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# Collaboratively Creating a Programmatic Information Literacy Strategy: Challenges and Opportunities

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## Collaboratively Creating a Programmatic Information Literacy Strategy: Challenges and Opportunities

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### **Abstract**

In 2017, a team of librarians and archivists at Western University developed local Information Literacy Learning Outcomes (ILLOs). The resulting document outlined the skills and understanding that Western University students should demonstrate at the end of a four-year undergraduate degree—specifically, the skills relating to accessing, assessing, and applying information. This article focuses on the challenges and opportunities encountered during the collaborative process as well as the approach employed by the team in the development of these ILLOs.

Six librarians and archivists in very different roles formed the project team. Despite coming from diverse backgrounds, the team recognized that there could be many

benefits to developing these outcomes: they could be used as a benchmark for students to measure their own learning, as a conversation starter and leveler with faculty and other instruction partners, and as a stepping stone to develop a full instruction program and common understanding among the librarians and archivists at Western University and Huron University College.

The ILLOs created also incorporate guidelines and ideas from various sources, including the Association of College and Research Libraries' Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education and Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education, Western University's undergraduate Degree Outcomes, and the university's and library system's strategic plans.

To ensure the success of this complex venture, detailed project planning was vital. We consulted with our colleagues through multiple engagement activities: information literacy retreats, focused discussion meetings, and one-on-one consultations. The diversity of roles and experiences of our team members and colleagues added both a richness to our project and specific challenges in dealing with dissenting opinions, information overload, engagement and visioning fatigue, and collaborative writing. This article will discuss our approach to writing collaboratively and valuing diverse opinions to improve colleague and organizational buy-in. We have also included practical suggestions for implementing a similar process at the reader's own institution.

### ***Keywords***

learning outcomes, information literacy, project management, collaboration, teamwork, student learning

### ***Introduction***

Western University recently completed a project to develop institution-specific Information Literacy Learning Outcomes (ILLOs). Learning outcomes are "statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completion of a process of learning" (Kennedy, Hyland, & Ryan, 2006, p. 5). The goal of the project was to improve teaching practices at Western Libraries and to move toward a coordinated, outcomes-based information literacy program.

Teamwork and collaboration were at the heart of this project. Rather than discuss the content of the ILLOs developed, this paper will focus on the process of developing a clear vision among a diverse group of individuals. We believe ours is a transferable process that can be applied to the co-creation of other institutional documents.

The spirit of collaboration was evident from the beginning. Our team was made up of six people with very different roles, backgrounds, and interests. The dynamic nature of this group of people was echoed in the varied methods used to consult with library colleagues and our campus teaching partners.

We furthermore drew inspiration for our ILLOs from a broad spectrum of documents, with origins ranging from our local library system to wider bodies such as the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL).

Ultimately, we established five ILLOs (see Appendix A):

- Discovery and Critical Evaluation of Information
- Responsible Creation and Use of Information
- Enduring Research Skills
- Communication
- Civic Engagement

### ***Inspiration***

Since the release of the ACRL's [Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education](#) (hereafter ACRL Standards) in 2000, academic librarians have increased their focus on learning outcomes as a foundation for curriculum development and assessment (ACRL, 2000). To update and modernize the standards, ACRL released the [Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education](#) (hereafter ACRL Framework) in 2015. Both documents frame information literacy from the student perspective.

Within Canada, there have been initiatives at the provincial level. In 2005, the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV) issued the [Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations](#) (UDLEs), which have become the standard for higher education in Ontario.<sup>1</sup>

In January 2015, based on the expectations outlined in OCAV's [Quality Assurance Framework](#) (IQAP), Western University began developing institution-specific learning outcomes to replace the UDLEs. The Western Degree Outcomes (WDOs) had been drafted and were scheduled to be approved by Senate in summer 2016 and then integrated across Western's curricula. Our project team chair, Kim McPhee, was a member of this working group. Additionally, there was a call for embedded information literacy in both the [Western University Strategic Plan](#) and the [Western Libraries' Strategic Plan](#).

