

# **Steely Library**

## **Guide to Information Literacy Competencies**

To be Taught in  
English 101  
English 291

To Accompany the Writing Instruction Program's  
*Faculty Guide to Writing Courses*

Prepared by the Research & Instructional Services Faculty  
Steely Library  
Northern Kentucky University

<http://library.nku.edu>

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## What is Information Literacy?

The Association of College & Research Libraries provides the following information.

**Information Literacy is the set of skills needed to find, retrieve, analyze, and use information.**

The beginning of the 21st century has been called the Information Age because of the explosion of information output and information sources. It has become increasingly clear that students cannot learn everything they need to know in their field of study in a few years of college. Information literacy equips them with the critical skills necessary to become independent lifelong learners.

Too often we assume that as students write research papers and read textbooks they are gaining sufficient IL skills. This is not so. IL skills may be introduced but what is needed is a parallel curriculum in IL forming a strong foundation of a college education.

Association of College & Research Libraries. Introduction to IL. <http://www.ala.org/acrl/il/intro/newil.html>

### Introduction

Steely Library's Research and Instructional Services faculty teach information literacy competencies in a series of core courses taken by many NKU students during their first two years of study: University 101, English 101, Speech 101, and English 291.

We recommend a sequential library curriculum that ensures that all students receive instruction in all areas of library research, from the most fundamental familiarity with university library organization to more advanced strategies for locating, evaluating, and using sources in projects, papers, and speeches. This curriculum takes a building blocks approach, so students gradually become more sophisticated information users as they progress through their courses. This approach also ensures that instruction and assignments in one course are not duplicated in another.

This guide provides suggestions for incorporating information literacy assignments into your syllabi for English 101 and English 291. The suggestions tie directly to the Goals, Outcomes, and Assignments to Achieve Course Objectives outlined in the Writing Instruction Program's *Faculty Guide to Writing Courses*.

## **Steely Library Research and Instructional Services Offered**

### **Class Instruction**

Library faculty will conduct English 101 and 291 classes based on the information literacy concepts outlined in this Guide for each course. Sessions usually take place in the library's classroom during class time.

Schedule your session at least two weeks in advance. It is best to schedule early -- our classroom calendar fills up quickly, especially for evening classes.

It is important that you attend the library session with your class.

### **Online Instruction**

The library faculty is developing online instruction units to be used in place of classroom instruction when:

- An alternative to in-class instruction is needed
- Students need to learn or review research competencies taught in earlier classes in a sequence
- Distance learning is the preferred method of delivery

See the suggestions for online material given for each class.

### **Hands-On Class Coaching Sessions**

Hands-on class coaching sessions provide your class with the full attention of a librarian who has scheduled a specific block of time to work with the class as your students conduct their research in the Reference area. This kind of session works especially well as a follow-up to formal classroom instruction. We can work effectively with up to 30 students at a time, offering guidance, suggesting specific tools, providing access to databases, and more.

Please schedule your hands-on class coaching session at least three days in advance. If another session has already been scheduled for that time, it may be in your students' best interest to reschedule so that enough computers and staff will be available. Please note that if you choose to bring in a class during a time when another class has been scheduled, the scheduled class will receive priority for staff and computer time.

It is important that you attend hands-on coaching sessions with your class so that we can work as a team with your students.

**To Schedule Class Instruction or Hands-On Coaching Sessions, submit the online Instruction Request form at <http://library.nku.edu/dept/ref/instruct.html>**

# English 101: College Writing

## **Recommended format for English 101 Classroom Presentation**

Bring class to Library Classroom for a 50-minute presentation by librarian

## **Online Instruction Alternative Format**

Online tutorials where available, as outlined below

## Information Literacy Competencies

### **Examine different kinds of popular secondary research sources**

- Reference sources: print
- Reference sources: online
- Print books
- E-books
- Popular periodicals
- Newspapers: print
- News sources: online

#### *Writing Instruction Program Outcomes for English 101 Supported:*

- Read print and electronic sources critically to identify an author's audience, purpose, claims, reasons, and evidence.
- Locate popular secondary sources in the library and on the Internet, evaluate their usefulness and credibility, incorporate them into an essay, and cite them.

