

# Collaborating with Faculty to Assess Undergraduate Information Literacy in Degree Programs

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*The authors would like to thank the other faculty participants in this project:*

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Library  
Assessment  
Conference  
2014



# Duquesne University

- ▶ Catholic university
- ▶ Pittsburgh
- ▶ 10,000 students
- ▶ Ten schools
- ▶ Two libraries

*Project described took place  
in Summer/Fall 2013*



# Information Literacy (IL) Learning Takes Place Outside the Library



- ▶ Researching & writing papers
- ▶ Creating presentations
- ▶ Laboratory work & preparation
- ▶ Class discussions

# Collaboration Required!

“Incorporating information literacy across curricula, in all programs and services, and throughout the administrative life of the university, requires the collaborative efforts of **faculty, librarians, and administrators.**”

*ACRL Information Literacy Standards for Higher Education, 2000*

# Positioning & Funding

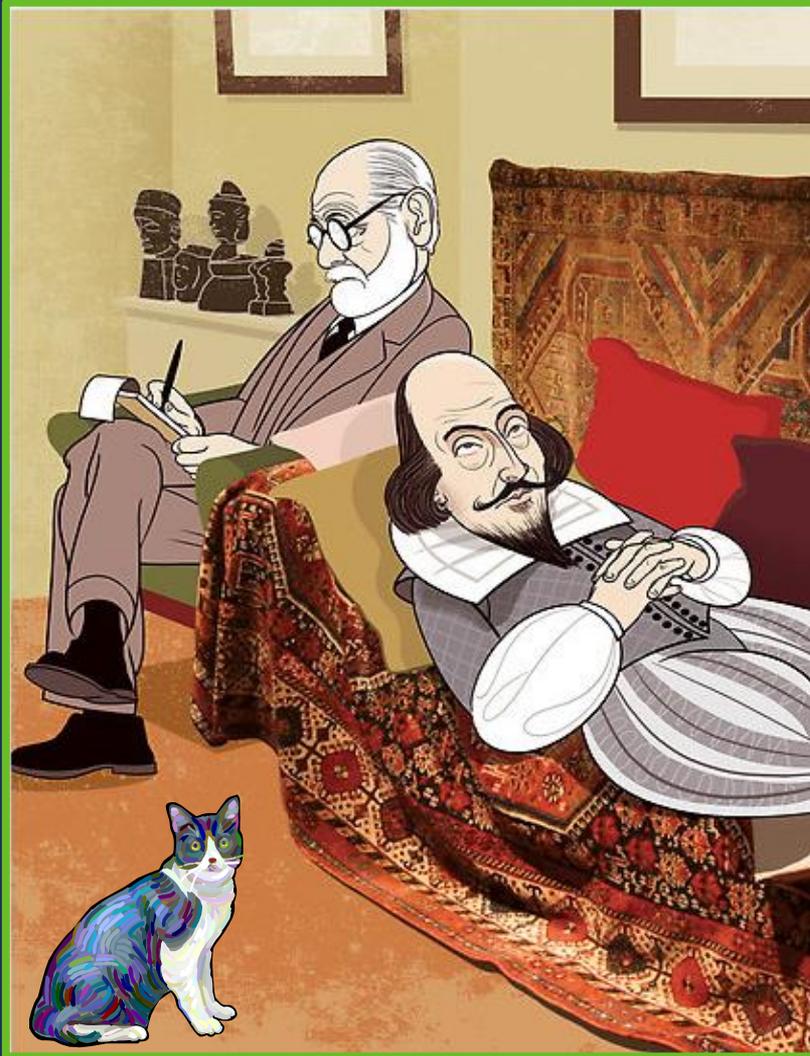


- ▶ Librarians co-chair university committees:
  - ▶ Learning Outcomes Assessment
  - ▶ Information Literacy
- ▶ Associate Provost approved & funded stipends!

# Project Goals

1. Document models of assessing IL relevant to a wide array of academic programs
  - ▶ Humanities
  - ▶ Professions
  - ▶ Sciences
  - ▶ Social sciences
2. Develop evidence of practice to serve as a “proof of concept”
3. Promote faculty / library collaborations to assess IL in the undergraduate curriculum

# Who participated



- ▶ English
- ▶ Psychology
- ▶ Biological Sciences

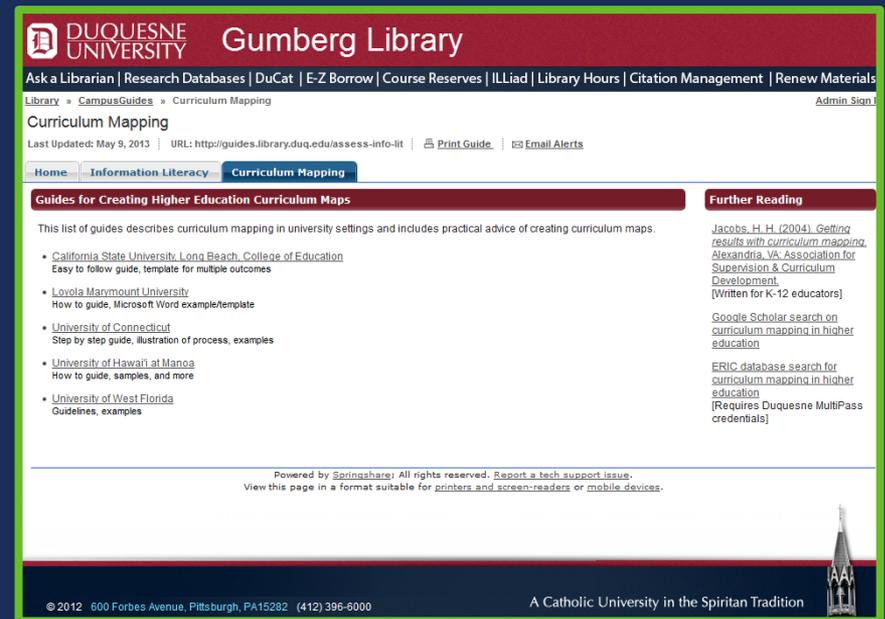
“Freud analysing Shakespeare” by drawgood (CC)  
<http://www.redbubble.com>