In August 2015, our chair attended Immersion, Program Track. This ACRL program "focuses on developing, integrating, and managing institutional and programmatic information literacy programs" (Immersion, 2017). While at Immersion, she developed

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<sup>1</sup> The current Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance: *Quality Assurance Framework, Acronyms* glossary, denotes University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (UUDLES). Our project utilized the original OCAV *Expectations* document, so we have opted to refer to UDLEs throughout this paper.

the idea that institution-wide information literacy learning outcomes could serve as the foundation for the development of a coordinated information literacy program across campus.

Upon her return, the chair wrote terms of reference for a team to work on this project, and sent out a call for volunteers to all Western Libraries staff. In February 2016, the team was assembled to develop undergraduate ILLOs that align with the ACRL Framework and WDOs for use across Western University.

## **Goals**

We had multiple motivations for developing the ILLOs. We divided these into how the learning outcomes would help our library staff members with their work (internal goals) and what the outcomes would mean for our users (external goals).

### **Internal Goals**

At Western, we have over twenty research and instructional services librarians responsible for a variety of subject areas across eight different service locations. This has resulted in a predominance of one-shot teaching methods: information literacy sessions that are developed individually and with a short-term goal, often scheduled based on a faculty member's schedule, and not integrated into the larger curriculum. These are difficult to assess and less effective, and in library instruction best practices, we are often cautioned to avoid one-shot sessions (Mery, Newby, & Pang, 2012; Conway, 2015).

Developing the outcomes allowed us to start conversations around how to distance teaching methods from the one-shot model. We hope that library-wide learning outcomes will help us to build consensus among librarians and archivists and to develop a holistic and systematic approach to how, what, and why we teach.

We anticipate that librarians and archivists will use the outcomes to start conversations about instruction with faculty members, and as a springboard to experiment and try new approaches. We specifically developed our own outcomes to align with language that our faculty already use to represent their own teaching (our Western Degree Outcomes), to give us a common vocabulary with faculty and to demonstrate our value to the teaching mission of the university. We hope they will help librarians and archivists be perceived as educational partners rather than simply instructors or guest speakers.

### **External Goals**

We believe the outcomes will offer a consistent student learning experience. Currently, student access to information literacy instruction is inequitable: with sporadic one-shot sessions, IL instruction varies depending on the program, faculty member relationship with their liaison librarian, departmental climate and perception of the value of teaching, as well as the individual librarian's availability, initiative, and interest level.

Librarians and archivists will be able to use the outcomes as a communication tool with students. Students perform better when they can refer to the outcomes and know what we intend for them to learn. They will be able to connect information literacy instruction and assignments to the outcomes and understand how successful they are and which skills they are learning (Trigwell & Prosser, 1991; Lizzio, Wilson, & Simons, 2002).

Our long-term goal is to see the ILLOs thoughtfully mapped and embedded in all Western University undergraduate curricula in order to improve our teaching practices at Western Libraries and move instruction from separate one-shot sessions toward a cohesive and integrated information literacy program.

### ***Environmental Context***

In creating institution-specific ILLOs, we wanted to reflect our local culture while incorporating aspects of significant policy documents. These included the ACRL Standards and Framework, our library's strategic plan (which includes a definition of 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy skills), and the undergraduate-level WDOs. We were also inspired by the local wisdom of our colleagues and relied on their knowledge about the information literacy needs of our students.

Our work as academic librarians is informed by our national, provincial, and institutional contexts. For our working group, the context informing the process of writing the ILLOs included the climate of change and transition at our institution and the affiliated colleges in London, Ontario as well as by the shifting climate of academic libraries in Canada. By "taking the temperature" or being aware of our various climates, we situate our work within the context of changes within our national library associations, the Canadian accreditation process for MLIS/MLS programs, the ACRL Framework, as well as our non-faculty status as academic librarians in Canada.

At Western University, we are currently in the middle of a system-wide organizational renewal process, transitioning from a location-based system to a function-based system, with the user at the centre of our work. One of our new core user functions is teaching and learning.