#### *Writing Instruction Program Assignments for English 101 Supported:*

- Reference
- General indexes

### **Learn to use basic research tools to locate popular secondary sources**

- Use LC Classification to find reference books
- Use LC Subject Headings as basis for controlled vocabulary
- Search Stealy Library's online catalog by title, author, and subject
- Search and compare two non-specialized, multidisciplinary online periodical indexes
  - Learn use of AND operator in keyword search

- Learn features: subject guide, result list, citation information, full-text availability, emailing articles, searching from off-campus
- Search and compare two online newspaper indexes
- Search and compare two multidisciplinary Web directories

*Writing Instruction Program Outcomes for English 101 Supported:*

- Read print and electronic sources critically to identify an author's audience, purpose, claims, reasons, and evidence.
- Locate popular secondary sources in the library and on the Internet, evaluate their usefulness and credibility, incorporate them into an essay, and cite them

*Writing Instruction Program Assignments for English 101 Supported:*

- Critical response to an essay, article, and/or Web site
- Analysis and assessment of a print and/or electronic source
- Use NKUIRE online catalog
- Use Steely Library Web site
- Articles in recent popular periodicals
- Organizational Web sites

**Online Instruction Alternatives:**

- Finding Books in Steely Library  
<http://library.nku.edu/howto/findbook.shtml>
  - Using NKUIRE  
<http://library.nku.edu/nkuirews/index.html>
  - How To Find Periodical Articles  
<http://library.nku.edu/howto/periodicals.shtml>
  - Interpreting Citations  
<http://library.nku.edu/howto/citations.shtml>
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The library faculty realizes that English 101 instructors often prefer to address the following competencies themselves in class or with the Learning Assistance Center. While we do not include these areas in our typical English 101 presentations, will cover them upon request. Please note that the unit on choosing a topic is covered in all Speech 101 classes.

#### **Examine Sources to Help Choose a Topic**

- CQ Researcher, Hot lists online, Facts.com

*Writing Instruction Program Outcomes for English 101 Supported:*

- Explore strategies for generating and organizing ideas, reviewing and revising drafts

*Writing Instruction Program Assignments for English 101 Supported:*

- Critical response to an essay, article, and/or Web site
- Analysis and assessment of a print and/or electronic source
- Persuasive essay, position paper, editorial

#### **Online Instruction Alternatives:**

- Choose a Research Topic  
<http://library.nku.edu/howto/topic.shtml>

#### **Examine the Basic Elements Needed to Cite:**

- Books
- Web sites
- Popular periodical articles found in print format
- Popular periodical articles found in full-text online format

*Writing Instruction Program Outcomes for English 101 Supported:*

- Explore strategies for generating and organizing ideas, reviewing and revising drafts

*Writing Instruction Program Assignments for English 101 Supported:*

- Incorporating and citing textual sources

#### **Online Instruction Alternatives:**

- Citing Sources  
<http://library.nku.edu/howto/styleguides.shtml>

#### **Avoid Plagiarism**

*Writing Instruction Program Outcomes for English 101 Supported:*

- Define, identify, and avoid plagiarism

*Writing Instruction Program Assignments for English 101 Supported:*

- Incorporating and citing textual sources

#### **Online Instruction Alternatives:**

- How to Avoid Plagiarism  
<http://library.nku.edu/howto/plagiarism.shtml>

# English 291: Advanced Writing

## **Recommended Format for English 291 Classroom Presentation**

- Three separate 20-30 minute library classroom presentations

## **Online Instruction Alternative Format**

Online tutorials where available, as outlined below

# Information Literacy Competencies

## **Examine a Range of Specialized Sources**

- Discuss primary vs. secondary sources
- Examine scholarly journals
- Examine trade & professional publications
- Find government sources: print and online
- Examine specialized Web directories and specialized Web sites
- Learn to use a specialized print index that does not have an online counterpart

