The TMI Generation: Promoting Information Literacy in Today's Undergraduates

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What is information literacy?

Information literacy is a complex and multi-layered skill set centered on accessing, analyzing, evaluating, synthesizing and producing knowledge. Information literacy is developmental and it is best learned and understood when taught in conjunction with the companion skills of critical thinking, reading, writing and production.
Information Literacy:
current issues & research

- The "TMI generation"
- Evaluation, interpretation, and synthesis key information competencies of the 21st century
- AAC&U "Student as Scholar"
Project Information Literacy

What can we learn about how college students seek information?

**Takeaway #1**

Frustrations with Research

The majority of students say research is more difficult for them than ever before.

**Takeaway #2**

Finding Sources

Nearly all students use a small compass to navigate the complex campus information landscape.

**Takeaway #3**

Efficiency and Predictability

Most students use a risk-averse and consistent strategy and rely on a “tried and true” approach.

**Takeaway #4**

Library as Refuge

Students rely on libraries as a quiet place where they can be productive and unplug from IT devices.

**Takeaway #5**

Day After Graduation

Recent graduates find they are unprepared once they need to solve information problems in the workplace.
Teaching information literacy skills: Effective practices

- Curriculum integration - information literacy best taught with writing and other related skills
- Scaffolded approach to teaching Information Literacy
- Scaffolded approach to research & writing assignment design
Teaching information literacy skills: Undergraduates @ the UW

- Students lack skills to evaluate information and the appropriateness of sources
- Primary vs. secondary sources / Scholarly vs. popular sources
- Students need citation help
- Plagiarism concerns
- Increased emphasis on student as creator of new knowledge, not just consumer
Major Paper #2: Final Research Paper

THE ASSIGNMENT: This paper requires you to develop a complex argument about a particular issue that you have researched. You should use at least 5 sources of your choosing. In addition to content, you may want to analyze these sources for similarities of opinion, perspective, tone, etc. and seek to synthesize these sources to form your own argument. You will then extend your argument to make a complex claim including stakes (why this issue matters), basing your claim in all of the sources you have read. This should be done keeping your peers and instructor in mind, that is, an academic audience unfamiliar with the intricacies of the issue but reasonably well-educated. Towards that end, your research should focus on scholarly sources (at least 3 of the 5 sources should be scholarly). Any information gleaned from non-scholarly sources should be analyzed in part for where, how, and why they appeared or were obtained by you and how this might modify the information that they present or the claims that they make.

SPECIFIC DETAILS TO REMEMBER:
• Please attach a list of works cited to your paper.
• Paper should include quotations or paraphrases from each source cited in MLA style.
• The paper should be 5-7 pp. and follow formatting guidelines given in the syllabus.

EVALUATION: Outstanding MP #2s will 1) articulate a complex claim that has explicit stakes; 2) demonstrate your ability to read and synthesize multiple kinds of complex texts; 3) provide sufficient background information to understand the issue without spending too much time on summary; 4) demonstrate an organized, logical flow of thought and argumentation; and 5) cite evidence appropriately according to MLA guidelines.

DUE DATE FOR FIRST DRAFT: Thursday, May 17th in class (peer review)
DUE DATE FOR SECOND DRAFT: Saturday, May 19th by 5pm in dropbox
Now that you have written an analysis of your cultural site, it is time to make an academic argument about what you have analyzed and expand the scope of your inquiry. Take a position on some idea within your analysis by exploring a claim that says something new about your site. This claim must advance our understanding about both your site and Foucault’s theory.

**Directions:**

In this paper, you have three main tasks:

1. Make a **claim** about something in your site: power, discipline, surveillance, subjection, etc. (you do not have to do all of these, they are just some examples—there are more).
2. Explore a **line of inquiry** (line of questioning) about that claim, considering some implications (new problems, results, and questions that arise), challenges and possible counterclaims.
3. Employ **interdisciplinarity** by making clear use of Foucault’s ideas, explaining them succinctly as you use them in your argument. Additionally, you will need to make use of at LEAST one outside source (Remember 3-Step Quotation Analysis!)

A general academic reader interested in your site and Foucault’s ideas should have a better understanding of both upon finishing your paper. Your main writing goal is to persuade readers to see the site and Foucault’s ideas as you argue them, and to communicate to readers something new and interesting. You can also make use of any class notes, materials, and/or other research you want to do on the site itself to help your argument. You are **required** to have at least two outside sources of your choosing that you employ to support your claim: this source must be from a book, essay, article (from a more “academic” magazine or newspaper (see me with any questions)) or scholarly journal. You may also use reputable online sources, but these should be in addition to your other source (again—please see me if you have any questions about the reputability of a source).