### ***National and Provincial Context***

Our project overlapped with the dissolution of the Canadian Library Association and the formation of the Canadian Federation of Library Associations. This change in national library leadership—and how various groups work in collaboration with the new association—is only just beginning to have an impact. During this period of transition, librarians continue to look to the American Library Association for strategic direction, guiding documentation, and for MLIS/MLS program accreditation.

In the first year since the publication of ACRL Framework, disparate adoption of the document by Ontario universities has made it difficult to ascertain how, where, and to what extent local colleagues are using it to guide their work in teaching and learning. Furthermore, in the absence of a unifying Canadian association driving the

implementation process, it is very challenging for Canadian institutions to share their progress. Given this gap, Canadian libraries must and have created those environments of support locally, relying on ACRL-driven trainings, workshops, listservs, and sandboxes for guidance on the implementation of the ACRL Framework. Anecdotally, at Canadian LIS conferences, we have also observed a varied adoption of and blending of both the ACRL Standards and Framework.

An additional layer of documentation in Ontario includes the OCAV's UDLEs, which are more familiar to faculty at many Ontario institutions than the aforementioned ACRL Standards and Framework documents. As instruction librarians in Ontario, we seek a common language with faculty, many of whom are more familiar with OCAV's Expectations within the context of the IQAP than with LIS documents and publications. Many Canadian academic librarians must negotiate with faculty for time, content, pedagogical approach, and assessment of student learning within faculty-led courses. This negotiation process requires us to be strategic in the discussion of guiding documentation informing the teaching and learning we propose within faculty-led courses.

## **Western University**

Western University is a large academic institution that includes eight libraries, three affiliated university college libraries (Huron University College, Brescia University College, and King's University College), one seminary library (St. Peter's Seminary), and many smaller departmental resource centres and reading rooms. Western has 28,800 students (full-time enrollment) across undergraduate and graduate programs of study. We rank as the fifth largest university in Canada in terms of undergraduate full time enrollment (Universities Canada, 2016).

Our size is reflected in the librarian and archivist complement of forty-five members at our institution; this large body of colleagues presents the challenge of defining a common and unified approach to our work. It also is a tremendous benefit to have a diversity of voices in the creation of that common approach to teaching and learning.

Western has a longstanding history of championing teaching and learning both locally and for all Canadian universities. This history includes the genesis of the Workshop on Instruction in Library Use (WILU). Locally, it also includes a reciprocal partnership with our teaching and learning centre embedded within one of our larger libraries, the Teaching Support Centre (TSC), and a specialized teaching and learning librarian, who works closely with the centre's programming.

## ***Developing the Learning Outcomes***

### **Assembling Our Team**

Our focus on collaboration throughout this process began as we assembled the working group. Our diverse team included an archivist, a teaching and learning librarian, a metadata librarian, a copyright librarian, and two research and instructional services

librarians. This group constituted a different mix of backgrounds and specialties than those who usually volunteer for IL-related teams. These voices and perspectives were paramount in shaping the process and the outcome of our work.

Tom Adam is Western's copyright librarian. Prior to taking on his current role in 2013, he spent ten years as Western's first teaching and learning librarian. For Tom, the notion of librarians as educators is foundational. Planting the seeds to grow our role as intentional teachers was a major part of his job in those formative years.

Tom Belton is an archivist in Western Archives. He believes that it is important to have meaningful dialogue in the Archives about advancing teaching and learning beyond the typical and traditional "tour of old." He is interested in encouraging meaningful and engaging learning experiences about the Archives and its valuable collections. Equally important to Tom is to ensure the archival voice is included in the conversation.

Colleen Burgess is an associate librarian at Huron University College, a small liberal arts college affiliated with Western. Her background and interest in instruction stems from her former career as a secondary school teacher. In making the transition to academic librarianship, Colleen has focused her professional practice, research, and service on information literacy pedagogy, design, and delivery. She is currently building an information literacy program at Huron.

Kim McPhee, the project team chair, is Western's current teaching and learning librarian. Kim has a keen interest in teaching and learning, particularly in working with colleagues to help them develop strong outcomes-based instruction. She was a subject librarian for seven years and before that, an elementary school teacher.

