

## Incorporating Information Literacy Student Learning Outcomes into an Assignment

Transforming the course assignments for an upper division Anthropology seminar has been part of the process of incorporating information literacy into the seminar. The new assignments have given students the opportunity to practice what they learned in instructional sessions, get an early start on their research for the paper, and augment their information literacy skills. Below is an example of one of the assignments, including its original design and the enhanced version.

### Diagnostic Writing Sample Assignment

#### **The original assignment:**

To catch writing problems early a short, no more than two-page, writing sample is due in duplicate at the beginning of class in Week Two. This paper is not graded. One copy is returned to students in Week Three. [It was acceptable for the writing sample to be from a paper written previously for another course.]

#### **The enhanced assignment:**

To catch writing and citation problems early, a one-page writing sample is due to both instructors at the beginning of the Seminar in Week Four. This writing sample should be a synopsis of a scholarly journal article the student has selected and read for their seminar paper. The synopsis should include the following: an example of paraphrasing of text from the article; a direct quotation from the article; APA-style parenthetical citations; accurate APA-style reference to the article; and a copy of the article itself with the paraphrased and quoted text highlighted. These writing samples and articles will be returned at the next Seminar meeting.

To find the scholarly article, use one of the article databases demonstrated in class (in Week Three) or another database related specifically to the subfield or area of the world you are studying. Apply what you learned in class about proper paraphrasing.

### Information literacy student learning outcomes for the assignment:

- Student will successfully use an article database to find a scholarly article related to his or her term paper topic [*ANSS IL Standard 2.1.a*]\*
- Students will demonstrate that they can restate in their own words the main ideas in a scholarly text, and quote text appropriately [*ANSS IL Standard 3.1.a*]
- Students will demonstrate that they can properly paraphrase text and avoid plagiarism [*ANSS IL Standard 2.3.c*]
- Students will demonstrate that they can construct an accurate, APA style, journal article reference, and two correct APA style parenthetical citations [*ANSS IL Standard 2.3.a*]

### Assessment:

The professor marks one copy with comments on the writing, and the librarian (consulting the submitted original article) marks the other copy with comments on choice of article, APA citations, and quality of paraphrasing (vs. plagiarism). The students' writing samples serve as an assessment of student learning in the Week Three instruction session. The instructors do not grade this assignment. Students are told to carefully review the comments in order to improve their writing style and citation practices for the final paper and to meet with the instructors during the term with questions.

Through this assignment, the instructors communicate that writing and ethical citation practices are important and will be examined closely, and that improvement is expected. Writing and citation are assessed in the final paper—along with content, sound argument, and depth of research—and can affect the paper grade.

\* The *ANSS IL Standard* citations refer to specific student learning outcomes in the ACRL-Anthropology and Sociology Section's *Information Literacy Standards for Anthropology and Sociology Students* (2007) <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/subject/ss/anssil/anssilstandards2007.pdf>. That document is based on the ACRL *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* (2000) <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/informationliteracycompetency.cfm> but is restructured and rewritten to be specific to the two disciplines.