Not Just One Shot: Extending the Dialogue about Information Literacy in Composition Classes

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While composition programs are frequently responsible for teaching basic research writing, it is still common practice to limit lessons in information literacy to “one-shot” library instruction sessions. This practice reinforces the perception that the research process is separate from (and simpler than) the writing process, that teaching students effective research practices can be reduced to a single, skills-based class session, and that, ultimately, literacy in information is only useful if tied to the academic research paper. We argue that writing and information literacy are complimentary processes that need to be integrated into multiple, contextual classroom sessions. Through collaboration and shared responsibility, writing teachers and librarians can better incorporate information literacy instruction within composition programs and improve students’ research options and behaviors.

Introduction

Instructors across the disciplines would probably agree that students’ ability to incorporate research within their writing is an essential facet of college education. Yet, most compositionists would assert that simply helping students use and cite research in their writing is not sufficient to make them more thoughtful writers or more successful students. Instead, writing instructors have increasingly come to see information literacy (IL) as a key element in a range of critical activities. According to Diane VanderPol, Jeanne M. Brown, and Patricia Iannuzzi, information literacy enables students “to determine the nature of information needed to solve a problem, find targeted information and evaluate its reliability and usefulness, apply and analyze the information to create new knowledge, and function with an understanding of the ethical and financial contexts of their information use” (12). Twenty-first century teachers of writing recognize that because our students have an excess of information resources at their disposal, creating rich opportunities for undergraduate engagement in diverse, dynamic research projects that develop such literacies is absolutely essential.

Despite the proliferation of information resources, however, a recent Project Information Literacy report notes that students’ habits as information seekers appear slow to change. According to the report’s authors: “students exhibited little inclination to vary the frequency or order of their use [of
information resources], regardless of their information goals and despite the plethora of other online and in person information resources—including librarians—that were available to them” (Head and Eisenberg 3). As such, we can conclude that many students will attempt to complete all of their college writing assignments using only a handful of the resources at their disposal.

Because composition instructors commonly bear responsibility for general research instruction, helping students to take advantage of such resources—and to use them creatively, purposefully, and thoughtfully—should be a prominent goal in our pedagogy and curriculum design. Indeed, in highlighting the importance of information literacy in all disciplines and at every academic level, professional organizations such as the American Library Association (ALA) and the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) have effectively set the stage for those who wish to infuse both writing and research across the curriculum (see also D'Angelo and Maid; Grafstein; Mackey and Jacobson; Information Literacy Articulation Group). Yet even as institutions are beginning to embrace direct information literacy instruction as part of the twenty-first century college curriculum, sustained attention to students’ use of information resources has not yet become a central curricular component of first-year composition, where information and research instruction is too often relegated to a one-shot library session. Librarians use the term “one-shot instruction” to describe brief (50-75 minute) library sessions in which they are asked to teach students all the skills they need to become information literate (Reitz 499). The term is thus meant to both describe and convey the futility of these sessions. Instead of providing any meaningful sense of what it means to engage the complexity of scholarly research, one-shot instructions provide just enough basic skill training for the student to find the 3-5 sources required to write their composition paper. Even though this approach has obvious shortcomings, in our own experiences at ten colleges and universities, one-shot instruction was the primary means of introducing students to research in first-year writing course work. Such trends, while anecdotal, seem to indicate that IL has not yet been adequately and practically integrated within introductory composition classrooms or curricula. This article will consider why and how writing instructors should engage in the conversation about information literacy on a professional level, as well as how instructors and librarians can collaborate to address this knowledge gap in student writing.