Leanne Olson is a metadata management librarian in the library information resources management unit. She appreciated the chance to join the project team because it was something outside of her daily work and spoke to her personal interest in pedagogy and her desire to support student learning. She is currently completing a second undergraduate degree part time, and as a current Western student, looks at the project from both sides: as an instructor and as a learner.

Christy Sich has worked as an instructional librarian at three different academic libraries. She has worked for nine years as a research and instructional services Librarian at the D. B. Weldon Library at Western. Christy feels that teaching is central to who she is as a librarian and this project offered an opportunity to connect instruction librarians and bring everyone onto the same page with their teaching.

More people than originally hoped for ultimately composed the group; however, the diversity of experience among those who volunteered was extremely appealing. Each of us came for different reasons and from different places with different experiences and expectations, all of which ultimately informed the outcomes and enriched the work. In the long run, having a group that represented a variety of backgrounds across our library system contributed greatly to our project's success.



Welcome diversity on your team. Diversity can mean different things depending on your local situation. For us, it meant including voices from many different departments across our library rather than including only subject librarians.

## **Project Planning**

The project team began its work in February 2016. We knew that June 2016 was the expected date for the WDOs to go to the University's Senate for approval, and in order to align our work, we set our project end date to match the Senate meeting. It was a short timeline, and so detailed project planning was essential.

When our project team chair set the meeting dates for the team in February, she also booked a reservation at our campus restaurant for a celebration lunch in June. This lunch would be a clear end date to ensure we met our timeline, as well as a fun motivational goal. Being able to refer to that lunch date throughout the project was a great reminder that this was a finite project with a delicious reward waiting at the end.

To stay on track, we developed a project plan outlining tasks, responsible parties for each task, and weekly timelines (see Appendix C). Reviewing this project plan was a standing agenda item at each meeting. We edited the plan as we progressed, reflecting our decisions and progress.

Realistic timelines and celebrations can be particularly motivating: it is important to consider the time needed for a project and keep timelines detailed and achievable, allowing for adjustments as the plan evolves, without drawing the project out past the deadline.

## **Engagement Activities**

The process of building a shared vision of the ILLOs took time and deliberate thought. It was important to us to create a variety of opportunities to hear from our colleagues about what they value in our information literacy instruction work. We developed a series of activities to engage with colleagues across Western Libraries and the affiliated university college libraries.

### ***Information literacy retreats***

Western Libraries held two full-day retreats focused on the ACRL Framework, to which all instructing librarians and administrators were invited to attend. Each of the retreats garnered the interest of 20 librarians and administrators. At the retreats, we asked our colleagues to respond from a beginner's perspective to the ACRL Framework.

We asked participants to read the Framework document in advance and come to the retreat prepared to share their answers with the group. Asking for individual contemplation in advance allowed us to appreciate the similarities and differences in our responses to the document.

The first retreat began with a reflection exercise: we asked our colleagues to share what they viewed as the strengths and weaknesses of the document, to identify who or what they saw as missing from the document, and to explain what language, frame, or concept resonated with them after reading the document.

From this sharing exercise we moved into a close reading activity. We divided participants into small groups of three, assigning each group one of the six frames from the Framework: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual, Information Creation as a Process, Information Has Value, Research as Inquiry, Scholarship as Conversation, and Searching as Strategic Exploration. We asked participants to think beyond their own specific liaison area to consider the larger scope of the university, and, using the Framework as inspiration, to write three to five learning outcomes applicable to undergraduate students graduating from any discipline at Western.

We then conducted a dotmocracy exercise in which our colleagues voted on the outcomes that resonated with them the most. Colleagues posted the outcomes that they had developed for one of the frames on large chart paper. After presenting their outcomes, each individual within the larger retreat group was given three colored stickers (red/stop, yellow/continue, and green/start) that they could use to vote on their favorite and least favorite outcomes. The value of this activity is that the group quickly comes to see variance in where collective interest, and conversely disinterest, lies. This exercise proved invaluable to our process, as we would later shape our writing of the ILLOs from these foundational outcomes that our colleagues had written and voted upon.

