

UNCG



Assessing Information Literacy in Transfer Students

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- Over 17,000 students at UNCG; about 1,500 (11%) transfers
- Diverse educational backgrounds
- Transfer students difficult to target and identify
- Our first year information literacy librarian has extensive program, but what instruction have our transfers had?
- What do these students need, and how can we provide it?

Why study transfer students?

- Survey incoming transfer students-demographic questions and information literacy tasks
- N=150
- Rubric created for qualitative data, SPSS used for cross tabulations and tests for statistical significance
- Results on choosing keywords:
 - Almost 73% of respondents scored fair or poor
 - Students reporting no library instruction experience least knowledgeable
 - Older students and students from community colleges least knowledgeable

- Keyword question wording didn't gather the information that we want
- Web source evaluation question too easy
- Citation question too ambiguous

I want to find information through the library. What are the best words for me to type? This is my research question: What are the long term effects of smoking on health?

Which of these statements would I need to cite? (tell my audience where I found the information). Please check each statement that needs a citation.

- Smoking causes lung cancer [this information can be found in many places - the Internet, seen on t.v., heard in class, and seen on packs of cigarettes]
- "Approximately 69% of smokers want to quit completely" [this quote was found for free on the Internet]
- Even being around second hand smoke can cause health problems like lung cancer, heart disease, and respiratory infections [this information was found for free on the Internet and I restated the information in my own words]

Challenges

- Librarian served as AiA Team Leader
- Assembled strategic partners who worked with transfer students and assessment across university
- 16 hours of in-person meetings at ALA
- Moodle course- cohorts, feedback, assignments, webinars, facilitator
- Project presented at ALA
- Research designed using structured Assessment Cycle.
- Two research studies designed:
 - Pre-test, intervention, post-test
 - Re-survey 2014 cohort



ACRL. 2015. "Assessment Cycle." Assessment in Action Notebook. Chicago: ACRL

Assessment Cycle

- Offered library instruction for two sessions in a class for new transfer students (FFL 250)
- Based lesson plan on identified needs of students from 2014 survey
- Pre and Post Test Google Forms
- Catalog search - identify author, year published, and call number
- Attitudinal questions on comfort levels for tasks and to identify most challenging skills
- Rubric instrument, SPSS analysis

Based on your experience at your previous college library and/or public library, how would you rate your comfort level with evaluating whether a source is popular or scholarly, with 1 being not comfortable, 2 being somewhat comfortable, and 3 being very comfortable?*

1 2 3

not comfortable very comfortable

Which skill do you think is the MOST challenging?*

Choose one

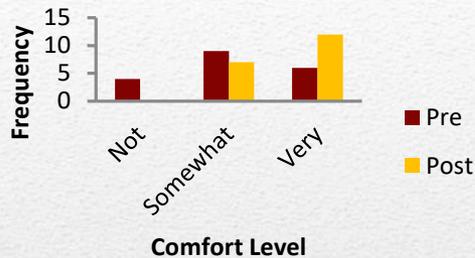
- Finding a journal article on a topic
- Determining whether an article is popular or scholarly
- Figuring out where to go to find the kind of information I need
- Creating proper bibliographies and using correct citation style

Start at UNCG Library's web site, <http://library.uncg.edu>. Search for the book title "The Wilderness World of John Muir". Who is the author? *

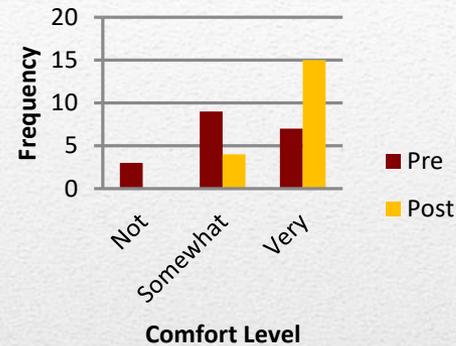
What year was the book written?

What is the book's call number in the library?

How would you rate your comfort level with finding journal articles on a topic?



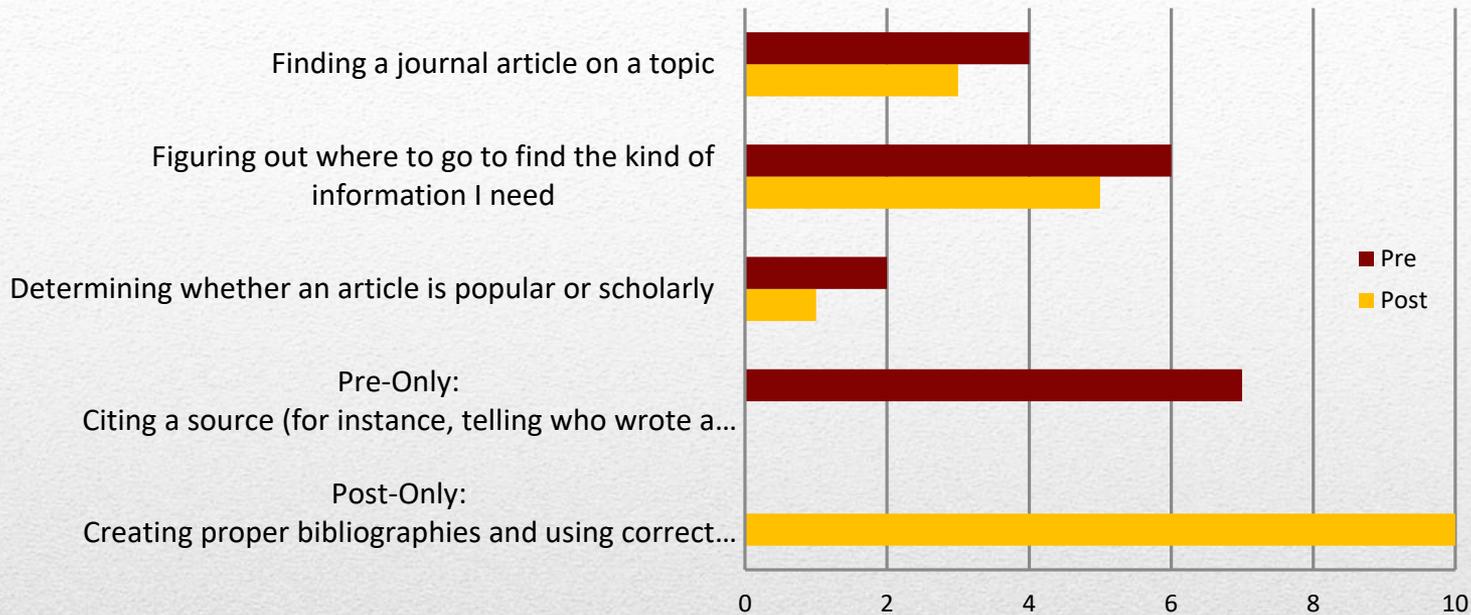
How would you rate your comfort level with finding books in the library?



Post-Test improvement finding call numbers, not for other two tasks.

25% increase in comfort level for finding books, and 26% increase in finding journal articles.

Which skill do you think is the MOST challenging?



Challenges finding kind of information needed:

“Because that is usually the most challenging for me at any library, since it is so broad.”

“When it is time to find information, sifting through the minutiae will still be challenging.”

Challenges citing sources:

“The different formats on citing a source, for example, MLA and APA.”

“Because there are many different ways to cite and I am not familiar with doing so.”

Challenges finding journal articles

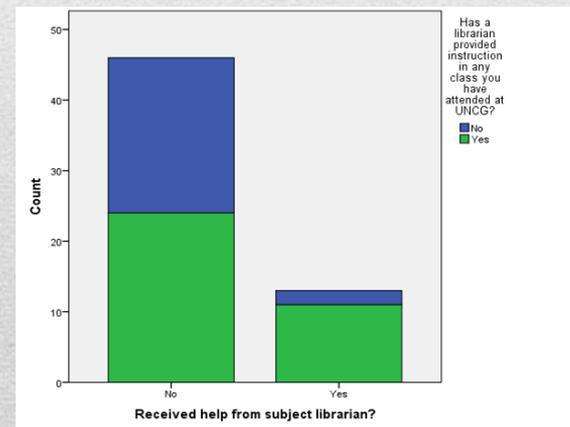
“I think it will be challenging because there are so many articles to choose from and having to go through and find one that fits with my research would be difficult.”

- Pre-test not sent out before class; time crunch
- One session not scored because of student challenges
- Small sample size (19) made it difficult to find significant differences
- One question worded slightly differently in post-test

Pre- and Post- Assessment challenges

- Re-surveyed 2014 cohort
- Similar- demographic + Information Literacy tasks
- Asked about student-librarian interactions
 - Reference desk
 - Virtual reference
 - Library instruction
 - Consultations with liaison
- Rubric instrument, SPSS

- This time asked the length of gap between transferring institutions
- Significant results
 - Students who have received library instruction were more likely to seek consultations with subject librarians.
 - Older students were more likely to have had a longer gap between transferring institutions, perhaps affecting skills



- Almost half of solicitation e-mails bounced back, suggesting retention issues
- Smaller sample size than desired (n=58)
- Theories for flattened results:
 - Those students who previously scored poorly might have been the students who dropped out
 - One year of instruction and research brought up lower scorers

- Both AiA studies show that library instruction increases confidence and motivation to seek out librarians
- Self-efficacy beliefs contribute to motivation and performance (Bandura, 1993). Increase in confidence will hopefully lead to greater sense of self-efficacy.
- Pre-test/Post-test results on increased skills disappointing

Bandura, A. (1993). Perceived self-efficacy in cognitive development and functioning. *Educational Psychologist*, 28(2), 117–148

Conclusions

- Use student ID number for access to all available demographic information, such as:
 - Ethnicity
 - Military service
 - First gen status
- Embed in transfer student orientations, specialized instruction
- Outreach to community college librarians
- Focus group planned Spring 2017
- Participation with Biology - HHMI grant application for at risk STEM Transfer Students

Next Steps