Research, Writing, Reciprocity: Resisting the Skills Mindset

Over the past decade, composition specialists have begun to address the importance of pairing effective information literacy instruction with instruc-
tion in composition. In reviewing publications on information literacy and composition, however, two prevailing patterns emerge. First, prior to 2009, the majority of scholarship that seeks to theorize the influence of IL instruction within composition classrooms—or the role of writing in information literacy instruction—appears in journals outside the field of Composition. While two recent articles on composition and information literacy have appeared in journals such as *Composition Forum* and *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, articles on integrating information literacy and the writing curriculum published earlier in the decade by Rolf Norgaard and Barbara D'Angelo and Barry Maid appeared in journals devoted to library and information science. Second, and perhaps more significant, scholarship on the integration of information literacy and writing instruction produced to date is overwhelmingly local. Published accounts on collaborative IL instruction commonly represent how particular programs have integrated library and research instruction within specific writing courses, or using particular collaborative models. Even though awareness of the role information literacy plays in developing effective writing strategies appears to be growing, we agree with Norgaard that “given how much classroom practice in rhetoric and composition involves helping students with inquiry and research, it is nothing short of surprising how little the field has written about information literacy and library collaboration, especially if one is looking for more than anecdotal reports of local practice” (“Contributions” 125). For nearly a decade, calls to reflect upon collective institutional practices and to build mutually supportive, engaged, and collaborative theories of blended IL and writing instruction have instead resulted in a fragmented and tenuous disciplinary perspective on the role of IL in writing instruction.

This tendency to resist a more comprehensive disciplinary understanding of the global, recursive relationships between information literacy and student writing may serve to perpetuate outmoded notions of what it means to be information literate, or what it means to compose in a digital age. As with writing, practice in research and information literacy has evolved from a concept largely associated with a set of discrete skills required to produce a polished and complete product (e.g., locating, gathering, and documenting sources), into a reciprocal and sophisticated process for interpreting, integrating, and sharing information. Norgaard, in the first of his guest columns published in *Reference and Information Services Quarterly*, highlights parallels between the development of information literacy and that of composition by outlining central misperceptions influencing work in both fields, most significantly:

> that information literacy is a neutral, technological skill that is, at heart, merely functional or performative. Rhetoric and composition has a long history of confronting similar misperceptions about reading and writing. Complaints that Johnny can’t read, or that Jane can’t write, easily promote
the notion that literacy is a neutral, discrete, context-free skill. These perceptions also remain in play regarding information literacy. (“Contributions” 125)

Just as compositionists have responded to such misperceptions with more nuanced, more complex models of writing, so have librarians worked to craft more sophisticated—and realistic—conceptions of what it means to discover, process, develop, and meaningfully utilize information for exploratory and communicative purposes.2

Despite progress in reconceptualizing both information literacy and composition as rich, productive, and complex processes, James Elmborg argues that theoretical and programmatic divisions have thwarted attempts to build from common notions of literacy valued by both compositionists and librarians. In his work, “Libraries and Writing Centers in Collaboration: A Basis in Theory,” Elmborg notes:

The recursiveness of the research/writing process is related at least in part to the recurring interplay between writing and information. By segregating the research process from the writing process, we have obscured the fact and thereby impoverished both the writing process and the research process. This segregation reflects institutional divisions, but not the reality of student work. (11)

Unfortunately, all too often, composition professionals have played a role in perpetuating such divisions. Though our programs frequently bear the responsibility for teaching basic research writing to first-year students, it is still common practice to either disregard the expertise our librarian colleagues may lend to IL instruction, or, conversely, to “farm out” lessons in information literacy to one-shot library instruction sessions.3 These practices can, in turn, serve to reinforce the perception that the research process is separate from (and more facile than) the writing process, that teaching students effective research practices can be reduced to a single, skills-based class session, and that, ultimately, literacy in information is only useful or valuable if tied to that well-worn (and ill-formed) genre, the academic research paper. In this sense, one-shot instruction mirrors misperceptions regarding literacy education that compositionists have sought to change. According to Chris Fosen, “under the skills mindset, individual composition classes reproduce education as the acquisition of basic tools that have value only in the progress toward a degree, not in their meaningful or disciplinary use” (20). By teaching research as a single and discrete unit disconnected from rhetorical concerns, we powerfully influence the ways students come to understand and engage information. According to Alison J. Head and Michael B. Eisenberg, the skills mindset continues to shape students’ perceptions of research, as “findings suggest students conceptualize research, especially tasks associated with seeking
information, as a competency learned by rote, rather than as an opportunity to learn, develop, or expand upon an information-gathering strategy which leverages the wide range of resources available to them” (1).

