Using Participatory Design to Develop Strategies for the Library’s Information Literacy Program

Veronica Wells
University of the Pacific, vwells@pacific.edu

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Using Participatory Design to Develop Strategies for the Library’s Information Literacy Program

Veronica A. Wells
University of the Pacific - California, USA
University of the Pacific

- Three Campuses: Stockton, Sacramento, and San Francisco
- 5,956 FTES
- 3,701 Undergraduate FTES
- Accredited by WASC Senior College and University Commission
Research Questions

- Do students, faculty, and administrators consider information literacy skills to be important for students to learn while at Pacific?
- What aspects of information literacy are most important to our students, faculty, and administrators?
Participatory Design

- Also known as co-operative design or co-design.
- Attempts to actively involve all stakeholders in the design process to help ensure the result is valuable and meets everyone’s needs.
Participatory Design

Source: Voltes
Participatory Design in Academic Libraries: Methods, Findings, and Implementation by the Council on Library and Information Sources:

Participatory design is an approach to building spaces, services, and tools where the people who will use those things participate centrally in coming up with concepts and then designing the actual products. (1)
Participatory Design Methodology

Using data gathered from a tool called the SAILS Test, we engaged stakeholders in two main types of participatory design activities:

1. **Road Shows**: Dissemination and sharing of the SAILS Test results by members of the University Assessment Committee.

2. **Core Competency Forum**: Approximately 40 faculty, administrators, and students viewed select questions from the SAILS Test and discuss information literacy as a set of skills for P
The SAILS Test is a knowledge-based multiple-choice test targeting a variety of information literacy skills.

We administered the SAILS Test to 783 of first year students in 2014-2015 and 368 senior students in 2017-2018.
Sample Question from the SAILS Test

Select the best set of search terms below for the research question: "If students listen to music while studying, do they get better grades?"

A. Music, achievement

B. Music, effect, students

C. Students, music, grades
Sample Question from the SAILS Test

Select the best set of search terms below for the research question: "If students listen to music while studying, do they get better grades?"

A. Music, achievement

B. Music, effect, students

C. Students, music, grades
Overall Findings

Pacific Students

All institutions

First Year

Senior

0 35 70
First-Year International Students at Pacific

- US Citizen
- Non-US Citizen
- Permanent resident
Senior Transfer Students at Pacific

- Transfer Students
- Non-Transfer Students
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selecting Finding Tools</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating Sources</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing a Research Strategy</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retrieving Sources</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Finding Tool Features</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Economic, Legal, &amp; Social Issues</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searching</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documenting Sources</td>
<td>44%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Students will be able to recognize when there is a need for information, identify and locate information, evaluate information, effectively and responsibly use information, and communicate that information for a variety of purposes.

368 students took the SAILS* Test in their PACS III courses.

64% Average score of seniors at Pacific
62% Average score of seniors at other doctoral institutions
60% Average score of seniors at other institutions

- Selecting Finding Tools: 76%
- Evaluating Sources: 73%
- Developing a Research Strategy: 72%
- Retrieving Sources: 63%
- Using Finding Tool Features: 61%
- Understanding Economic, Legal, & Social Issues: 60%
- Searching: 56%
- Documenting Sources: 44%

How many research papers have you written while at Pacific?

- Six or More: 32%
- Four or Five: 26%
- One or Three: 36%
- Zero: 3%
- Not sure: 3%

Non-transfer students scored significantly higher on the SAILS test than transfer students

- Non-transfer: 65%
- Transfer: 59%

* Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills
Core Competency Forum

At their tables, participants were asked to discuss two questions:

1. How do students demonstrate information literacy skills in your discipline?

2. What top two skills from the list are most important for Pacific students to develop?
How do students demonstrate IL skills?

- Research papers
- Problem sets (econ) can require source + citation
- Literature reviews - contrast + compare different authors' conclusions
- Asking deliberately vague questions: that seem "actual" (general)
  - "What percentage of adults are smokers?"
  - Discuss discrepancies in answers based on varied assumptions
- Iteratively! (must assign these kinds of tasks regularly + frequently)

- Interpreting data + understanding reliability taught in chunks - scaffolding within a course + across a curriculum.

Top 2 IL skills at Pacific?

1. Evaluating sources
2. Understanding economic, legal + social issues - or - Developing a research strategy
NOTES

1. Evaluating Sources
2. Documenting Sources
2. Motivation to retrieve Sources
2. Search comprehensively

We are confused about:

"understanding economic, legal & social issues."

How is this an information literacy skill?
Top 2 literacy skills

- Evaluating sources
- Understanding economic, legal, and social issues (related to information)

INFO LIT

- Transfer of learning
  - Helps to slowly take away routes
  - Help to see why we do things
  - Helps to say why we do things

INFO LIT

Top 2

1. Evaluating sources
2. Developing a research strategy
NOTES

where should quantitative reasoning be taught?
- GE priority followed by designated courses
  - all students should be taught quantitative reasoning
    - as a GE it would be covered, if it was a designated
course it would be one more course the student would
  - need to take
  - left to programs, it might not be as consistently taught

in your discipline, what aspects of info literacy are most important
for students to learn?
- in general, students should be able to distinguish types of info
  - fact vs. opinion, primary vs secondary, etc.
- be able to cite sources, when & where citations should be listed
- evaluate sources i.e. sort & evaluate "fake news"

how do students in your discipline demonstrate information literacy skills?

1. LA
2. top 2 most important information literacy skills for students at
   pacific to learn?

  - evaluating sources
  - searching
Top Two
Information Literacy Skills

Selecting finding tools: 1
Evaluating sources: 7
Developing a research strategy: 4
Retrieving sources: 0
Using finding tool features: 0
Searching: 1
Understanding economic, legal, and social issues: 2
Documenting sources: 2
Results

• Students, faculty, and administrators consider Information Literacy to be an essential skill that students need to develop.

• The top two skills according to our stakeholders are students’ ability to evaluate sources and develop a search strategy.
Next steps

• Develop an information literacy curriculum that focuses on:
  • Evaluating sources, including fake news
  • Developing search strategies regardless of tool
• Explore new ways of supporting international and transfer students.
• Consider switching from the SAILS Test to the Threshold Achievement Test for Information Literacy.
• Further engage our stakeholders through surveys and focus groups.
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