After a break for lunch, we reconvened and divided into two groups: one group focused on developing shared tools and the other on developing a shared vision for Western Libraries.

The shared tools group worked on developing ACRL Framework promotional content for our fellow colleagues' use: an elevator speech, an email template, a ten-minute departmental meeting pitch, presentation slides, and other ideas.

The second group was presented with a series of questions to consider the problems and opportunities in developing a coordinated approach to information literacy informed by the ACRL Framework. Those questions included:

1. How can we conduct the one-shot information literacy session differently, or should we move away from it entirely?
2. How can we work to integrate the ACRL Framework into the curriculum?
3. How might information literacy be incorporated into Western Libraries' Strategic Plan?
4. Is it possible (or desirable?) to take a coordinated approach to information literacy at Western Libraries?

After discussing each group's work, we concluded the afternoon and followed up with a survey to learn the group's desired next steps.

### ***Focused discussion activity: The Ideal Graduate***

For these discussions, we invited our colleagues to reflect on what we considered the "ideal" graduate. We displayed an infographic with a list of demographic statistics related to first year students at Western. We then asked participants to brainstorm (on post-it notes) what knowledge, skills, and values an ideal graduate should have, demonstrate, or hold at the time of graduating from their program of study.

Participants separated into groups to share and refine their ideas, then each group posted their notes on a large blank wall. We gathered around the wall of notes to collectively identify and name themes that emerged from this brainstorming activity.

Some of the themes included:

1. Ethical, equitable, or responsible use of information
2. Communication skills
3. Finding and using information
4. Characteristics of a lifelong learner
5. Emotional intelligence
6. Qualities of an engaged and responsible citizen

We then worked as a group to map the themes to our WDOs. These focused discussions were challenging: it can be difficult to openly disagree about our respective approaches to our work, to disagree about what is important about what we do, and to hold different values about what should be considered within the scope of our work. However, the discussions were worth the effort, and gave our group a clear sense of what our colleagues valued in teaching information literacy.

### ***One-on-one consultations***

Once we had reflected on the outcome of the focused discussion sessions, we consulted with colleagues one-on-one about the themes developed in the two discussion sessions. This approach was meant to meet the needs of those who prefer to offer feedback face to face. Some of the questions we posed to these colleagues included:

1. What do you like best?
2. What are you most excited about?

3. What will challenge you?
4. What's missing?
5. Any suggestions for rollout?

In addition to soliciting feedback from our librarian colleagues on various drafts of the ILLO document, we also sought the expertise of our partners in the Teaching Support Centre (TSC).

The TSC team is familiar with reviewing outcomes documents and provided constructive feedback on many aspects of the document, including:

- establishing the order of the outcomes (they recommended we begin the document with concepts most familiar to students, and then move on to more challenging concepts);
- ensuring that the outcomes are readable by undergraduate students;
- removing any content that fell outside of the discipline of information literacy;
- writing from a perspective that allows for differentiation from any future graduate-student-focused outcomes document.

Consulting widely and offering a variety of methods to give feedback were essential steps in the co-creation of the ILLO document. We felt that by offering as many methods as possible for our colleagues to engage in the process, we could ensure that they would see themselves reflected in the document.

### **The Writing Process**

Over the course of the project, themes that emerged and repeated became easy candidates for inclusion in our learning outcomes. The process helped us whittle down our outcomes into succinct, yet meaningful statements.

Even so, the writing process took time. Our group took many steps in the writing of the final ILLO document: one of our team members wrote an initial draft of the document for us to develop collectively, we “workshopped” the document as a collective, and we contributed our own individual editing and wordsmithing efforts to the writing of the document. Throughout the writing process, we also continually referred to the foundational documents: the ACRL Framework, the ACRL Standards, UDLEs, WDOs and our institution’s and library’s strategic plans. We presented the final draft to the library administration for feedback and circulated it for our colleagues to see and use.

## **Challenges**

### **Librarian Engagement and Visioning Fatigue**

As with any new initiative, we faced challenges beyond writing the document.

