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Assessment of the Information Literacy QEP: Comparison of Pre- and Post-QEP Senior Papers

Institutional Research

December 2013

In the spring of 2008, the Director of Institutional Research requested that chairs of departments provide copies of senior papers for use in assessing the capstone component of Trinity's general education curriculum (Common Curriculum). These papers were retained to serve as a base line for measuring changes in students' information literacy performances resulting from the campus Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP).

In the spring of 2013, following the completion of the five year implementation of the QEP, chairs were again asked to submit copies of senior papers. During the summer of 2013, the Information Literacy Coordinator, Benjamin Harris, and the Director of Institutional Research, Diane Sapphire, compiled lists of the papers that had been submitted in 2008 and those submitted in 2013. They narrowed these lists to only those departments that had submitted papers in both years. Within these departments, they reviewed papers to ascertain whether or not they were amenable for this information literacy evaluation process. Some were deemed inappropriate due to challenges with having other faculty members review them (e.g., they were written in foreign languages or consisted mainly of computer code) and others were set aside due to the nature of the project (e.g. simulations or creative writing).

Those that remained came from six departments: Chemistry, Engineering, Human Communication, Philosophy, Political Science, and Psychology. Within each department, an equal number of pre- and post-papers were randomly selected. This process resulted in 29 pre- and 29 post-papers (6 of each from Chemistry and Philosophy, 5 of each from Engineering, Political Science, and Psychology, and 2 of each from Human Communication).

During the final QEP workshop in May 2012, attending faculty members developed a rubric for to assess information literacy at the senior level. A copy of the rubric is included as Appendix A.

The Information Literacy Coordinator and Director of Institutional Research identified a faculty member with sufficient expertise in each of the subject areas of Chemistry, Engineering, Human Communication, Philosophy, Political Science, and Psychology to serve as a reader and scorer of the pre- and post-papers in that area. If a faculty member served as the instructor for the course from which the pre- or post-papers were drawn, an alternative faculty member was invited to participate in the project.

These faculty members were provided with copies of the papers from which all identifying information and dates were removed and were asked to score them using the rubric. Scored rubrics were submitted to the Director of Institutional Research.

Detailed scoring results for the twelve rubric criteria are provided in Appendix B. For eleven of the twelve criteria, the percent of students at the “On Target” level or higher increased from the pre papers to the post papers. For the one criterion where the percentage did not increase, “synthesizing quoted or paraphrased information and integrating the information into their own ideas and arguments”, the percentage remained constant. The table below summarizes the pre-to-post change in percentage of students scored “On Target” or above.

Percent of Papers Scored “On Target” or Higher, Pre and Post

Criteria	pre	post
Access	39%	74%
Understand - Primary, Secondary	46%	83%
Understand - Variety of Sources	34%	55%
Evaluate - Credible Sources	69%	79%
Evaluate - Relevant Sources	83%	97%
Evaluate - Recognize Bias	38%	76%
Use Ethically - Identify Sources	38%	59%
Use Ethically - Bibliography	34%	41%
Use Ethically - Paraphrases	83%	83%
Create - Insight	41%	55%
Create - Synthesis	34%	59%
Create - Accurately represent positions	38%	66%