Just as theories of process served to revolutionize the teaching and administration of writing courses in the last decades of the twentieth century, reconceptualizing the teaching and placement of information literacy in our writing programs is crucial in these early years of the twenty-first century. In particular, developing programs that recognize the complexity, the difficulty, and the centrality of information literacy within contemporary writing environments may prove essential to counteracting the skills mindset, in that research requires responsible, inquiry-driven consideration of “meaningful” uses of information. As noted by Norgaard, “thinking of information literacy as ‘shaped’ by writing—writing theory, writing instruction, and the very writing process itself” enriches composition as both a practice and a field (“Contributions” 125). Yet, in order to teach students to make “meaningful or disciplinary use” of information as both tool and concept (Fosen 20), our programs must embrace the technical and disciplinary knowledge of research and teaching librarians.

The work begun by research and teaching librarians clearly provides fertile ground for collaborative, informed, and creative approaches to sharing responsibility for instruction in writing and research. In their work “A Blended Method for Integrating Information Literacy Instruction into English Composition Classes,” librarians Leslie Sult and Vicki Mills indicate that practically and philosophically, there is a “natural fit and shared goals of information literacy and English composition programs,” as both “writing and researching are viewed as non-linear processes and both require individuals to work back and forth through a number of stages of discovery, development, and critical thinking” (369-370). To prove their point, Sult and Mills provide a table drawing clear parallels between the Council of Writing Program Administrators’ Outcomes Statement and the ACRL Standards for Information Literacy. Indeed, the ACRL indicates that successful information literacy programs “depend on collaboration between classroom faculty, academic administrators, librarians and other information professionals” (“Information Literacy for Faculty and Administrators”). As Sult and Mills explain, “For a multitude of reasons, budgetary constraints, personnel reductions, and questions of efficacy, libraries and librarians are being challenged to develop more integrated methods for assisting faculty, instructors, and students in teaching and learning information literacy skills” (368). To do so, university libraries often reach out to established programs such as first-year experience seminars, first-year writing courses, writing centers, service learning courses, or writing-intensive courses. All of these partnerships can be successful; yet, “[t]hroughout the library instruction literature, it has long been held that targeting first year English composition courses is an
efficient and effective means of incorporating information literacy into the curriculum” because it is typically required for new students and requires research-based writing (369).

Composition specialists can bring a wealth of experience and knowledge regarding student writing practices to bear in such partnerships. However, we must also remain mindful of how we might successfully incorporate information literacy within first-year writing programs. According to Randall McClure and Kellian Clink, information literacy problems could be caused by “too many people working in isolation” (131) and perhaps no other symptom of this problem is as pronounced as one-shot instruction—an inefficient and inadequate means of preparing students to incorporate meaningful research into their writing. Yet, one-shot instruction persists in many first-year writing programs despite the focus on writing and research as complimentary processes and the knowledge that, for library instruction to be effective, it has to occur in several sessions throughout a term and within multiple contexts. According to David A. Sousa, practice “refers to learners repeating a skill over time. It begins with the rehearsal of the new learning in working memory. Later, the memory is recalled from long-term storage and additional rehearsal follows. The quality of the rehearsals and the learner’s knowledge base will largely determine the outcome of each practice” (97). Repetition cannot occur in a one-shot instruction because of the severe time limitation. Also, there is no way to ensure students will perform quality repetition outside of the session. After a demonstration or explanation of a few research options, the student is left with only a few minutes of practice for something they are likely to forget once they have their needed sources. Studies such as Project Information Literacy indicate that students are fairly rigid in their research process, unwilling or unable to expand their research agendas and procedures (Head and Eisenberg 14-15); one-shot instruction thus cannot provide the support, motivation, or attention required to change information literacy behaviors.

