Information Literacy for Appalachian Studies

Turning activists into scholars
Goals for Session

- Discussion of the concept of information literacy.
- Understand what it is and why it is important to AS students.
- Discover ways of assessing information literacy to prove the value of IL instruction and to improve teaching skills.
What is Information Literacy?

- *Information Literacy is the basis for life-long learning.*
- *It is common to all disciplines and to all levels of education.*
Why is it important?

- Research for students usually begins with the Internet and goes to library resources only if taught how to do it.

- Students do not know how to find reliable print and electronic resources for their research.
Why do students need it?

- An information literate student can access, gather, evaluate, and ethically use information for a specific purpose.
- *And* to succeed in today's world of rapidly exploding information, one must know how to find information and be able to judge its reliability.
Why do Appalachian Studies students need it?

- Most Appalachian Studies students think research means field research.
- But to contribute anything new in a discipline, you must know what has already been done.
- And you must know how to find out where and what was done.
Research:
Gathering information

♦ Today’s students have access to new and ever-exploding sources of information.
♦ Students are not familiar with academic library resources: how to find books, journal articles and reliable internet sites.
Critical Thinking: Evaluating Information

- Students often don’t know how to tell what resources are good for academic research.
- They don’t know how to distinguish between authoritative sources and biased ones.
- They don’t recognize the difference between popular and scholarly resources.
Students often do not realize that copying someone else’s work is both unethical and illegal.

Using another’s work as their own is plagiarism.

The consequences of plagiarism are dire, such as being expelled from school.
Citing Sources

♦ Students often don’t know that they must give credit where credit is due.
♦ Research sources must be cited, providing a reference to the work used in a paper or presentation.
♦ Any quote, image, or idea students use that is not original to them must be cited in the text and the source included in a bibliography.
What is copyright?

- Protection of one’s intellectual property is the form of copyright law that is most important for students to know about.

- Copyright law provides legal protection to the creator of an original work, whether it is a literary, audio, art, or other type of work.

- For example, you cannot use a logo, trademark, song, a complete poem, story, or other source without specific permission from the copyright holder.
Copyright

- Any original work is under the protection of copyright law.
- It is against the law for one to use it without written permission from the owner of the work.
- This includes trademarks, songs, poems, stories, images or other sources published or produced by another.
Fair Use

- But students should also know that there is a concept called “fair use” to save them from landing in jail.
- Fair use allows students to use some parts of a work for educational purposes, provided that the work is cited.
Assessment

- More and more schools require that student learning be assessed.
- Assessment occurs when evidence of student learning is provided to make judgments and decisions about student achievement against a set of goals and standards.
- Assessment may occur by means of assignments, papers, quizzes, or personal observation.
Kinds of Assessment: What/Who/Why are we assessing?

- **Formative**
  - Evidence of student learning
  - Used to improve the process
  - Student is involved
  - Feedback for student & teacher

- **Summative**
  - Part of the grading process
  - Student learning relative to course standards
  - Evaluate the effectiveness of programs
Why assess?

- To know *what* and *if* the students are learning.
- To alter your assessment tools or improve your teaching methods.
- To justify and/or rationalize the need for research instruction.
Assessment Tools

Formative

- Written exercises in class
- Observing student engagement
- Asking questions
- Group work & peer evaluation
- Student worksheets

Summative

- Pre-tests and post-tests
- Grading an assignment
- Report cards
- Exams
- Surveys after class
- Consultation with professors
Example of an assessment tool: A Research Log

Students fill out a form, writing down the citation elements of their resources: a book, a journal article, and a web site.
Another example: An Online Quiz

Students take an online multiple-choice quiz.
This has been an introduction to the teaching of information literacy concepts and skills.

ANY QUESTIONS?
For additional information on information literacy and assessment see:

- The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Information Literacy Resources page at: http://www.ala.org/acrl/issues/infolit

- The Texas Information Literacy Tutorial (TILT): (http://tilt.lib.utsystem.edu) is an excellent interactive tutorial that describes how to find, use, and evaluate information.

- The American Association for Higher Education & Accreditation, ASSESSMENT FORUM's 9 Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning.