***Information Literacy***

**Definition**

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) defines Information Literacy as “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](http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/issues/infolit/framework1.pdf), 2015, p. 8).

**Rationale and Intent**

Our students face an increasingly complex information ecosystem where the authority and credibility of sources is often unclear. Rampant circulation of fake news and misinformation through social media networks, in addition to multiple traditional communication channels, calls for greater emphasis on the development of Information Literacy mindsets and skills. In 2011, ACRL highlighted the growing need for education in Information Literacy, noting that it is

increasingly important in the contemporary environment of rapid technological change and proliferating information resources. Because of the escalating complexity of this environment, individuals are faced with diverse, abundant information choices ‐‐ in their academic studies, in the workplace, and in their personal lives…. The sheer abundance of information will not in itself create a more informed citizenry without a complementary cluster of abilities necessary to use information effectively.

The new general education curriculum requires the teaching of information literacy in two foundation year courses, the first-year experience (FYE) seminar and Writing II, where the focus is on information literacy for scholarly writing. To ensure that students have the opportunity to further develop foundational learning goals throughout their general education curriculum, courses designated as a Critical and Creative Thinking across the Disciplines (CCTAD) course must include at least one of these goals as a secondary skill.  Information literacy may therefore be selected as one of the secondary skills in the CCTAD. Finally, students may elect to take “Integrating and Applying LA&S Learning” courses that also focus on Information Literacy. In this manner, the curriculum is designed to ensure that every student is introduced to these skills at a foundational level and has the opportunity not only within the major, but also within the general education program, to develop this learning outcome.

**Goal**

Fitchburg State University students will recognize what information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use that information effectively and ethically.

**Potential Course Objectives**

The objectives below are recommended as models for general education course syllabi. The list is not meant to be complete. Faculty should feel free to adopt these as course objectives, or they may develop their own.

Students will be able to...

* Develop a search strategy appropriate to the tools and methods.
* Choose the appropriate level of authority for an information need.
* Determine credibility of sources through various evaluative methods.
* Attribute and cite sources correctly.
* Select the appropriate medium for communicating scholarship.
* Explain how their scholarship contributes to ongoing discussion.
* Formulate and refine a research question.
* Organize information in meaningful ways.
* Synthesize gathered information to communicate new ideas.
* Locate sources relevant to information need.

Note: Fitchburg State librarians welcome partnerships with faculty members to incorporate information literacy objectives into academic programs at all levels. In addition, librarians have mapped out the above course objectives to the *AAC&U Value Rubric for Information Literacy* and are happy to partner with faculty members in measuring outcomes.