One we were faced with from the start was combatting “visioning fatigue”. We began our project at the same time as our library system embarked on an organization renewal initiative. This meant that we had to be sensitive to the fact that our colleagues were being asked to provide a lot of feedback about all aspects of our work.

Our strategy was to think about how we could sustain interest in the project for ourselves, and for our colleagues, in order to get the feedback that we needed. We deliberately sought feedback in multiple ways to encourage as much participation as possible. For example, for one of our events, we invited colleagues to attend group sessions or to meet with us one-on-one for coffee. We also provided refreshments at our events; food is an appealing incentive and a good way to show gratitude to instructors for providing their feedback.

While some colleagues did not participate in these activities, a majority of colleagues did. This allowed us to still be able to create a document that reflected our collective values.

### **Dissenting Opinions**

Although most of the people who participated in our activities were instruction librarians, because of our organization’s current structure, they came from libraries across our campus. Many of the attendees do not usually work together, and so naturally there misunderstandings, disagreements or tensions.

In reflecting on our process in conducting this work, we recommend soliciting diverse views using a variety of approaches. This includes carefully listening to dissenting views, working through moments of tension, asking clarifying questions of your colleagues, and taking the time to listen. Part of the challenge of this process is in listening to dissenting views and part of that challenge is in learning how to distill those views into a cohesive whole that reflects the diversity of views presented by your colleagues.

We found that with a great deal of mindful listening and by offering a variety of opportunities to offer feedback throughout the process, we were successful in writing a document that was representative of our colleagues’ many views and values.

### **Data Overload**

It was important to us to get as many people in the library system on board with the development of the ILLOs. To use the ILLOs and develop an instruction program, we naturally needed buy-in from the instructors who are on the ground teaching.

To accomplish this, we were deliberate about gathering as much feedback as we could. As a result, we had mountains of data to work with. We had to mesh together documents from local and national levels that sometimes seemed similar but that were written from very different contexts and for different purposes (i.e., the international ACRL Framework document versus the local WDOs). We recommend expecting this overload of data from the outset. The early stages of any project with many voices involved will feel chaotic: we resolved to embrace the chaos and plough through it.

### ***Collaborative Writing***

Writing collaboratively presented similar challenges. These challenges are noted in personal reflections from the members of the project:

Tom Adam noted that even though it should not have been surprising, collaborative writing takes time and it often felt as though we were looping back and beginning all over again. However, the richness of the resulting document more than compensated for what seemed like moving at a snail's pace.

Colleen Burgess emphasized that words matter. With two degrees in English, and a background as an English teacher, she was concerned that we get the language right: language that would resonate with our colleagues' views of what we as librarians contribute to the educational mission of our institution.

Kim McPhee wanted to make sure people would use the ILLOs, so the document needed to balance richness with practicality and ease of implementation. This work takes time, perspective-taking, and patience.

Christy Sich found the challenge to be thinking beyond her own work, while still making sure that the outcomes would be applicable to her own teaching.

### **Benefits of the ILLOs**

The most significant benefit of this project is that we now have an Information Literacy Learning Outcomes document that can be used as a foundational tool for librarian and archivist instructors to engage in dialogue with faculty instructors at a meaningful level. We hope this will help us continue to build collaborative and reciprocal partnerships in the classroom.

The document also aligns with our key strategic priorities, library goals, and institutional goals. It addresses accrediting and government body requirements for Western and the affiliated colleges. The ILLOs align with organizational and quality assurance frameworks and provide the foundation of a common language to facilitate conversations at all levels.

At a grassroots level, they demonstrate the library's value and worth to instructors, curriculum developers, and students, spelling out exactly what the library can add to meaningful learning environments. They also speak to a broader perspective by

underscoring the value of library and archives professionals as partners in teaching and learning.

The ILLOs enable and facilitate collaboration at all levels. For example, from the administrative perspective they can be integrated into Ontario's routine, seven-year curriculum review cycle by framing the contribution the library makes to teaching and learning in the discipline. From the instructor perspective, the ILLOs can assist faculty with course development and can serve as a catalyst for integrating librarians as partners in the classroom.

