

UNIV 100 Library Week Pre-Test Results, Fall 2007

Overview

The following tables show the responses to the 15 questions asked on the library week pre-test, which was provided to students enrolled in University 100 via a Web-based form prior to their weeklong library instruction session. Test questions (1-12) were based on the Association of College and Research Libraries' [Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education](http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/informationliteracycompetency.cfm) (<http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/informationliteracycompetency.cfm>).

In the following tables, correct answers for the test questions are highlighted in yellow. "Missing" refers to questionnaires returned with blank responses for those questions. Percentages are based on the total frequency of responses and do not include questions with missing answers.

Q1. Choose the best set of keywords that you would use to search for recent research on the possible impact of global warming on weather patterns.

	Frequency	Percent
global warming, impact	171	42.9
research, weather patterns	10	2.5
global warming, weather	189	47.4
weather patterns, impact	20	5.0
Don't know	9	2.3
Total	399	100.0
Missing	2	
Total	401	

Q2. Of the following choices, the fastest, most accurate source of information on an event happening TODAY is:

	Frequency	Percent
Book	3	.8
Today's newspaper	117	29.3
This week's Time Magazine	2	.5
CNN.com or another well-known news source on the Internet	276	69.2
Don't know	1	.3
Total	399	100.0
Missing	2	
Total	401	

Q3. Which of the following elements would BEST help you determine if a publication is a scholarly journal?

	Frequency	Percent
"Journal" in title of publication	20	5.1
Articles cite their sources	117	29.5
Has a volume number	22	5.6
Peer reviewed	38	9.6
Has ads for books	2	.5
All of the above	116	29.3
Don't know	81	20.5
Total	396	100.0
Missing	5	
Total	401	

Q4. The following citation is for what type of source?: Leung,-Doris-Y-P; Kember,-David. 2003. The relationship between approaches to learning and reflection upon practice. Educational-Psychology, 23(1): 61-71.

	Frequency	Percent
Journal article	137	34.6
Book	63	15.9
Book chapter	149	37.6
Don't know	47	11.9
Total	396	100.0
Missing	5	
Total	401	

Q5. The following citation is for what type of source?: Dembo,-Myron-H. 2002. Motivation and learning strategies for college success: A self-management approach. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

	Frequency	Percent
Journal article	119	29.9
Book	203	51.0
Book chapter	21	5.3
Don't know	55	13.8
Total	398	100.0
Missing	3	
Total	401	

Q6. To determine if a library has the book that I need, I would search the:

	Frequency	Percent
Library of Congress Subject Headings	12	3.0
Books in Print	20	5.0
Online Catalog	345	86.7
Amazon.com	4	1.0
Don't know	17	4.3
Total	398	100.0
Missing	3	
Total	401	

Q7. A periodical database allows you to search for:

	Frequency	Percent
Articles	175	44.1
Books	9	2.3
DVDs	1	.3
All of the above	176	44.3
Don't know	36	9.1
Total	397	100.0
Missing	4	
Total	401	

Q8. Which of the following search strategies will retrieve the MOST SPECIFIC (FEWEST) results in an online database?

	Frequency	Percent
Paris Hilton AND jail	305	77.0
Paris Hilton OR jail	69	17.4
Don't know	22	5.6
Total	396	100.0
Missing	5	
Total	401	

Q9. If you had to give an informative speech on the benefits and limitations of electric-powered cars, which of the following resources should provide the MOST balanced or unbiased information?

	Frequency	Percent
American Petroleum Institute report	61	15.4
Electric Car Retailers Association newsletter	111	28.1
Consumer Reports magazine	201	50.9
Don't know	22	5.6
Total	395	100.0
Missing	6	
Total	401	

Q10. Before citing information you found on the Internet in a research paper, which of the following is important to consider?

	Frequency	Percent
Authority of the person or organization responsible for the information	17	4.3
Information is up-to-date enough for research topic	23	5.8
Information based on cited facts, or if it is opinion, that is made clear	40	10.1
Professor allows use of Internet	16	4.0
All of the above	291	73.5
Don't know	9	2.3
Total	396	100.0
Missing	5	
Total	401	

Q11. If you used information that you found on the Internet to write a research paper, when must you cite that source?

	Frequency	Percent
When you copy a whole paragraph	12	3.1
When you summarize or write over the information in your own words	20	5.1
When you copy one sentence	27	6.9
All of the above	327	83.2
Don't know	7	1.8
Total	393	100.0
Missing	8	
Total	401	

**Q12. Assume you found the following citation to an article in a periodical database: Increasing undergraduate student retention rates.; By: Rickinson, Barbara; Rutherford, Desmond., British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, Jun95, Vol. 23 Issue 2, p161, 12p, 5 charts, 2 diagrams
Which of the following lists of elements would you include when you cite this article in your bibliography?**

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Article title, authors, date, pages	39	9.8
Article title, authors, journal title, volume, date, pages	195	49.2
Article title, authors, volume, pages	43	10.9
Article title, authors, journal title, pages, number of charts and diagrams	63	15.9
Don't know	56	14.1
Total	396	100.0
Missing	5	
Total	401	

Q13. Before coming to CSUN, did you have formal instruction (lecture, presentation, tour, self-paced tutorial) on how to find information using a library or the Internet?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	181	45.6
No	216	54.4
Total	397	100.0
Missing	4	
Total	401	

Q14. Since entering CSUN, have you had formal instruction (lecture, presentation, tour) on how to find information using the CSUN Library?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	92	23.2
No	305	76.8
Total	397	100.0
Missing	4	
Total	401	

Q15. How would you rate your library research skills in terms of being able to locate information for class assignments?

	Frequency	Percent
Excellent	17	4.3
Very good	48	12.1
Good	139	35.0
Fair	148	37.3
Poor	33	8.3
Not applicable	12	3.0
Total	397	100.0
Missing	4	
Total	401	

Analysis

As anticipated in a pretest of library skills of freshman students, more than half of the questions were answered incorrectly by the majority of respondents. Students did the worst in the question about identifying a scholarly journal (Question #3) wherein only 9% correctly answered that peer review is the best indicator that a publication is scholarly. Students also had a difficult time identifying an article citation (Question #4: 34.6% correct), knowing that articles are searched in a periodical database (Question #7: 44.1% correct), determining keywords from a topic (Question #1: 47.4% correct), and recognizing the elements of a citation normally included in a bibliographic reference (Question #12: 49.2% correct). Students also scored below the mean ($X=56.4\%$) when critically evaluating information sources for obvious bias (Question #9: 50.9% correct) and

recognizing a book citation (Question #5: 51.9% correct). Where they did a better was demonstrating an understanding of the timeline of information (Question #2: 69.2% correct), which asked students to identify which source was the most up-to-date for news. 73.5% knew when it was appropriate to cite Internet sources in a research paper (Question #10) and 77% demonstrated an understanding of Boolean (“and”) logic (Question #8). Where they did the best had to do with avoiding plagiarism (Question #11: 83.2% correct) and where to search for a book (Question #6: 86.7% correct).

In terms of student characteristics related to information competence, a little more than half (54.4%) indicated that they did not have library instruction prior to entering CSUN and 76.8% did not yet have instruction since entering CSUN. A simple majority of students (37.3%) rated their skills as “fair,” followed by 35% who rated themselves “good.” Only 8.3% rated themselves as “poor”; considering how low the overall percentage of correct answers were, this probably is an indication that these students “don’t know what they don’t know.”

Next Step

The next step will be to compare performance on the same questions in the posttest to determine if their library instruction sessions had an impact.