

Information Literacy in McNair Scholars Programs

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AT THE MCNAIR PROMISING PRACTICES INSTITUTE, ORLANDO, FL, FEBRUARY 1, 2019

Definition of Information Literacy

Information literacy: “The ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use and share that information for the problem at hand.”

(Association of American Colleges & Universities, 2009, adopted from the National Forum on Information Literacy)

Research Question

In what ways do McNair programs address information literacy as part of research and scholarly activities and preparation for doctoral study?

Methodology

Online survey distributed by email to McNair listserv requesting participation

Follow-up emails to individual directors

59 responses out of 151 funded programs (39%)

Conducted during fifth year of 2012-2017 grant cycle

Survey Results

Number of years each participating institution has hosted a McNair Scholars Program:

	Frequency	Percent
0 to 5 years	2	3.4
6 to 10 years	15	25.4
11 to 15 years	13	22.0
16 or more years	29	49.2
Total	59	100.0

“Does Your Program Provide Instruction Addressing Information Literacy?”

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	46	78.0
No	6	10.2
No response	7	11.9
Total	59	100.0

“Who Provides Instruction Addressing Information Literacy in Your Program?”

Similar among most programs:

- Librarians—referred to in various ways, e.g., reference, subject, faculty, research, mentor, liaison (31 programs)
- McNair staff (20)
- McNair faculty/faculty mentors (24)
- Research instructors (5)

“Who Provides Instruction Addressing Information Literacy in Your Program?”

Unique among programs:

- Graduate student mentors
- McNair graduate assistant
- Writing specialist
- Summer instructors
- Writing Center staff
- Quantitative resource center
- Dean of the Graduate School

“Does Your Program Have Assignments or Activities That Address Information Literacy?”

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	43	72.9
No	7	11.9
Unknown/No Response	9	15.2
Total	59	100.0

Assignments or Activities That Address Information Literacy: **With Librarians**

- Practice on searching and citing literature
- Assist in finding topic and using discipline-appropriate sources
- Finding scholarly articles and summarizing
- Individual meetings on the research project, e.g., with discipline-specific research librarian — specific citation styles, academic search engines
- Developing bibliography with reference librarian
- Student has individual reference librarian who helps with fine-tuning project materials
- Workshops on library skills, e.g., to create spreadsheet of sources preliminary to literature review

Assignments or Activities That Address Information Literacy: **Other**

- Review a scholarly resource and identify key pieces of information
- Find articles and summarize
- Develop 5-10 citations
- Annotated bibliography
- Literature review
- Research proposal
- Create a research timeline
- Submit drafts throughout summer

Assignments or Activities That Address Information Literacy: **Other**

Resources:

- *The Craft of Research* (Booth, Colomb, and Williams)
- *They Say / I Say* (Graff and Birkenstein)
- Research planning guide
- Bibliography/reference software

Unique activities/assignments:

- Journal groups
- Information literacy modules

“Does Your Program Hold Group Meetings That Address Information Literacy?”

	Frequency	Percent
Yes, provided by library personnel	37	62.7
Yes, provided by non-library personnel	7	11.9
No	7	11.9
No response	8	13.6
Total	59	100.0

Group Meetings That Address Information Literacy: **With Librarians**

- Literacy orientation/overview workshop
- Using library resources
- Navigating library website, databases, how to use reference software
- Using search engines, navigating online indices and resources specific to discipline
- Research seminar: scholarly research and writing
- Researching the literature: how to review it, judging, reading effectively, and efficiently, summarizing

Group Meetings That Address Information Literacy: **With Librarians**

- Use of library catalogue and Zotero
- Seminar during summer internship
- How to research and refine literature within the scholars' various disciplines
- Writing a literature review
- Dedicated librarian teaches all five information literacy criteria
- Interactive session with practice doing searches and citing information

Group Meetings That Address Information Literacy: **Other**

- English faculty
- Summer research course
- Faculty mentors
- McNair staff:
 - Class addressing all five information literacy abilities
 - Seminar addressing information literacy
 - Course in research methods and writing
- Weekly research seminars—for credit
- Literature review workshops

“As Part of Their Program Participation, Are Your McNair Scholars Required to Meet with a Librarian?”

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	36	61.0
No	23	39.0
Total	59	100.0

Number of Librarian Meetings Required

Of the 36 programs (61%) that require a meeting with a librarian:

- 30% answered some version of “1” (required meeting)
- 20% answered some version of “2” (required meetings)
- 20% answered a range of more than 2 and up to once per month
- A few stated meetings were not required but strongly encouraged

Comments

“Reading through this [survey], I think we should do more with information literacy. I guess we assume that it will happen through the faculty mentors and in classes.”

“TRIO Works!”