# Faculty Participants Agreed to:

1. Identify program level IL goals
2. Map discipline-specific terminology & competencies to Duquesne IL definition
3. Create curriculum maps documenting course-level IL learning outcomes & assessment
4. Provide evidence of analysis & use of assessment results to improve learning
5. Present findings at workshop open to all faculty

# Support for Faculty Participants

- ▶ Project website:
  - ▶ Duquesne IL definition
  - ▶ Accreditation standards
  - ▶ Assessment guidelines
  - ▶ Curriculum maps
  - ▶ Further readings
- ▶ Periodic individual meetings
- ▶ Help creating final project reports



The screenshot shows the Gumberg Library website page for Curriculum Mapping. The page header includes the Duquesne University logo and navigation links such as 'Ask a Librarian', 'Research Databases', 'DuCat', 'E-Z Borrow', 'Course Reserves', 'ILLiad', 'Library Hours', 'Citation Management', and 'Renew Materials'. The main content area is titled 'Curriculum Mapping' and includes a list of guides for creating higher education curriculum maps. The guides listed are:

- California State University Long Beach, College of Education: Easy to follow guide, template for multiple outcomes.
- Lovola Marquette University: How to guide, Microsoft Word example/template.
- University of Connecticut: Step by step guide, illustration of process, examples.
- University of Hawaii at Manoa: How to guide, samples, and more.
- University of West Florida: Guidelines, examples.

There is also a 'Further Reading' section with links to articles like 'Jacobs, H. H. (2004). Getting results with curriculum mapping, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development' and 'Google Scholar search on curriculum mapping in higher education'. The page footer contains copyright information for 2012 and the university's motto: 'A Catholic University in the Spiritan Tradition'.

# Using Syllabi to Gather Data

- ▶ Two had full access to syllabi
  - ▶ Gaps in syllabi
  - ▶ Lack of explicit IL learning outcomes
- ▶ One focused on major-level courses
- ▶ One department would not share syllabi
  - ▶ But responded to online survey...



“Mmm...Swiss cheese burger with mushroom sauce” by Fae  
Wikimedia Commons

# Findings – Missing in the Major

- ▶ Most key IL competencies covered within the three programs' curricula
- ▶ Finding 1
  - ▶ Major-level courses did not explicitly address plagiarism, copyright, ethical use of information
  - ▶ Faculty assumed material was covered in Core
- ▶ Recommendation
  - ▶ Ask faculty to teach this material at all levels

# Finding 2 – Gaps in the Scaffold

- ▶ Scaffolding assignments\* used in introductory & capstone courses
- ▶ Infrequently used in mid-level courses
- ▶ Recommendation
  - ▶ Faculty should reinforce skills taught in scaffolding assignments at all levels

\* *Required structured research methods, evaluating sources, and submitting drafts*

# Finding 3 – Unpleasant Surprise

- ▶ Three competencies not well covered:
  1. Formulating information needs
  2. Accessing information
  3. Evaluating information sources
    - ▶ Covered in courses but not syllabi?
- ▶ Recommendations
  - ▶ Guidance on writing syllabi & learning outcomes
  - ▶ Encourage faculty to explicitly list IL learning outcomes



# Separated by a Common Language...

**Competency:** Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose

- ▶ Clear to Librarians & Biology
- ▶ Psychology
  - ▶ Not sure how it fits undergraduate education
- ▶ English
  - ▶ Not representative of approach to information sources
  - ▶ Typical approach is close reading & analysis of texts
  - ▶ Describes approach to secondary sources

# Project Outcomes

- ✓ Confirmed IL outcomes addressed within programs' curricula
- ✓ Encouraged further assessment of IL at course and program levels
- ✓ Documented extent to which university's IL definition fit programs' learning goals
- ✓ Created curriculum maps that can serve as models for other programs

# Faculty Workshop Outcomes

- ▶ Biology & Psychology models applicable to professional programs
- ▶ ESL faculty approached library to incorporate IL throughout its curriculum
- ▶ Mostly professional school faculty:
  - ▶ Accustomed to using assessment & standards
  - ▶ More supportive of assessment than others

# Recommendations for Collaborating with Faculty

- ▶ Choose participants strategically
- ▶ Include multiple incentives
- ▶ Plan checks & balances
- ▶ Create timelines
- ▶ Hold progress meetings
- ▶ Close the assessment loop!
- ▶ Avoid “once and done”



# Project Follow-Up

- ▶ Department meetings:
  - ▶ Discuss findings
  - ▶ Review curriculum maps
  - ▶ Address gaps in IL competencies
- ▶ English & Psychology
  - ▶ Planning senior capstones



# Project Benefits

## Helped Programs to:

- ▶ Align learning outcomes with IL expectations
- ▶ Discover curricular strengths and gaps
- ▶ Use findings to integrate IL into programs

- ▶ Work more closely / deeply with each other
- ▶ Gather actionable evidence!

## Helped Library to:

- ▶ Apply model to other programs
- ▶ Enlist faculty to educate colleagues about IL
- ▶ Assess program level outcomes for low cost

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