Beyond Embedding: Integrating the Standards of Librarianship with Discipline Values and Accreditation

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Introduction

To be effective, librarians must become conversant in the language and resources of their subject or liaison area disciplines. Setting their discourse within a framework that is relevant to the faculty they are working with, and aligning with the educational goals of the programs they are serving, will aid in the discovery of the information needs of their liaison departments and guide their approach to information literacy (IL) instruction. There are many strategies for discovering the values and guiding principles underpinning a discipline and tying them to library services. It is the goal of this paper to highlight effective approaches for this process, based on our experience in writing the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Nursing and being beyond embedded in the discipline.[1]

Finding Supporting Documents for Nursing

The first step in the process of uncovering these concepts for nursing education was a literature review. Our search results did not reveal any sort of overview or documentation of the resources necessary to provide the lexicon of nursing education to a non-nurse educator, such as a librarian. The search did produce references to documents to further pursue, such as professional practice standards and competencies, as well as uncovering a large body of literature related to nursing informatics. This came as no surprise, due the ubiquity of technology in nursing care and the education surrounding it.[2]

The broader objectives and competencies of a discipline are often defined by their accrediting bodies and related organizations. Knowing this, the next step of our process was to investigate the two accrediting bodies for nursing programs in the United States and the supporting documents they rely on to guide accreditation.[3] Of those two entities, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), formed by American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), accredits the majority of baccalaureate, graduate, and residency programs in nursing in the United States. In their accreditation standards, CCNE requires programs to demonstrate the incorporation of professional nursing standards and guidelines, specifically those created by the AACN for baccalaureate, master's education, nurse practitioner, and doctoral education.[4] These documents (collectively referred to as "The Essentials Series"), are a rich source of curriculum content and competencies correlated to the various levels of nursing education.

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Exploring organizations such as the AACN led to the discovery of other resources, such as the Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) project,[5] which the AACN co-sponsored to create a set of competencies designed to provide "a systematic pedagogical structure" for course design and guidelines designed specifically to prepare nurses to practice in an atmosphere that values quality and safety in patient care at both the pre-licensure and graduate levels.[6] The QSEN elucidates the knowledge, skills and attitudes required by nurses to practice effectively, and includes a competency stating that nurses should engage in evidence-based practice (EBP). This focus on assuring that nurses practice from an evidence-based perspective provides an ideal avenue for the consideration of information literacy.

Regional standards are another source for guidance in this process. In our research, we discovered that the Oregon Consortium for Nursing Education (OCNE) had compiled a set of core competencies for their shared curriculum, which is being taught in 10 partner institutions across the state.[7] Documents and guidelines created collectively in a collaborative organization of this sort are sure to be thoughtful and constructive resources to inform your work.

Because nursing is a professional field, we also searched for professional practice standards that would elucidate the principles and values we were seeking. Documents guiding the standards of practice or professional expectations in this subject area, such as the American Nursing Association (ANA) Professional Standards,[8] and the ANA Scope and Standards of Practice,[9] provided important insight into the skills and expertise required of practicing nurses. These documents also included a focus on evidence-based practice which, as mentioned previously, is a natural fit with the principles of information literacy. A faculty connection led us to the work of the Technology Informatics Guiding Education Reform (TIGER) Initiative, a group of leaders in the fields of nursing practice, education, and the delivery of patient care, who came together to develop strategies for improving nursing practice. We consulted their document, "In-

formatics Competencies for Every Practicing Nurse: Recommendations from the TIGER Collaborative" in our work as well.[10] Searching for publications from international associations, especially in countries where nursing education is heavily researched, gave us another source of reference materials for our process. For example, through the International Council of Nurses (ICN) we discovered the "ICN Code of Ethics for Nurses,"[11] another set valuable of competencies for nursing.

At the local level, faculty provided us with course syllabi and assignments, program objectives and outcomes, and curriculum committee documents to inform our work. In addition, we also consulted mission statements and strategic plans to obtain further insight toward what a school or program valued most and considered most important for their organization to remain viable.

