effect of an educational intervention called "Information Skills: How to Find the Information You Need," designed specifically to meet the needs of first-year students who scored below proficient on the Information Literacy Test (ILT). The researchers began by convening focus groups of community college students to determine which type of educational interaction the students preferred; this was informed by the imposed query model. They also relied on research on the Dunning-Kruger effect, specifically the phenomenon in which one does not accurately recognize his or her own limitations (usually overestimating them) and thus is unlikely to seek help, not realizing one's own deficiencies. Therefore, the first two goals of the instructional intervention were to "change conception of the skills required to find, evaluate and use information" and "change conception of personal ability to find, evaluate and use information." The third goal was for students to acquire at least one information literacy skill. The researchers wanted students first to recognize information literacy as an achievable skills set. They also wanted students to improve their own self-assessment of their abilities in that skill set. The outcome was the ASE (Analyze, Search, Evaluate) Process Model, a scalable information literacy instruction model that is transparently explained to students, who are then led through a series of carefully designed activities. This well written article describes the process by which this IMLS grant-funded intervention was conceived and designed. Summative evaluations are underway.

Kovalik, C., Yutzey, D. & Piazza, L. (2012). "Assessing Change in High School Student Information Literacy Using the Tool for Real-Time Assessment of Information Literacy Skills." *Contemporary Issues in Education Research* 5.3: 153-166.

The authors used the TRAILS (Tool for Real-Time Assessment for Information Literacy Skills) assessment tool to measure the change in information literacy knowledge and skills in 201 high schools students in Upper Arlington High School (near Columbus, Ohio) between their freshman and senior years. TRAILS assessment consists of six questions in each of five sub-categories. The authors found that "Information literacy knowledge and skills for the high school students in this study showed a significant overall increase between the freshmen mean score and the senior mean score. Sub-categories of the TRAILS assessments indicated mixed results, with two sub-categories indicating significant increases, two sub-categories indicating significant decreases, and one sub-category with no significant difference" (p.160). The authors find that student information

literacy skills need a continuous and consistent approach and recommend that a district wide plan be implemented. WJ Lee, E. A., Reed, B., & Laverty, C. (2012). Preservice teachers' knowledge of information literacy and their perceptions of the school library program. Behavioral & Social Sciences Librarian, 31.1: 3-22. The development of information literacy skills is at the forefront of most conversations regarding library instruction. Professional organizations like ACRL, AASL, IFLA and UNESCO have all defined information literacy, and the impact information literacy has on learning. Studies have also linked competence in information literacy with academic achievement in primary and secondary school students. To this end, this study, based out of Ontario, Canada, investigated the current levels of understanding preservice teachers have of information literacy, to what degree were they prepared to teach information literacy to their students, what role did the teachers feel that library has on their practicum, and what was their understanding of the role of a teacher librarian. The authors collected survey results from over 500 preservice teachers, all of whom were candidates in a 1-year bachelor of education program that leads to accreditation to teach in K-12 classrooms. The survey was 26 questions, and included both Likert scale, yes/no, checklist questions and open-ended questions. Overwhelmingly, the survey indicated that many teachers felt unprepared to teach incorporate information literacy into their lesson plans, and had very traditional views about the role of the school library, reflecting the low level of collaboration between teachers and teacher librarians in the schools. In response to this survey, the authors developed the INSPIRED Teaching Series (Innovative Student Participation in Research and Education) with the goal of both teaching and developing course integrated classes, focusing on resources and curriculum specific content, and improving teacher-librarian collaboration. The study shows that while there is still a gap between the desired learning environment in K-12 schools and the readiness of teachers who staff these schools, there are developing models for programs that can improve the relationship between librarians and teachers and foster collaboration aimed at closing this gap. CG Martin, C.M.

Garcia, E.P., & McPhee, M. (2012). "Information literacy outreach: Building a high school program at California State University Northridge." *Education Libraries*, 34.1-2: 34-47.

The transition from high school to college is tough for many students. Incoming college students often do not possess the needed research and critical thinking skills to succeed academically. Furthermore, the library can often be the most intimidating building on campus. Librarians at CSU Northridge collaborated with a high school academy – that itself is a partnership between the university and the local school district – to assist in preparing high school students for college. Librarians secured university library privileges for the high school students and collaborated with teachers on assignments. Staffing allowed for a librarian

position dedicated to liaising with the high school. Librarians implemented a variety of instructional tools, handouts, and assessments. This case study will assist other academic libraries in providing outreach to high schools. JH

McBride, M. F. (2012). "Reconsidering Information Literacy in the 21st Century: The Redesign of an Information Literacy Class." *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*, 40.1: 287-300.