In approaching all your data (last three papers, site ideas, notes, outside source, etc.) it might be helpful to think of some of these issues and sets of questions (you do not need to use these, they are just some examples):

**Issues:**
- Hierarchy, surveillance, observation
- Divisions, exclusions, categories, and classifications
- Power exercised with violence vs. power exercised with discipline
- How the technologies of discipline work on an individual level
- How the technologies of discipline work to “amplify” power and “Strengthen social forces”
- The “ordering of human multiplicities” and “distributions”
- Investigations, interrogations, examinations, “empirical” knowledge
- How individuals are made “useful” and “docile”
Major Paper 1: Critical Conversations
English 111

In this assignment, you will respond to a critical position about the aesthetics of violence and then apply that position to contemporary artifact, such as a book or film. To accomplish this task, you will need to find a critical essay about violence and have master that essay, and also the artifact (it may be helpful to do some research about the artifact, too). You may use a second (or, with my approval, a third) critical essay, but at least one essay must come from a source that can be described as “scholarly.” You will need to demonstrate nearly every task we’ve practiced so far this quarter: interpretive reading of texts, summary, analysis, and synthesis, to which you will be adding the use of evidence and argumentation.

To that end, your paper should demonstrate your ability to use support (quoted material) in an academic manner and to have opinions about texts. Basically, you are entering the conversation: you and the critic are both considering the aesthetics of violence. S/he says x; what do you say back?

In this essay, you should:

- Summarize (and analyze) key points of the critical essay(s)
- Explain the use of violence in the artifact
- Have an opinion on the issue: do you agree with the author? Why/not? How else could it have gone? What didn’t s/he discuss? Is there anything you don’t understand about it?
- Express the significance (stakes) of your position compared to h/ers.

Length and Format: 5-7 typed double-spaced pages (i.e., minimum five full pages), 12-pt. Times New Roman with 1-inch margins

Draft due (minimum 4 full pages): 28 October

Revision Due: 2 November

Outcomes:
Short Paper Two: Annotated Bibliography

Due to Collect It by Thursday, Oct. 22 at 9 a.m. Bring 3-4 copies to class for peer review.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre: Annotated Bibliography</th>
<th>EWP Target Outcomes:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Audience: Instructor</td>
<td>• MLA formatting (2.5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purpose: To help you find and evaluate secondary sources that you can use in your research paper.</td>
<td>• Intertextuality (2.3)</td>
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<td>• Analysis of sources (2.2)</td>
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<td>• Sources from multiple points of view (3.4)</td>
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Annotated bibliographies are probably not the most interesting pieces of writing you'll do in college. They can be dry and tedious and very few people read them for fun. But, they can be tremendously useful in helping to organize the secondary sources you gather for research papers. And, they can make writing research papers easier because you'll have a better idea of how you want to use your secondary sources.

For the annotated bibliography, you must:

- Include five or six reputable sources.
- Include entries that represent different genres (book chapters, reports, websites, journal articles, etc.) and points of view. Two of them must be "scholarly."
- Format each entry meticulously according to the MLA guidelines given in The Everyday Writer and make them as specific as possible. (In other words, if you are only using two chapters out of a book, then those two chapters and their page numbers should be cited.)
- Write about 500 words beneath each entry describing what the source is about, evaluating its relevance to your research project, and outlining how you plan to use it in your paper. Be specific. Use direct citations if you can.

Before you start panicking, you do not need to read sources in-depth in order to include them in your bibliography. Instead, skim and scan to get a general idea what sources are about and how you might be able to use them. Closer readings can be done later.

Other Requirements

- The title should be "Annotated Bibliography."
- 2 1/2 - 3 pages double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins, saved as a Word .doc or .docx file.
Information Literacy Activity

In groups of three, evaluate your resource using the C.R.A.P test:

- Currency
- Reliability
- Authority
- Purpose/Point of View

Please be prepared to share your responses with the group.
Information Literacy Activity

Currency
How recent is the information? Is it current enough for your topic?

Reliability
Does the creator of the content provide references or sources for any data or quotations used in the work?

Authority
Who is the author of your source, and what is their credential?

Purpose/Point of View
What type of audience is the author addressing, specialized or general?

For which type of research topic would your resource be appropriate as a primary or secondary source?
Free UW Resources

- UW digital collections of primary sources: http://content.lib.washington.edu
- Subject research guides - many open access and government sources included: http://www.lib.washington.edu/subject/
Wrap-up and reflection

Based on today's discussion and activity, brainstorm one way you can incorporate Information Literacy skills into an assignment, course or curriculum at your school.

Thank you!