The time limitations in one-shot instruction sessions also fail to provide an adequate means of presenting the information in different contexts. This is essential for encoding (a process that relates new information to information already in long-term memory thus making it easier to recall when needed): “Retrieval, then, is very much influenced by the context of encoding. This suggests for instruction that many different contexts or examples may be important to discuss during the presentation of new concepts. In this way, students will have many cues available to assist in encoding that may later be used for recall” (Driscoll 101). One-shot instructions simply do not allow for the multiple presentations of contexts that would allow for long-term memory retrieval.

Additionally, time limitations imposed by one-shot instruction may inhibit or obscure essential connections between research contexts and writing
processes. According to the Project Information Literacy report, students’ efforts in establishing a context for their research are “key to understanding how students operationalize and prioritize their course-related and everyday life research activities” (Head and Eisenberg 7). Based on their preliminary findings, Head and Eisenberg define four research contexts students must engage in fulfilling both academic and everyday tasks:

1. Big picture: Finding out background for defining and selecting a topic
2. Language: Figuring out what words and terms associated with a topic may mean
3. Situational: Gauging how far to go with research, based on surrounding circumstances
4. Information-gathering: finding, accessing, and securing relevant research resources. (7)

Clear links exist between this contextual model and rhetorical models, both classic and contemporary: specifically, between situational research and analysis of a rhetorical situation; between both language research and information-gathering and elements of genre or discourse analysis; and between big-picture research and elements of invention, definition, and exposition. One-shot instruction by necessity isolates procedural information-seeking behaviors from the more complex range of behaviors that allow students to make informed choices regarding potential uses of information in particular rhetorical contexts. Yet, it also appears to serve as an all-too-common means through which first-year writing programs attempt to address the pivotal role research can play in the writing process.4

Collectively, we can do much better—particularly if we heed the advice of McClure and Clink and work collaboratively, rather than in isolation. Instead of one-shot sessions, librarians could seek to create alliances with faculty in order to improve students’ research options and behaviors. Specifically, librarians hope to provide information literacy instruction and support at multiple points during a project or a term, providing repeated opportunities in which students can practice a range of approaches to research. Fortunately, writing instructors appear increasingly interested in creating partnerships that facilitate library instruction in order to improve students’ use of information in written research.

To date, attempts to measure the success of such partnerships have focused on the written products students submit after taking part in a collaborative information literacy initiative. For example, in “Collaboration is Key: Librarians and Composition Instructors Analyze Student Research and Writing,” Barratt et al. study research practices of students enrolled in the University of Georgia’s first-year composition program, asking whether a combination of library instruction and clear assignment guidelines improves students’ research citations. In their examination of 5,246 citations culled
from student writing across 40 FYC sections, students relied on Web sites 51 percent of the time (42). Half of the sections participated in library instruction sessions [LI] and half of the sections had no library instruction [NLI] (46). The total number of citations per assignment was nearly the same per assignment [LI: 65 citations, NLI: 66 citations] (47). In addition, the number of times students used Web sites were the same [LI: 50 percent, NLI: 51 percent] (47). The only “noticeable effect of library instruction lay in the number of books and articles the students cited” (47). NLI classes used more books [24 percent versus 17 percent] and LI used more articles [29 percent versus 21 percent] (47).

To understand how the assignment and library instruction influence citations, the researchers then analyzed one assignment in four classes, examining “citations within the context of individual writers, teachers, assignments, and library instruction” (37) and considering each of the following factors: the type of information resource (book, journal, Web site, etc.); how citations are used within the student essays (advance an argument, make a point, meet an assignment requirement); and how the teachers’ written assignment instructions influence citation quality (report information, choose one side of an issue, convince an audience) (49-54). Based on their findings, they conclude:

Library instruction and carefully considered teacher assignments—in particular, written instructions—do have a positive influence on the quality of the research that students perform for their first-year composition courses. As predicted by previous studies, neither factor alone prompts the best research method; written exhortations and library instruction must work in tandem. Librarians and instructors need to focus as much on crafting an effective assignment together as they do on teaching students information literacy and composition skills. (54)

If we understand information literacy as a mix of choosing the appropriate sources and using the sources appropriately, librarians and instructors can work together to identify teaching strategies that not only assist students in finding information but also in using that information purposefully. Further, this collaboration must not be reserved until students are in the process of conducting or beginning their research, but must be part of instructional planning envisioned by the instructor or writing program administrator. If this sort of cooperation appears to improve student writing (in terms of the final products produced through such partnerships), then our efforts as compositionists and WPAs must focus on the collaborative processes that facilitate productive interaction between library and writing instructors.