Appendix A – Information Literacy Rubric

	UNACCEPTABLE	ADEQUATE	ON TARGET	ADVANCED
ACCESS	Selects sources that suggest the use of elementary search strategies.	Selects sources that demonstrate basic searching principles.	Explores the searching mechanics of information resources (advanced search options, limits, controlled vocabulary).	Explores the searching mechanics of information resources and exhibits efficient (quick, effective) methods to locate sources.
UNDERSTAND	Confuses primary, secondary, and tertiary sources.	May understand the difference between primary, secondary, and tertiary sources, but uses one type of source when another is available or more appropriate.	Understands the difference between primary, secondary, and tertiary sources and uses each appropriately.	Recognizes the most respected and reputable journals, databases and websites in a discipline. Recognizes the value of using tertiary sources to begin research, but not as primary support for their work.
	Uses minimal variety of sources.	Uses some variety of sources.	Uses a variety of sources--primary, secondary, tertiary sources---as appropriate.	Uses sources that are appropriate/credible in a particular discipline and recognizes the relationships between sources as part of a practice of scholarly communication with a discipline.
EVALUATE	Does not incorporate credible or authoritative sources.	Uses a mix of credible/authoritative and questionable sources.	Uses only credible and authoritative sources.	Uses seminal works and primary journals from the discipline as well as credible/authoritative sources
	Uses sources not relevant to topic.	Uses mix of relevant and irrelevant sources.	Uses only sources relevant to topic.	Uses only sources that are relevant to the topic and appropriate for the discipline.
	Fails to recognize bias/perspective.	Partially recognizes and/or deals with bias/perspective.	Recognizes and deals with bias/perspective.	Recognizes and deals with bias/perspective by contrasting the two competing arguments
USE ETHICALLY	Fails to properly identify sources of information and ideas according to the standards of ethical use of information.	Properly identifies most sources of information and ideas according to the standards of ethical use, but may exhibit minor mistakes.	Properly identifies all sources of information and ideas according to the standards of ethical use of information. There are no noticeable mistakes.	Properly identifies all sources of information and ideas according to the standards of ethical use of intellectual property/information. There are no mistakes.
	Does not include a functional bibliography and/or in-text citations.	Includes a bibliography or in-text citations which may contain minor formatting errors or omissions.	Bibliography and in-text citations are consistent with each other and in proper formatting for the subject area.	Bibliography and in-text citations are correct according to the current discipline-appropriate guidelines.
	Uses source material as indirect quote without adequate paraphrasing.	Attempts to paraphrase or summarize cited material but poorly worded/rephrased.	Effectively paraphrases or summarizes ideas/information from the cited source materials using original language.	Synthesizes quoted or paraphrased information and integrates the information into their own ideas, arguments, etc.
CREATE	Does not develop insight, or does not include a range of sources and perspectives.	Develops some insights based on some sources and perspectives.	Develops meaningful insights based upon variety of sources and perspectives.	Develops astute insights based upon sources and perspectives, resulting in a better understanding of the norms of this discipline/community of practice
	Does not synthesize arguments/ideas; unable to integrate sources with each other or within original thinking on the topic.	Demonstrates some synthesis and engagement with sources; tends toward summary.	Demonstrates sophisticated, level of critical/creative synthesis.	Demonstrates sophisticated level of critical/creative synthesis, resulting in original conclusions/products/perspectives/etc.
	Misrepresents other positions on the topic, or fails to identify or acknowledge other views.	Represents some other positions, with varying degrees of accuracy; may fail to acknowledge some major perspectives.	Accurately represents major/leading positions on the topic.	Accurately represents major/leading positions on the topic and recognizes the place of their own arguments within this discussion.

Appendix B – Detailed Rubric Scores

Score Counts

Access

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	6	3	9
Adequate	8	3	11
On Target	7	11	18
On Target-Adv		5	5
Advanced	2	1	3
NA	6	6	12
Grand Total	29	29	58
average score	2.2	2.8	2.5

Score Percents (NA's excluded)

Access

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	26%	13%	20%
Adequate	35%	13%	24%
On Target	30%	48%	39%
On Target-Adv	0%	22%	11%
Advanced	9%	4%	7%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%
% 3 or higher	39%	74%	57%

average scores computed by assigning values of acceptable=1, adequate=2, on target=3, advanced=4

Understand - Primary, Secondary

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	3	1	4
Adequate	12	4	16
On Target	5	21	26
Advanced	8	3	11
NA	1		1
Grand Total	29	29	58
average score	2.6	2.9	2.8

Understand - Primary, Secondary

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	11%	3%	7%
Adequate	43%	14%	28%
On Target	18%	72%	46%
Advanced	29%	10%	19%
NA			
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%
% 3 or higher	46%	83%	65%

Understand - Variety of Sources

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	6	7	13
Adequate	13	6	19
On Target	4	10	14
Advanced	6	6	12
Grand Total	29	29	58
average score	2.3	2.5	2.4

