
CREATING “INFORMATION COMPETENT” COURSES:

A Guide to Information Competence (IC) Course Designation

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EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES: AT THE END OF THIS SESSION, PARTICIPANTS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Define and explain what “Information Competence” (IC) means
- Explain why IC is important
- Identify and describe IC student learning outcomes (SLO)
- Offer examples of IC assignments and activities for classes
- Describe elements of successful applications for IC course designation
- Recognize examples of IC-designated CSUN courses

WHAT IS INFORMATION COMPETENCE (IC)?

A student with “Information Competence” possesses the ability to determine the nature and extent of information needed for assignment, and to effectively find and ethically use that information.

WHY IS IC IMPORTANT?

- IC applies to many fields (e.g. fashion design, writing, architecture, health sciences, biotechnology, etc.)
- IC sends students the message that their own voice, viewpoints, and thoughts are important
- IC enhances critical thinking and analytical skills – e.g. students learn to ask the right questions regarding research
- IC promotes critical reading and reflection

WHAT ARE THE IC – GE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES?

Students will be able to:

- Determine the nature and extent of information needed
- Demonstrate effective search strategies for finding information using a variety of sources and methods
- Locate, retrieve, and evaluate a variety of relevant information including print and electronic formats
- Organize and synthesize information to communicate effectively
- Explain the legal and ethical dimensions of the use of information.

WHAT ARE EXAMPLES OF IC ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES FOR CLASS?

- Papers with Annotated Bibliography
- Oral presentations with bibliography
- Lab reports requiring analysis of information
- Require students to document their use of outside resources using various style formats – e.g. MLA and APA
- Students explore information sources applicable to course curriculum and analyze these sources

Oral history assignments: did you cite and get permission to use their statements?

Reflection essays/journals on how they are using information in course

Students are asked to: gather diverse supporting evidence from primary and secondary sources for their arguments; correctly represent the information presented by these sources; and to appropriately cite these sources.

Locate a scholarly article on a topic and summarize it in a report, properly citing references.

Write a paper using a variety of resources

10 minute oral presentation on a topic using variety of resources for support

Debate the “pro” and “con” of an issue with information from variety of resources for support

Peruse standard sources in a discipline including two or more journals related to the field, and write a paper describing the disciplines including issues and topics those in the field are involved with

Create a web page on a topic related to the course, including selected links and an annotated bibliography, documenting where they get web page images from

Research historical topic using newspapers like “New York Times” and “London Times” and contrast points of view (Oviatt Library has digitized copies of these newspapers)

Research a topic using variety of resources presenting your findings in a poster

Propose new legislation for a current issue and conduct research to support the need for it

Develop a research proposal

Research a topic using information published in different decades and compare the changes that have occurred.

IC COURSE DESIGNATION

FOR IC COURSE DESIGNATION APPROVAL FORMS: See <http://www.csun.edu/epc/curriculumforms.html>

Successful applications showed faculty using embedded research and inquiry opportunities inherent in course content to achieve the IC Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS:

IC was already learning outcome of General Education (GE) prior to new GE requirements - without showing how it would be met. The purpose of the IC requirement in GE is to ensure that all students are exposed to IC – not just within discipline – but also outside their discipline.

Disservice to students not to have discipline-specific IC courses (participant): IC has two-fold understanding - general and discipline-specific

Sharing resources: American University School of Communications Center for Social Media’s comprehensive website that includes Renee Hobbs on copyright in media literacy: <http://www.centerforsocialmedia.org/resources/>. (participant)

If students argue that citation formats such as MLA and APA are not relevant to their lives, then reply that whatever field they choose, there will be rules of conduct and guidelines to which they will have to conform and apply to their work. (participant)

Is a blogger a journalist? Journalist.org includes bloggers in tracking journalism’s “top stories.” (participant)

Should students cite blogs? Yes – if it is a source, it is better to cite it than not.