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It's Your Business: Evaluating the Business Curriculum to Target Information Literacy in the Discipline

Introduction

How can librarians ensure they are meeting the information literacy needs of their Business departments and incorporate innovative practices into student learning experiences? This short article will describe techniques for developing an information literacy curriculum within a particular Major or program of study. It will chronicle how the Business librarian used the "curriculum map" technique to support this high-impact initiative for the College of Business.

The curriculum mapping process required the analysis of Business course syllabi and the identification of relevant information literacy learning outcomes at the institutional, departmental, programmatic, and course levels. Additionally, national standards and "threshold or transformative concepts" from the Business literature were evaluated.

Data Collection & Evaluation

First, you want to identify information literacy outcomes that both correspond with your institutional and program level outcomes and also bolster ACRL's frames (you may use the ACRL's information literacy standards and frames simultaneously). As the business liaison completing the curriculum map for the College of Business, I reviewed information literacy outcomes relevant to my institution, as well as information literacy outcomes for each particular business department (i.e. Accounting, Management, etc.). Once these outcomes were gathered, they were aligned with the primary information literacy goals of the library. I also skimmed the *National Standards for Business Education* published by the National Business Education Association to identify discipline-specific standards with information literacy components. The standards were categorized by business topics, thus facilitating the identification of information literacy outcomes by business departments.

Next, you want to list the required “core” courses and elective courses for each business department, as well as course descriptions for each course. Use your institution’s course bulletin, program overview, or the departmental web page to help you obtain this information. This step will help you gain insight on how a particular curriculum is organized and better understand what students are expected to learn in their major.

Third, you want to collect faculty syllabi to identify assignments with an information literacy component. At this point, you should have designated four to six information literacy outcomes that are the most relevant to your institution. You will use these particular outcomes to evaluate the business assignments. This step will help you identify assignments with high research activity and thus pinpoint courses that benefit from library instruction. Learning outcomes, assignments, curriculum, and how each assignment is graded or assessed (if known) were evaluated for each course that was identified as having an information literacy component.

Example: BLAW 3210

Learning Outcomes/Performance Indicators	Assignment	Curriculum (What does the student need to know to do it well?)	Assessment/Grade
Access and evaluate law journal articles and develop a concise position statement	Periodical review (law journal) on corporation law	Search strategies, search tools (LexisNexis), analyzing sources, citing	Rubric: Min of 3 articles, proper citations, and quality of content

In addition to the curriculum mapping steps, I collected articles that discussed information literacy and/or critical thinking skills for business students. This gave me a clear idea of what skills business students needed to be successful in their careers. On a side note, this type of information provides insight into “threshold concepts” and provides some guidance when thinking about the new ACRL Framework.

Conclusion

Curriculum mapping is a process for reviewing the curriculum and analyzing specific components, such as content, skills, and assessment. The goal is to strengthen the curriculum and to help students achieve the designated learning outcomes. This short article outlined techniques for other librarians to develop discipline-based information literacy learning outcomes that promote real-world student learning and engagement.

Additional Links:

- [Finance Curriculum Map Example](#)
- [Blank Curriculum Map Template](#)