Mapping Disciplinary Documents to Information Literacy

After gathering disciplinary documents and scouring the literature, we decided it would be most beneficial to identify a set of foundational documents or standards from which to focus. We thought of this foundational document as our "mapping document" and for our work chose the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education.[12] Should you choose a similar approach, the selected "mapping document" should contain the concepts that you, the librarian, will use as the lens through which to identify connections and on which to base a final document detailing the ties you make between the literature of the discipline and information literacy-based outcomes. Creating a table, using the first column to delineate the separate values, concepts, or standards of the foundational document, helps with organization of concepts. If it makes more sense to the librarian constructing this document, this information also could be presented in a narrative format.

In the process of translating the disciplinary information into the mapping document, think about whether it would be more useful to divide the con-

nections into separate categories or if one will be sufficient. In our work, we created a table with the information literacy standard performance indicators and outcomes listed in the left column. Next, we created columns for each level of nursing education for which we could identify disciplinary standards. With the ACRL Standards in mind, we went over the disciplinary documents again and searched for concepts that corresponded to each of the divisions laid out in the information literacy column.

Reading through the disciplinary documents, it is important to maintain an awareness of differences in the language used to describe values, concepts, and ideas to make connections. Knowing the concepts and language of the foundational document very well will help to interpret the connections in the secondary documents. It is likely that some connections will stretch the meaning of either document, but go ahead and include everything that may be applicable in this first draft. Once that is complete, revisiting the document with at least one or two colleagues and asking for feedback from disciplinary faculty will allow for the most accurate final document. This step will help to refine the connections document so that it is reasonable in size and defendable in content.

An alternative approach might be to choose to work from a list of disciplinary standards and map to the ILCSHE, or the newly approved ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, to those disciplinary standards.[13] This depends on the audience for the final document and will determine the order in which the table is read. In the case of writing the ILCS for nursing we used the ACRL document as the lens for the discipline specific standards, did our original mapping in a table and then transferred the content to the format of the original ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards. Additionally, using the familiar standards as a foundation will assure that the information will be more useful for a new librarian, who needs to transition from information literacy language to the language of the discipline.

It may be more useful to nursing faculty to look at the evidence-based practice steps first, allowing the reader to look at the IL standards through the lens of the EBP framework. This construct might be more useful for the nurse-educator, who needs to create a connection from the familiar (EBP) to the unfamiliar (IL).

It appears that Amanda Hovious used a similar method to draw correlations between the new ACRL Framework and the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards. She placed the new framework in the first column and then linked the previous standards, saying that "the chart helps you to see where the old competencies fit into the new construct".[14] For instance:

This sort of mapping document also helps to draw attention to where there are notable differences in the information literacy framework that might be important in the disciplinary documents. Nancy Adams highlights one important difference between the EBP standards and the ACRL Information Literacy

TABLE I	
Example of a Mapping Document	
ACRL Alignment Chart Proposed — Current	
Proposed Framework	Current Standards
Authority Is Constructed and Contextual Authority Is Constructed and Contextual refers to the recognition that information resources are drawn from their creators' expertise and credibility based on the information need and the context in which the information will be used. Experts view authority with an attitude of informed skepticism and an openness to new perspectives, additional voices, and changes in schools of thought.	**Standard One** The information literate student determines the nature and extent of the information needed **Standard Three** The information literate student evaluates information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system.

Competency Standards, involving assessment of the information.[15] EBP calls for assessment of research methods to evaluate the strength of the evidence in the literature, while the IL Standards stress the authority of the researchers to assess the strength of the research. This is a very important difference that affects the quality of instruction for the librarian in the health science disciplines.