The ILLOs act as a toolkit for change. They reflect the shift from teacher- to student-centred learning and encourage library instructors to move beyond tool- and skill-based teaching to an integrated and embedded role.

The ILLOs can help to break down institutional silos and grow collaborative working partnerships by providing common goals for library instructors and enabling a holistic approach to information literacy instruction.

### ***Recommendations***

In considering what worked well and where we stumbled in this project, we distilled our practices down to several key points that contributed to our success:

- Welcome diversity on your team. Diversity can mean different things depending on your local situation;
- Anticipate ambiguity and trust the process;
- Consider the time needed for your project and establish a realistic timeline;
- Plan a concluding celebration early;
- Develop a detailed project plan;
- Review the project plan regularly and make necessary adjustments;
- Solicit diverse views using a variety of approaches;
- Listen to a diversity of voices and learn how to distill them;
- Trust that a diversity of responses will inform richness of the final document;
- Offer incentives and gratitude to participants;
- Accommodate diverse learning styles and the communication preferences of your colleagues.

## ***Local Context Exercise***

In Appendix B, we have included an exercise to help you consider your local context and how this might shape the development of ILLOs at your own institution. It leads the reader through considering relevant details that may change your ILLOs: which national, provincial/state, or local library associations you might rely on, which documents (such as provincial/state degree expectations or institutional strategic plans) you might borrow from, and what other factors may influence your outcomes.

For example, are students required to take information literacy courses as a part of their degree? What is the academic status of librarians and archivists at your institution and how do they interact with faculty? How comfortable are your instruction librarians with change, how much consultation do they expect, and how similarly or differently do they think? You may want to consider the size of your institution as well. For a smaller library system without the many individual locations that Western has, it may be possible to scale back the consultation process and accomplish in an afternoon what took us a full-day retreat. Our process worked well for us, but you may want to alter it based on your own local context.

## ***Conclusion***

We see the end of this project and the creation of these Western-specific outcomes for information literacy as a beginning to larger work. The project has set the course for building an intentional information literacy program at our institution. It has taught us important lessons to apply to further collaborative work, and we know now to trust in the process even when it is messy and full of surprises.

We look at the development of our ILLOs as similar to planting seeds: an integrated and collaborative information literacy program will take a generation of faculty and teaching librarians and archivists to fully embrace the ILLOs, their shifting roles as instructional partners, and to create engaging learning environments where knowledge and skills can develop and grow. We have planted one small seed in the larger teaching and learning garden that one day will yield its fruit.

## ***Next Steps***

At the time of writing this article, two projects are underway that are building toward implementation of the ILLOs. A curriculum mapping pilot project is ongoing to develop and deliver a cohesive information literacy program with the aim of providing Western Libraries staff with the processes and tools to approach teaching and assessment activities from a programmatic perspective. We are also in the early stages of developing an internal guide to the ILLOs to assist in their integration into teaching practice.

In addition, our teaching and learning committee is focused on developing a teaching and learning community of practice during the coming academic year. We are hopeful



that the community of practice will support members to engage in conversation about integrating the ILLOs into their teaching so that we can develop shared wisdom.

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## ***Appendix A: Western Undergraduate Information Literacy Learning Outcomes***

### **Definition of Information Literacy**

Information literacy is the set of integrated abilities encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning. (ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education)

### **Learning Outcomes**

The Western Undergraduate Information Literacy Learning Outcomes are intended to align closely with the Western Degree Outcomes. Information Literacy Learning Outcomes articulate undergraduate expectations with respect to information access, assessment, and application.

### **Discovery and Critical Evaluation of Information**

Western graduates will define their information needs and design their search strategies, recognizing that searching is strategic exploration. They will be proficient in the use of online resources that aid in their research. They will evaluate the breadth, scope, and variety of information resources, and they will apply their information literacy skills to new questions. They will investigate information gaps and conflicting information; they will recognize creator perspective. They will articulate how different formats affect use of information. They will investigate and question traditional norms of authority.