Mark McBride from Buffalo State College, State University of New York, seeks to incorporate a new understanding of literacy into our practice of library instruction. He discusses how a 3-credit information literacy course was redesigned to include transliteracy (the ability to read, write and interact across a broad range of platforms, including orality, handwriting, print, TV, radio and film, and digital social networks) and metaliteracy (a conceptual framework for information literacy that reinforces central lifelong learning goals among different literacy types). McBride incorporated a constructivist learning into his class and believes that Connectivism (which emphasizes the social and cultural context of learning) may hold the key to teaching information literacy in the future. He calls for a reconceptualization of information literacy. WJ

Saunders, L. (2012). "Faculty Perspectives on Information Literacy as a Student Learning Outcome." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 38.4: 226-236.

How do faculty members from different disciplines view information literacy? Who is responsible for ensuring students receive information literacy instruction: faculty or librarians? In this article, the author sets out to answer these and other questions via a survey of faculty from across the country. The author presents both quantitative and qualitative data that sheds light on how faculty understand and see the role of information literacy in their courses. Saunders found that an overwhelming majority of faculty view information literacy skills as an integral part of their students' education. Additionally, the majority of faculty believe students possess competencies in some skill areas but could improve in others. Saunders also presents data concerning the shared responsibility of teaching information literacy skills, faculty understanding of the term information literacy, and how faculty from different disciplines view the role of information literacy in their courses. In conclusion, Saunders offers suggestions for continued library/faculty collaboration and how to work with faculty in way that balances friendliness with persistence. YM

Sobel K, Sugimoto C. (2012). Assessment of Learning during Library Instruction: Practices, Prevalence, and Preparation. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 38.4: 191-204.

In a random selection of 100 libraries, 73% of doctoral degree granting institutions had a librarian with the word instruction in her or his title, while only 12% of associate degree granting institutions had a librarian with this word in the

title. Academic libraries are often treated as a homogeneous group, but they may not be. The researchers surveyed the librarians with the word instruction in their titles at these 100 libraries and found that a small majority conducted some type of instruction assessment. Of those that didn't do assessment, nearly half of them had the word instruction in her or his title. Of those that did conduct assessment, they only spent 10% or less of their time doing so. The survey respondents liked to assess undergraduates in one shot sessions and often used worksheets to do so. Some used pre- and post-quizzes. Many used multiple methods of assessment and some were able to work well with academic faculty to conduct assessment outside of the library instruction session. Twenty percent of these librarians learned how to conduct assessments in their MLS programs and a third of them had never received formal training in statistics. While these librarians look to journal articles to learn about assessment, they mostly shared the results of their own assessments internally only. JO

Sinkinson, C., Alexander, S., Hicks, A., & Kahn, M. (2012). "Guiding Design: Exposing Librarian and Student Mental Models of Research Guides." *portal: Libraries and The Academy*, 12.1: 63-84.

Caroline Sinkinson, Stephanie Alexander, Alison Hicks, and Meredith Kahn administered an open card sort study to students and librarians at the University of Colorado, Boulder to reveal perceptions of various library research guides. The authors found that students and librarians have different conceptions of the research process and that the research guides at the University of Colorado reflect librarian models of research rather than student preferences. The study also finds that mobile assistance probably will play an increasing role in the research process. Librarians should use the findings of Sinkinson, et al. to tailor research guides (and instruction) appropriate for undergraduate and graduate students. WJ

Smith, C., Doversberger, L., Jones, S., Ladwig, P., Parker, J., and B. Pietraszewski (2012). "Using Course Syllabi to Uncover Opportunities for Curriculum-Integrated Instruction." *Reference & User Services Quarterly* 51.3: 263- 271.

Library faculty at the University of Notre Dame collected and analyzed the content of class syllabi, searching for opportunities for future instructional collaboration. Through this analysis they were about to evaluate several hypotheses regarding the general underutilization of library tools and services in various disciplines and course levels. Among their findings the authors learned that, after filtering out syllabi from directed research classes, graduate level classes and first year composition classes, 43 percent of the classes evaluated required no library use and the remaining 57 involved at least some library component, and that 38 percent required library use beyond reserves and required readings. They further determined that course level and subject matter had an effect on the amount of library work required, and that formal library

instruction was underused in classes that required significant research. By using these and other results, the librarians have discovered areas for potential growth in the library instruction and outreach programs at Notre Dame. JN

Stockham, M. & Collins, H. (2012). Information literacy skills for preservice teachers: Do they transfer to K-12 classrooms? *Education Libraries*, 35(1-2): 59-72.

