

# Western Libraries

## Report of the Information Literacy Learning Outcomes Project Team

JUNE 15, 2016

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### INTRODUCTION

#### Background

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

In the Canadian context, there have been initiatives at the provincial level. In 2005, the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents issued the [Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations](#) (UDLEs), which have become the standard for higher education in Ontario.

In January 2015, Western began the process of developing institution-specific learning outcomes. The Western Degree Outcomes (WDOs) have been drafted and are expected to be finalized in summer 2016 and then integrated across Western's curriculum. Additionally, there is a call for embedded information literacy in both the [Western University Strategic Plan](#) and the [Western Libraries' Strategic Plan](#).

The Information Literacy Learning Outcomes Project Team was formed in February 2016 to develop undergraduate information literacy learning outcomes that align with the Framework, Standards, and WDOs, for use across Western University (for Mandate see Appendix A).

As part of our process, we consulted various internal and external resources (see Appendix B); and we consulted with staff across Western University and the Affiliated University Colleges (see Appendix C).

# 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 A

### **MANDATE**

Drawing on Western Libraries' Strategy Map and in order for us to operate effectively and with excellence, Western Libraries will lead 21<sup>st</sup> century literacies development for students, scholars, and researchers. This includes teaching critical literacies and embedding learning outcomes into the curriculum. By developing Western Libraries-specific learning outcomes based on the wider WDOs we will lead the development of 21<sup>st</sup> century literacies on this campus.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

Working in a consultative manner, the Project Team will:

- Develop a definition and shared understanding of information literacy for use at Western University
- Determine current information literacy practices across Western Libraries
- Consult and consider a broad range of documents to inform our approach
- Develop institution-specific information literacy learning outcomes to be used at Western
- Investigate the potential of building a curriculum mapping framework to be implemented across Western Libraries, time permitting

### **Project Team Membership**

Tom Adam, Copyright Librarian

Tom Belton, Archivist

Colleen Burgess, Research & Instructional Services Librarian

Kim McPhee, Teaching & Learning Librarian (Chair)

Leanne Olson, Metadata Management Librarian

Christy Sich, Research & Instructional Services Librarian

## Appendix B

### RESOURCES CONSULTED

#### Internal Resources Consulted

[Draft Report of the Working Group on Western Degree Outcomes \(WDOs\)](#)

[Western University Strategic Plan](#)

[Western Libraries' Strategic Plan](#)

#### External Resources Consulted

[Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations \(UDLEs\)](#) (Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents)

[Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education](#) (Association of College and Research Libraries)

[Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education](#) (American Library Association)

## Appendix C

### STAFF CONSULTATION

#### 2015 ACRL Retreat

- Wednesday, June 17<sup>th</sup> from 9 am to 2 pm
- Wednesday, August 19<sup>th</sup> from 9 am to 2 pm

Prior to the establishment of the Project Team, Kim McPhee and Colleen Burgess facilitated a retreat to discuss the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education. Instruction librarians and archivists at Western Libraries and the Affiliated University Colleges, as well as Library and Information Science faculty members were invited to the session. The Information Literacy Learning Outcomes Project Team looked at the written outcomes from this retreat in designing the Western Libraries' Information Literacy Learning Outcomes.

#### 2016 IL Learning Outcomes Focussed Discussions

- Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup> from 1:30pm to 3pm
- Friday, April 29<sup>th</sup> from 10:30am to 12:00pm

The project team hosted two focussed discussion settings looking at the Western Degree Outcomes, asking instructors to brainstorm and classify the knowledge, skills, and values that they felt the ideal Western graduate should have, demonstrate, or hold. The invitations were sent to the [wlinstruct@uwo.ca](mailto:wlinstruct@uwo.ca) email list. The project team used this work to inform the content and phrasing of the Western Undergraduate Information Literacy Learning Outcomes.

#### 2016 Feedback on Draft Learning Outcomes

In early June of 2016, we shared a draft of the Undergraduate Information Literacy Learning Outcomes with Western Libraries staff, Teaching Support Centre staff, and colleagues at the Affiliated University Colleges. We received responses via email and in-person meetings and incorporated the feedback into the latest draft.

#### Consultation with TLSC

We also met with the Teaching and Learning Standing Committee on Wednesday, June 15 to share the close-to-final draft with them, ask what was exciting and challenging about the learning outcomes, and to ask for input into the roll-out process.