### **Responsible Creation and Use of Information**

Western graduates will analyze and apply the legal and ethical limitations or considerations in the use of information, including but not limited to creator rights, the concept of the public domain, and privacy concerns. They will articulate their rights and accountabilities, and recognize the opportunity to act equitably, as both creators and stewards of information. They will show that they value knowledge and information by demonstrating attribution.

### **Enduring Research Skills**

Western graduates will be resilient and proactive researchers with a developed awareness of the information landscape. They will be able to manage their emotions as they navigate the research process, in order to better manage their time, stress, and information overload. As a result, they will be flexible, creative, and curious researchers.

## **Communication**

Western graduates will demonstrate critical thinking through strong written and verbal communication skills. They will tailor their communication to their audiences and support their claims with appropriate research. They will know how, where, and when to disseminate their work. They will value the power and persistence of their online identity.

## **Civic Engagement**

Western graduates will be active and aware citizens who examine and critique their own information privilege. They will engage in discussions about how and why some people may be marginalized within systems that produce and disseminate information. They will seek out the perspectives of others who challenge their own views and will address information needs through collaboration and cross-cultural connections.

## **Appendix B: Co-Creating System Wide Information Literacy Learning Outcomes: Content Comparison Chart**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ontario, Canadian Context</b>	<b>Your State or Country Context</b>
Associations	Dissolution of CLA, CAPAL has a librarian focus not a library focus, MLIS accredited by ALA	
Required Courses	No mandatory 1st year IL/research skills courses	
Framework adoption	Disparate adoption of new ACRL Framework by universities	
Blending of documents	Varied adoption of and/or blending of the Standards and the Framework documents	
Degree expectations	Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations in Ontario	
Faculty status	Librarians do not have faculty status at the majority of our institutions	

<b>Category</b>	<b>Western / Affiliate Context</b>	<b>Your Institution's Context</b>
Type of institution	Large academic institution with three affiliated university colleges and one seminary	
Size of institution	Size: 28,864 students across undergraduate, master and PhD programs of study	
T&L on campus	History of Teaching and Learning: genesis of WILU & partnership with TSC	
Library leadership	Library leadership: new UL & Provost, organizational change, & varied comfort levels with change among colleagues	
T&L Librarian role?	Teaching & Learning Librarian Role: gradual shift in focus from instructor to student, from imparter of knowledge to facilitator of knowledge, moving from tools to skills to experiences focus in IL	
Other campus influences	Western Degree Level Outcomes released	
Team composition	Team Composition: Value diversity & create a document that reflects the diversity of our institution	

**Appendix C: Project Plan: Information Literacy Learning Outcomes Project Team (updated April 22, 2016)**

Task	Responsible	March	April	May	June
<b>Communications</b>					
Share composition of team with WL	Author 1 (done)	X			
Share project plan with WL or who?	done		X		
Decide who our stakeholders are	done		X		
Send updates re: progress and invitations to get involved	ongoing		X	X	X
<b>Literature Review</b>					
set up project site on OWL	Author 4; Author 2. (support) (done)	X			
load existing docs on OWL site	Colleague 1. (done)	X			
informally search the lit; sub-topics: history of IL, outcomes generally, follow up on questions that arise, assessment	All (done)		X	X	X
import documents into OWL (ongoing)	All (done)		X	X	X
read and share findings	All—as needed		X	X	X
<b>Current IL practices across WL</b>					
Talk with/survey/focus group all who provide instruction at WL	in progress—focused discussions April 27 and 29			X	X
Mine the instruction database	decision: not needed due to forward-looking focus			X	X
Decide how to gather faculty input	circulate draft to 'champions' and TSC; ask for input via survey				X
Do we consult USC or other student groups?	decision: not at this point			X	X

Task	Responsible	March	April	May	June
<b>Definition of Information Literacy</b>					
Hold one or two working meetings to develop definition	May 18 meeting			X X	
Share with WL for feedback; revise as appropriate	May 25?				X X
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>					
Based on lit review and gathered input, spend one to two working meetings to develop LOs	May 4—2 hr meeting			X X	
Share with WL for feedback; revise as appropriate	May 25?				X X
<b>Curriculum Mapping</b>					
TBD					X X X X