Researchers surveyed education majors at Kansas State University, Washburn University, and members of the Kansas Association of School Librarians with several goals in mind: to measure school media specialists' perceptions of whether new teachers in their schools integrate information literacy (IL); to discover whether education majors feel aware of and ready to teach IL concepts; and to raise awareness of IL standards and partnership opportunities with school media specialists. The authors theorized, based on research showing first-year college students as unprepared in IL skills, that K-12 classroom teachers are a key component to improving student IL skills. They wanted to see whether these pre-service teachers in Kansas clearly understood IL, felt prepared to teach it, and recognized their school media specialists' as potential partners. Although the sample size was small and demographics were not collected, the researchers themselves found utility in the results and adjusted their own academic library instruction with education majors to emphasize how what the education students are learning now about information literacy can be applied in their classrooms and in partnership with their school media specialists. This article will be most relevant for education librarians and school media specialists. M O'K

Strittmatter, C. (2012). Developing and assessing a library instruction module for a core business class. *Journal of Business & Finance Librarianship*, 17(1), 95-105. doi: 10.1080/08963568.2012.630645

Connie Strittmatter of Montana State University reports on faculty-library collaboration to develop an instructional module for a core undergraduate business course. The module contained three instructional sessions accompanied by a graded online exercise and assigned research memo. Strittmatter found a significant statistical difference in the online exercise between students who attended the instructional sessions and those who did not. However, the results regarding the assigned research memo were inconclusive. The study demonstrates how to evaluate the effectiveness of information literacy sessions using quantitative analysis. WJ

Tennant, M., Edwards, M., & Miyamoto, M. (2012). Use of instructional design theory and an individualized hybrid strategy for assessment in library-based instruction. *Journal of the Medical Library Association*, 100.4: 319-322.

Tennant et al. examine how a course featuring individualized course projects could migrate from a primarily paper-based assessment environment to a hybrid system combining both paper-based and online components. Further, it

examines how such a migration can both decrease the grading burden on the instructor without sacrificing the individualized assignment components of the course. The purpose is a familiar one, finding ways to reduce instructional load while retaining the quality of the course. By isolating the three major assignments from the course, outlining their intended instructional goals, and identifying the assignments that necessarily required a paper-based component, they successfully found ways to reduce the amount of time spent grading assignments, which in turn gave the students timely feedback on their performance. For the first assignment, a series of online quizzes were created, and though it proved a time consuming at first, it has now allowed for the first assignment to be graded entirely online. The second assignment which focused on database searching and critical literature review was left in a paper-based format, as it was critical to the instructors to use a format that would accurately capture student search strategies and analysis. It was, however, accompanied with an online assessment that was universal enough to apply despite any differences in individually selected topics final section was done in a similarly hybrid style, combining paper-based responses with online components for assessment. While the conversion required an investment of time and resources at the outset, ultimately it would create a stable online platform that would be easy to update for future sessions, and uniform enough that it would still allow students to select individualized topics. It could also be integrated into course software, in this case, Sakai. The authors found that the key component for their success was not simply transferring questions to an online platform, but thinking critically about each assignment and the expected learning outcomes. After analyzing student performance and feedback before and after the migration, the authors found similarity in assessment scores, suggesting that the change in format had not had influenced student learning despite the change in platform. CG

Zhong, Y. (2012). "Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in Library Instruction." *College & Undergraduate Libraries*, 19.1: 33-45.

Ying Zhong, from the Walter W. Stiern Library, California State University, Bakersfield applied Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to library instruction. UDL is based on three principles: (multiple means of representations, or the "what" of learning; multiple means of action or expression, the "how" of learning; and multiple means of engagement, or the "why" of learning) to "design course instruction, materials, and content to benefit people of all learning styles without adaption or retrofitting." Ying Zhong's study supplies two lesson plans (one a general plan and the other focusing on Boolean logic). The author gathered data (surveys) to evaluate the teaching effectiveness of the lesson plans. The results of the surveys indicate that UDL helps students improve their information seeking skills. WJ