### *Writing Instruction Program Outcomes for English 291 Supported:*

- Read print and electronic sources critically to identify an author's argumentative strategies

### *Writing Instruction Program Assignments for English 291 Supported:*

- Summary, analysis, and assessment of a print and/or electronic source
- Continued use of general reference materials, general indexes, library Web site, NKUIRE online catalog
- Variety of indexes
- Government publications
- Variety of organizational Web sites

### **Online Instruction Alternatives:**

- Primary and Secondary Sources  
<http://library.nku.edu/howto/primary.shtml>
- Scholarly Journals and Research Articles  
<http://library.nku.edu/howto/journaltype.shtml>

## **Learn to Use a Broad Range of Sophisticated, Specialized Research Tools to Locate Scholarly and Primary Information**

- Search and compare several specialized online indexes
- Search government indexes

*Writing Instruction Program Outcomes for English 291 Supported:*

- Read print and electronic sources critically to identify an author's argumentative strategies
- Use advanced search techniques in databases and Internet search engines to locate scholarly articles, books, and Web pages

*Writing Instruction Program Assignments for English 291 Supported:*

- Summary, analysis, and assessment of a print and/or electronic source
- Variety of indexes
- Government publications
- Variety of organizational Web sites

**Online Instruction Alternatives:**

- Databases and Indexes  
<http://library.nku.edu/info/databases.html>

**Learn to Perform Effective Online Research**

- Discuss kinds of Web sites available and their characteristics pertaining to research
- Discuss difference between search engines and directories for finding appropriate Web sites
- Examine several specialized Web directories
- Learn to use advanced, power search features
- Learn Boolean operators and equivalent features
- Learn difference between full-text searching and search fields

*Writing Instruction Program Outcomes for English 291 Supported:*

- Read print and electronic sources critically to identify an author's argumentative strategies
- Use advanced search techniques in databases and Internet search engines to locate scholarly articles, books, and Web pages

*Writing Instruction Program Assignments for English 291 Supported:*

- Summary, analysis, and assessment of a print and/or electronic source
- Variety of organizational Web sites

**Prepare a Research Strategy for a Topic**

- Analyze and identify issues surrounding a topic
- Identify possible keyword combinations and subject headings
- Discuss criteria for choosing research tools
- Preliminary scanning of tools: cast a broad net
- Refine search topic

- Re-examine search tools used to determine if these are best, or if others should be selected

*Writing Instruction Program Outcomes for English 291 Supported:*

- Create individualized strategies for generating topics, developing and organizing ideas
- Read print and electronic sources critically to identify an author's argumentative strategies and stylistic techniques
- Use advanced search techniques in databases and Internet search engines to locate scholarly articles, books, and Web pages

*Writing Instruction Program Assignments for English 291 Supported:*

- Explanation, analysis, and significance of a concept based upon research

**Online Instruction Alternatives:**

- Research Plan  
<http://library.nku.edu/howto/researchplan.shtml>

**Learn that Sources used in the Research Must be Cited in the Paper or Project**

- Reiterate that sources found via the Web must be cited differently from those found in print
- Reiterate that journal articles found full-text in online databases must be cited differently from those found in print

*Writing Instruction Program Outcomes for English 291 Supported:*

- Integrate sources with their own ideas, avoid plagiarism, and document sources correctly in a prescribed format

*Writing Instruction Program Assignments for English 291 Supported:*

- Incorporating and citing textual and graphic sources in the prescribed format of the student's major discipline

**Online Instruction Alternatives:**

- Citing Sources  
<http://library.nku.edu/howto/styleguides.shtml>