

RUNNING HEAD: Rathmel_RepackagingPorfolioFinal

Information Literacy and the MLS: A Research Support Project

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LI819 Final, Real Client Repackaging Project

This information design package represents a portion of research supporting a real client in the Library and Information Science profession. The scope of the research relates to Master of Library and Information Science programs and the quantity and quality of information literacy instruction taught in ALA accredited library schools. This package is presented in two parts: 1) the ALA accredited schools that offer information literacy instruction as part of their master degree course offerings and 2) the literature authored by the instructors of these courses and its contribution to the practice of librarianship. I present the final product of this project and the research process involved for each part.

Project Design

The first part of this research project gathers all ALA accredited Library and Information Science graduate degree programs from a list hosted on the ALA (2009) website. The content is repackaged into an Excel spreadsheet with headings based on the researchers' instructions for the content needs of the project and the ability to sort and filter. The project portion includes 14 of the 67 ALA accredited school programs. The research for this part primarily involved browsing the contents of each school's website. First was degree program information, including whether concentration, tracks, or certificate are incorporated. Then, course requirements and electives were looked over to determine what, if any, courses related to instruction and literacy are offered. Finally, faculty directories were searched for the contact information of each instructor of these courses. Many of the faculty directories included listings of publications which were used in the second part of the research project.

In addition to the Excel spreadsheet, this same information is repacked into in a wiki (informationliteracymls, n.d.), a collaborative web workspace that allows the researchers to see and contribute to the progress of the project in real time. The website quality of this format is also useful for presenting the literature portion of the project and the collaborative quality of the wiki also allows the presentation to be modified easily as the project progresses. The wiki includes three sections: a front

page, courses and programs pages, and the literature page. Each page includes persistent links to each of the other pages. The front page introduces the research and the two parts of the project including how the research is presented and the layout of the wiki. Courses and programs pages were populated directly from the Excel spreadsheet data. The literature page was populated from both the Excel spreadsheet and additional database search results. For instructors who did not have a webpage or other listing of their publications available, literature searches were performed in EBSCO's Library and Information Technology Abstracts (LITA), OCLC's WorldCat, and DialogWeb's Library Literature and Information Science database.

Search Process

With minor variation each search used the author's last name and first initial with wildcard and the single keyword with wildcard: *librar**. Most searches yielded small enough result sets to not require a date limiter in the command. However the search results recorded in the literature section are limited to items published since 2005. Instructors' websites with selected recent publications often used this date as a limit; other instructors' publication lists were more exhaustive. Some adjustments to the search command were required for common names like Susan Nelson, Karen Brown, or John Berry. EBSCO's "author affiliation" feature in the LITA database was useful in helping identifying the correct author in many instances. One author's name was indexed in LITA with an incorrect spelling. Because the last name was hyphenated, a search with wildcards at both ends proved broad enough to catch this error. The result in DialogWeb was listed correctly.

Approximately half of all the faculty searches did not yield any relevant publications. Reasons for this are multifarious. It is unlikely that nothing has been published by these faculty in all cases. Rather, if these instructors have been published, the limited results can be attributed to the lack of indexing in the chosen database or that the search was insufficient. Added to this are the limitations set by the researcher

omitting any publication not related to library and information literacy instruction and any published before 2005.

Conclusion

It is clear that there are many directions in which this research could be expanded. Many professors are adjunct faculty, some coming from a department of education or credentialed with degrees in Education. Literature searches should also include education based databases such as ERIC. Furthermore, as the researchers suggested, the literature should extend to prominent publication regardless of date. Where contact information was not found or where publication information is uncertain, direct contact with the program or instructors would be warranted as well.

Another possible resource to explore is file sharing or conference sites for presentation material that are likely not indexed in databases but often have a great impact on the profession. The literature itself and its contribution to the field of library and information science remains to be summarized in this presentation. For the sake of consistency and due to the scope of the project and limited time, a single online bibliography citation is used for those instructors with a faculty webpage or curriculum vitae listing of their publications. For instructors' publications found through database searches, each relevant publication is listed item by item.

References

American Library Association (2009). *Alphabetical list of institutions with ALA-accredited programs*.

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