From Information Literate to Information Fluent: The Role of Libraries in Preparing 21st Century Citizens

Dr. Alan Bearman
Washburn University Profile

46% First-Generation

45% Pell Eligible

87% Kansas Residents

22.1 ACT average

29% racial/ethnic minority
From Information Literate to Information Fluent

- Students coming to Washburn University with limited understanding of Information Literacy
- Students coming to Washburn University picturing the Library as a book filled “scary” place
Mabee Library

Book Repository to a Center for Student Success

Physical Renovation
• Shelving Removed
• Utilization of Off-Site Storage and Compact Shelving
• Coffee Shop
• Multi-Use Zonal Spacing and Furniture

Role of Librarians and Staff
• Payroll Allocation
• Custodians of Knowledge to Instructors of Information Literacy
Mabee Library: Place Matters
Mabee Library: Place Matters
Mabee Library: Place Matters
Mabee Library: Place Matters
Mabee Library: Place Matters

2001

2017
From Information Literate to Information Fluent

University Student Learning Outcomes Revision, 2013

The previous 9 USLOs became 4, with a new 5th USLO

• Communication
• Quantitative and Scientific Reasoning
• Information Literacy and Technology
• Critical and Creative Thinking
• Global Citizenship, Ethics, and Diversity
From Information Literate to Information Fluent

Credibility becomes more important than owning “Stuff”

• University Libraries claimed responsibility of building a First-Year Experience Program around the USLO of Information Literacy and Technology

• WU101: The Washburn Experience now drives First-Year student success

• Wanted to immediately create for students a conversation regarding: The Credibility of Information in the Knowledge Economy
From Information Literate to Information Fluent

• Information Literacy is about learning and mastering an important set of skills

• Information Fluency is about taking these skills learned and using them to succeed in the Knowledge Economy

• Librarians, better than any group, understand this subtle distinction and are best prepared to help students move towards becoming successful life-long learners
Fall to Fall First-Year Full-Time Retention

- Fall 2011: 62%
- Fall 2014: 68%
- Fall 2017: 74%
From Information Literate to Information Fluent

Lyrasis Catalyst Fund

20 area middle/high school librarian partners

• Average ratio of librarians to middle school students of 486:1

• Average ratio of librarians to high school students of 1,344:1
From Information Literate to Information Fluent

Lyrasis Catalyst Fund

• Seeking to create Open Source Information Literacy modules for area middle and high schools

• Seeking to assist students in developing Information Literacy skills that translate seamlessly from high school to college

• Seeking to create independent, successful life-long learners who are Information Fluent for the Knowledge economy
What is Information Literacy?

The ability to:

- know when there is a need for information
- identify potential information
- locate needed information
- evaluate the quality of information
- effectively use the new information
From Information Literate to Information Fluent

(Immediate) Lessons Learned

- Middle & High School Librarians see this project as one that can illuminate their value as something other than Tech Support

- Bi-Lingual

- Partnerships