Identifying Collaborators

Collaboration is essential to successfully integrate the values of a discipline into the work of the librarian. The following are recommended strategies that are useful in identifying collaborators, either locally, regionally, or nationally, in order to build a network of professionals to aid in the process:

- Identify the major players in the discipline area by examining web sites and professional organizations. Review their work, and get involved with current projects.
- Search relevant databases to find out who in the disciplinary field is publishing in teaching and information literacy.
- Find librarian partners to work with by putting out a call on a regional or national listservs for any interested parties. The authors consulted health science library listservs to query colleagues, and otherwise reached out to those in the field, especially those within the Association of College and Research Libraries Health Science Interest Group—who sponsored this work on the nursing information literacy standards. They also made connections with the Medical Library Association, particularly the Nursing and Allied Health Research Section.
- Inquire at relevant meetings at regional, state, and national conferences to locate colleagues interested in collaborating on a project.
- Find local people with whom to partner. These include: "faculty, departmental or college curriculum committees, instructional designers, staff from centers for teaching and learning, and others".[16] Working closely with faculty specifically, and, if possible, identifying champions or mentors amongst them, is the strategy that will provide the best information. Collaborations with faculty have developed librarian liaison relationships and contributed to better faculty understanding of the librarian's role as not only valid, but vital, in disciplinary education.

- Think about how to contextualize the project when speaking with potential research partners. Having conversations with faculty members about associations and standards with which they might already be familiar with is a great way to begin a collaborative project.[17] One suggestion from the ACRL Framework is to identify "core ideas" and focus on the "knowledge domain that can extend learning for students".[18] Read through the "For Faculty: How to Use the Framework" in the ACRL Framework to consider which concepts would be relevant to share with discipline faculty.[19]

Another pertinent approach is to use the "disciplinary standards as a bridge to talk about instruction goals in addition to ACRL Information Literacy documents." In working with faculty and/or curriculum committees using the "discipline standards allows for a richer, more authentic collaboration".[20] It is also meaningful to faculty and easily understood by the students. Collaboration of this type can lead to the development of a set of goals, assignments, and assessment practices that eventually can be extended to all of the concentrations offered in the program.[21]

- For those who are new to partnering with faculty, consider the tips from the 2013 Meulemans, Nalani, and Carr article such as, "take an approach with faculty that aims to build awareness that collaborative work is available".[22] Inform faculty and potential research partners about current or upcoming opportunities to work with them. Consider professors that are seeking assistance and

guidance in crafting a rich learning experience for their students. They may be more likely to engage with the goals of the project.[23] According to Ivey 2003, there are "four behaviors that are essential for success in collaboration: a shared, understood goal; mutual respect, tolerance, and trust; competence for the task at hand by each of the partners; and ongoing communication".[24] Communicate the intent to build an intentional culture such as this during the beginning of the collaboration.

- Invite potential partners to engage together in "problem-posing about the discipline".[25] In the overall process, the librarian will be potentially engaging with students, colleagues, campuses, librarianship other professions in the act of questioning related to information literacy and the discipline.[26]

- "Teaching librarians have tools similar to those used by faculty, including:
  — Critical thinking and lifelong learning are already goals of most disciplines…, and "information literacy naturally complements educational approaches in those areas."
  — Librarians cannot be the sole purveyors of information literacy.
  — Collaboration and buy-in from all parties is essential to make information literacy education effective.
  — Separating the information literacy process from the content of a discipline risks losing meaning and context.[27]

- Ideally, the scope of the project should not aim for a single library session, but rather, according to the ACRL Framework should be, "developmentally and systematically integrated into the student's academic program at a variety of levels. This may take considerable time to implement fully in many institutions".[28]

- Depending on the time frame for conducting this work, consider using some significant

frameworks such as the ACRL "threshold concepts, backward design and decoding the disciplines".[29] These frameworks can provide structure for the project.

Conclusion

Gaining insight into the values and guiding principles of an academic discipline can be done at whatever level time allows and does not require a deadline or a publication document. It only requires that a librarian use their professional skills to search out the appropriate documents to satisfy the information need. We believe that any iteration of this process will provide greater understanding of the discipline of interest to appropriately inform the creation and provision of library services.

Notes

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