Understand - Variety of Sources

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	21%	24%	22%
Adequate	45%	21%	33%
On Target	14%	34%	24%
Advanced	21%	21%	21%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%
% 3 or higher	34%	55%	45%

Evaluate - Credible Sources

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	1	1	2
Adequate	8	5	13
On Target	13	16	29
Advanced	7	7	14
Grand Total	29	29	58
average score	2.9	3.0	2.9

Evaluate - Credible Sources

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	3%	3%	3%
Adequate	28%	17%	22%
On Target	45%	55%	50%
Advanced	24%	24%	24%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%
% 3 or higher	69%	79%	74%

Evaluate - Relevant Sources

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable		1	1
Adequate	5		5
On Target	13	12	25
Advanced	11	16	27
Grand Total	29	29	58
average score	3.2	3.5	3.3

Evaluate - Relevant Sources

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	0%	3%	2%
Adequate	17%	0%	9%
On Target	45%	41%	43%
Advanced	38%	55%	47%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%
% 3 or higher	83%	97%	90%

Evaluate - Recognize Bias

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	8	3	11
Adequate	10	4	14
On Target	3	9	12
Advanced	8	13	21
Grand Total	29	29	58
average score	2.4	3.1	2.7

Evaluate - Recognize Bias

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	28%	10%	19%
Adequate	34%	14%	24%
On Target	10%	31%	21%
Advanced	28%	45%	36%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%
% 3 or higher	38%	76%	57%

Use Ethically - Identify Sources

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	5	4	9
Adequate	13	8	21
On Target	8	12	20
Advanced	3	5	8
Grand Total	29	29	58
average score	2.3	2.6	2.5

Use Ethically - Identify Sources

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	17%	14%	16%
Adequate	45%	28%	36%
On Target	28%	41%	34%
Advanced	10%	17%	14%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%
% 3 or higher	38%	59%	48%

Use Ethically - Bibliography

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	3	3	6
Adequate	16	14	30
On Target	5	5	10
Advanced	5	7	12
Grand Total	29	29	58
average score	2.4	2.6	2.5

Use Ethically - Bibliography

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	10%	10%	10%
Adequate	55%	48%	52%
On Target	17%	17%	17%
Advanced	17%	24%	21%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%
% 3 or higher	34%	41%	38%

Use Ethically - Paraphrases

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	1	2	3
Adequate	4	3	7
On Target	18	16	34
Advanced	6	8	14
Grand Total	29	29	58
average score	3.0	3.0	3.0

Use Ethically - Paraphrases

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	3%	7%	5%
Adequate	14%	10%	12%
On Target	62%	55%	59%
Advanced	21%	28%	24%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%
% 3 or higher	83%	83%	83%

Create - Insight

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	7	3	10
Adequate	10	10	20
On Target	8	10	18
Advanced	4	6	10
Grand Total	29	29	58
average score	2.3	2.7	2.5

Create - Insight

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	24%	10%	17%
Adequate	34%	34%	34%
On Target	28%	34%	31%
Advanced	14%	21%	17%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%
% 3 or higher	41%	55%	48%

Create - Synthesis

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	4	3	7
Adequate	15	9	24
On Target	5	10	15
Advanced	5	7	12
Grand Total	29	29	58
average score	2.4	2.7	2.6

Create - Synthesis

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	14%	10%	12%
Adequate	52%	31%	41%
On Target	17%	34%	26%
Advanced	17%	24%	21%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%
% 3 or higher	34%	59%	47%

Create - Accurately represent positions

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	4	1	5
Adequate	14	9	23
On Target	5	13	18
Advanced	6	6	12
Grand Total	29	29	58
average score	2.4	2.8	2.6

Create - Accurately represent positions

Score	pre	post	Total
Unacceptable	14%	3%	9%
Adequate	48%	31%	40%
On Target	17%	45%	31%
Advanced	21%	21%	21%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%
% 3 or higher	38%	66%	52%