100 Composition Studies
Incorporating IL in the Writing Curriculum: The View from the Library

While a growing body of research is working to assess the effectiveness of library partnerships within particular programs (see, for example, Brady et.al.; Holliday and Fagerheim; Sult and Mills) or to achieve particular ends (Macklin; Mackey and Jacobson), librarians have been developing various alternatives to one-shot instruction. In “Information Literacy and Higher Education: Placing the Academic Library in the Center of a Comprehensive Solution,” Edward K. Owusu-Ansah argues for three types of library instruction: “Course-related and course-integrated instruction, the two most popular methods for bibliographic instruction, and independent credit courses remain the most viable vehicles for delivering information literacy instruction” (11). Similarly, McClure and Clink indicate that problems in effectively integrating information literacy instruction in English composition courses “are best solved through innovative collaborations between the information experts (librarians) and writing experts (EC teachers). These partnerships might involve interactive Web-based supplements, co-requisite information literacy courses, and co-taught writing courses” (131).

Librarians have, for some time, lent their expertise to composition students in the form of course-related instruction. Course-related instruction refers to library instruction that, in addition to a one-shot library instruction or workshop, provides additional resources related to the course. The librarian works with the instructor to develop these resources, though contact with the students is typically limited to the one-shot session. More effective strategies, in terms of establishing meaningful collaborative efforts between writing instructors and librarians, involve the creation of additional resources such as subject or class guides related to the course. These Web-based guides provide a list of resources with a short description and Web link. They can include a list of library databases, Web sites, and other relevant information. Additional Web-based instruction can be provided on how to use these resources (for example, a video on searching JSTOR or a tutorial on scholarly versus peer-reviewed sources). These additional resources are housed on the library home page or in a course management system.

The advantage of course-related instruction is that it can provide additional demonstration and instruction opportunities through Web-based tutorials as well as providing a richer source of assignment-related resources for the student to explore. Further, such resources can be made available to all stakeholders involved in information literacy education—librarians, teachers, and students—thereby creating an integrated network of materials capable of extending instruction beyond the limitations of a single class or course. The disadvantage is that there is no way to ensure the quality of
skill repetition or opportunities for encoding, as students may simply ignore these additional resources and tutorials.

Another alternative involves course-integrated library instruction: “a research and/or library component built into an academic course description as an essential part of the course” (LaGuardia et al. 55). In the course-integrated instruction model, the librarian has a presence in the course from the beginning of the term. This is accomplished with contact information in both the syllabus and course management system and with a live or face-to-face introduction on the first day of class. The librarian works with the faculty member to design specific library assignments related to the course (e.g., advanced Internet research, finding articles in library databases, or using podcasts for research). A brief in-class demo or library session is given prior to each assignment. These instructions can also take the form of self-paced, Web-based units. These assignments/Web-based units will be delivered during the term in short segments with relevant discussions related to each instruction. The assignments/Web-based units themselves may or may not have any impact on the final grade.

The advantage of course-integrated instruction is that it facilitates a higher quality of practice as the librarian can work with students one-on-one to improve their research skills. The breakdown of library instruction into smaller components allows multiple contexts for information to be presented, creating a greater opportunity for encoding and further attention to the importance of using research sources purposefully or strategically. Also, course-integrated instruction encourages communication and multiple points of contact between the students and librarian, and it may also help to address a key issue highlighted in the Project Information Literacy report: namely, students primarily turn to their instructors for guidance on research, rather than to librarians who specialize in research instruction. According to the report, “eight out of 10 of the respondents reported rarely, if ever, turning to librarians for help with course-related research assignments” (Head and Eisenberg 3).

