Instruction in Library Use Committee  
Report to the UTL Strategic Planning Steering Committee  
Submitted April 22, 2013

The Instruction in Library Use (ILU) Committee would like to thank the Strategic Planning Steering Committee for the opportunity to submit our input and share our vision for information literacy (IL) at the University of Toronto Libraries.

Introduction

The ILU Committee believes that, moving forward, IL will play an increasingly important role in the work of academic libraries as it increases in importance in our institutions and in higher education generally. IL is one of the learning objectives included in the undergraduate degree-level expectations in several key faculties (for example, Arts & Science and Applied Science & Engineering), and employers are also demanding IL skills of our graduates. In particular, we wish to emphasize the primacy of teaching and learning in the University of Toronto’s mission and the importance of IL in supporting these key areas.

We have compiled what we see as some key directions for IL initiatives for the University of Toronto Libraries. In our aim to “provide a forum for discussion, collaboration and innovation in the ongoing development, implementation and evaluation of instruction programs in the University of Toronto Libraries system”, the ILU committee will seek to take a leadership role in shaping and implementing these directions.

1. Provide innovative, evidence- and standards-based approaches to IL and pedagogy

The ILU Committee sees IL as a key part of UTL’s mission to support the University of Toronto’s teaching and learning goals. To provide innovative IL initiatives for the University of Toronto community, we must:

- Work toward curriculum integration and a university-wide strategy for IL
- Aim to have IL skills embedded in every program as a requirement
- Support online learning at the University of Toronto
- Grow our graduate and undergraduate offerings to include high-level IL skills such as the critical evaluation and interpretation of information, digital literacies, etc.
- Seek out and explore new tools for use in teaching, learning and research and provide IL initiatives to support them

2. Build effective and enduring partnerships across campus

Effective partnerships are a key component of providing effective IL to our users. To support the types of initiatives listed above, we must:

a) Collaborate

- By collaborating with libraries/librarians across all three campuses on IL initiatives
By building partnerships with other campus agencies that share our common goals (such as the Writing Centres and the Academic Success Centre, the Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation, etc.)

b) Engage with our users
   • By crafting IL initiatives that are based on evidence such as user studies, research, and needs assessments of our constituents
   • By effectively promoting our services to our users
   • By re-framing IL as a competitive advantage for faculty and students at the University of Toronto

c) Communicate our value
   • By effectively assessing our IL initiatives
   • By communicating our value to users and stakeholders

3. Build a strong culture of teaching and learning within UTL

To build and maintain an internal culture of teaching and learning, and to highlight IL as a key library service and professional development goal, UTL should:

a) Build recognition around teaching
   • By crafting a strong agenda for library instruction at UTL
   • By improving internal communication (through listservs, teaching practice exchange participation, social media)
   • By broadening the framework for “teaching” to include a wider range of our work that supports learning goals
   • By growing recognition for teaching in individual performance assessments
   • By working with library managers to understand and support IL competencies in performance assessments

b) Ensure adequate staffing for increasing workloads
   • To support and advocate for curriculum integration
   • To allow for more embedded programs (for graduate programs in particular) and to support the engagement outlined in previous sections
   • To support current and new online instructional initiatives such as embedded Blackboard offerings, MOOCs, etc.

c) Support capacity building for librarians in teaching and learning
   • By promoting skill building for instructional librarians through increased attendance in programs such as instructional skills workshops, iSchool continuing education courses, ACRL immersion program, Fundamentals of University Teaching, etc.
   • By promoting skill building for librarians to be advocates for IL curriculum integration

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Respectfully submitted by the Instruction in Library Use Committee.