Preliminary research on course-integrated instruction indicates that more extensive exposure to research librarians can reverse this pattern. For example, in “Taking Library Instruction into the Online Classroom,” Amy C. York and Jason M. Vance conducted a survey of librarians embedded in course management systems: “According to 70% of respondents, students ‘often’ or ‘always’ contact the embedded librarian (63% and 7%, respectively), and only 30% reported that students ‘seldom’ contact them” (206).

By working together to design assignments, as Randall McClure claims, “librarian-teacher partners will certainly learn more about their shared writing and researching goals, thus likely to improve both library and writing instruction in the process” (71). Further, from a programmatic perspective, course-integrated instruction can offer opportunities for WPAs to encourage professional development among teaching staff, to assess the effectiveness
of information literacy initiatives, and to glean feedback from both instructional and library staff regarding students’ writing and research practices. The disadvantage of course-integrated instruction is that while the depth of the library assignments/Web-based units is considerably greater than a one-shot instruction, it is unusual for significant portions of the course to contain information literacy instruction. Also, if no credit or grade is attached to completing the assignments/Web-based units, students may not be motivated to engage in this type of instruction.

Credit-bearing instruction “requires approval within the curriculum to carry institutional credit. These classes meet repeatedly and regularly and are library counterparts to academic courses” (LaGuardia et al. 56). Credit is the term that stands out in this type of library instruction. It requires a more substantial amount of information literacy instruction, and it has the consequences of a grade. Unfortunately, libraries that pursue credit-bearing information literacy instruction have advocated for an independent course. In addition to being difficult to add to the curriculum and nearly impossible to mandate as a requirement for graduation, these independent information literacy courses have been critiqued because they only teach information literacy separated from a real world context. According to Ann Grafstein,

there is a risk in carrying too far the dichotomy between information seeking as a process and more concrete subject-based knowledge. The risk is that of isolating entirely information-seeking skills from knowledge, thereby losing sight of information-seeking skills as a tool whose ultimate goal is the synthesis of information into knowledge. (200)

While it makes sense to argue for additional information literacy instruction in upper-division, discipline-based courses, there is also a need to add a credit of information literacy instruction to existing composition courses. Boise State University, University of Utah, Daniel Webster College, and West Virginia University are examples of writing programs taking this approach (Estrem; Holliday and Fagerheim; Hearn; Brady et al.). Composition courses already have a place in the curriculum, are required for graduation, and can be a place to teach information-seeking skills in combination with the synthesis of knowledge. However, a composition course should not give up a credit of instruction to accommodate information literacy. Instead, a credit hour of information literacy could be added to a composition course in order to ensure a more integrated approach to instruction. For example, in “Integrating Information Literacy with a Sequenced English Composition Curriculum,” Wendy Holliday and Britt Fagerheim describe how a writing-information literacy course would work: “The curriculum is divided into four lessons. Two lessons take place in the English classroom and last for 30-35 minutes, and two take place in the library and last for approximately 50 minutes” (179). Alternate models for integrated credit-bearing information
literacy instruction include a hybrid of classroom instruction and Web-based units that are completed entirely online.

Ultimately, librarians can collaborate with faculty to design specific information literacy outcomes and objectives that fit particular course structures or program designs. Such collaboration is appropriate and useful in upper-division research or capstone courses (for example, discipline-specific research methods courses or courses that support senior research projects); yet, it can also enhance IL instruction in first-year course work. When designing collaborative arrangements in first-year programs, McClure argues “WPAs should take the leadership role in forming these partnerships, since they are the ones in charge of courses that nearly all undergraduates take” (71). Specifically, McClure recommends using WPA and ACRL resources “in local conversations among compositionists and librarians to determine what values, outcomes and standards for researching and writing they share” (71). Given the array of possibilities made possible by developments in library instruction, such conversations are surely crucial. However, it is also clear that integrating IL instruction within composition course work involves more than just managing options for teaching writing and information literacy as complementary, integrated activities. According to McClure, influencing “information behaviors” involves resourceful collaboration, requiring composition specialists to partner with information specialists in order to facilitate initiatives, pedagogies, and linkages that extend beyond disciplinary, physical, and institutional boundaries (71-72). For example, at one of our institutions, the WPA’s office was recently relocated to a library and information commons and this physical location facilitates collaboration among writing, library, and academic support staff. The WPA’s proximity to research librarians, as well as to the learning center and academic advising offices housed in the commons, has led to greater coordination of support services for first-year students, as well as the incorporation of IL as a more distinct component of the first-year writing curriculum. In another example, two of the authors attended Information Literacy Summits with college librarians and instructors across the state to discuss, create, and revise the Information Literacy Proficiencies (see Appendix), which would be enacted across their state university system. In addition, they meet weekly to make IL a clear part of composition and plan ways to involve more instructors in face-to-face and Web-based IL instruction. Currently, they are conducting a pilot study of course-integrated library instruction with a librarian and composition instructor team-taught course.

**Conclusion**

While the participation of individual composition instructors is important to this type of collaboration, D’Angelo and Maid suggest, “A great
deal of time and energy are spent on advocacy and frequently individual efforts are not sustainable beyond the work of individual librarians or librarian-faculty team” (213). In particular, WPAs are in a unique position to encourage program-wide collaboration because of their administrative status (McClure 71). Since many college librarians are not considered faculty, they often have limited influence over institutional and curricular policies. Working collaboratively with WPAs can thus improve the likelihood of reform in the delivery of research and information instruction. Further, because WPAs are commonly responsible not only for first-year writing curricula, but also for facilitating faculty development within WAC and WID programs, their collaborative work with librarians has the potential to influence instruction after the first year. By helping faculty from across the disciplines incorporate meaningful IL assignments and instruction in their courses, WPAs and their collaborative library partners can encourage the development of additional context-specific approaches to research writing beyond the composition program. Such efforts are integral to supporting students’ research and sustaining their development as writers throughout their academic careers.

Without a doubt, establishing more effective information literacy instruction within writing courses requires reflective, equitable, ethical, and ongoing participation among all faculty. Is this extra effort worth it? On a personal level, it could be if, as Elmborg suggests, the timing, personalities, and institutional context align (1). According to one audience member in attendance when we presented parts of this article at the 2009 WPA conference, she was happy to have someone else share the work. Yet, that may not be enough. On a larger scale, this type of collaboration, as many studies attest, improves student research performance because it introduces “students to academic writing as a complex, recursive learning process based on broad and open-minded information seeking” (Deitering and Jameson 78). Research skills cannot be taught in “one shot,” just as writing cannot be taught in one term.

Notes
1 Brady et al. explain how they incorporate IL at West Virginia University. McClure analyzes student use of advocacy and commercial Web sites in their research papers. In his conclusion, he makes a call for WPAs to “take a leadership role” in forming partnerships with academic and research librarians (71).
2 For more extensive discussions of IL definitions and review of the literature, see ACRL “Information Literacy Competency Standards”; Brady et al; Eisenberg; and Rockman and Associates. For an overview of sample IL Proficiencies, see Appendix.
3 There is no current research about how composition instructors’ knowledge of IL influences what they teach to students. Anecdotal evidence suggests that, much like their students, writing faculty tend to teach the few databases and skills with which they are familiar. This problem may even be exacerbated
when graduate students or instructors with limited experience teach composition classes. In other words, students who receive research instruction only from composition faculty may be learning a limited number of options available to them and only from the viewpoint of the particular writing instructor's own research background. This is why partnering with librarians is so important—it is not uncommon for librarians to hear comments from instructors such as "I learn something new every time I bring in a class" after a library instruction.

4 The emphasis on information-gathering skills within one-shot IL instruction sessions may also inadvertently undermine students' inherent motivation for pursuing independent research. According to the 2009 Project Information Literacy report, students' "need for big-picture context, or background about a topic, was the trigger for beginning course-related (65%) or everyday life research (63%)" (Head and Eisenberg 3). By deemphasizing elements of the research process related to invention and definition, in particular, one-shot instruction may thus impede processes of exploration important to student engagement in writing projects.

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106 Composition Studies
Not Just One Shot


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