EXPLORING HOW FACULTY MEMBERS ARE TEACHING INFORMATION LITERACY TO ONLINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS: AN INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Technology has created an abundance of information easily accessible to anyone using computing technology. This abundance of easily accessible information has exacerbated the need for information literacy education so students are able to find, evaluate, and use the information to meet their specific educational goals. Moreover, with an increase in online course and program offerings by colleges and universities, academic libraries also need a comprehensive understanding of how faculty members are teaching information literacy in within these online courses. This study examines how English faculty members at a large, suburban, community college teach information literacy within fully online courses. This Interpretative Phenomenological Study works to understand the lived experience of several English faculty members teaching one of two identified general education courses in a fully online environment. The data analysis reveals how these English faculty members define information literacy, which information literacy concepts they teach in their courses, the pedagogical strategies utilized by the English faculty members to instruct students on the identified topics, and finally an exploration of the relationship that exists between English faculty members who teach these gateway, general education courses and the academic library at their institution. The results of this study offer clear suggestions for community college academic libraries that can also be translated to other types of colleges and universities as nationally, institutions prepare to implement the new Association of College and Research Libraries Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education.

Keywords: Information literary, community college, English faculty members, online education, composition, academic libraries.
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English faculty members primarily define information literacy as finding, evaluating, and documenting the sources needed for students’ writing.
English faculty members use a mixture of personally-developed presentations and library-generated content to teach students in online courses how to find and evaluate information.  

Although information literacy instruction often originates with English faculty members in the online classroom, there is a need for more content from the academic library.

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Chapter One: Statement of the Problem

Statement of the Problem

The transformative nature of technology has altered how institutions of higher education educate students both in the traditional classroom and in the online environment. The changing modes of course instruction comes at the same time when technology is transforming how students access information. Considerably affected by the technological changes in education, are academic libraries. For academic libraries, the period before recent technological advancements was marked by information scarcity (Straumsheim, 2014). With the introduction of modern information and communication technology there is now information abundance (Straumsheim, 2014). To remain relevant, academic libraries have been obliged to continuously evolve the way resources and services are provided. Windham (2006) stated, “it’s hardly surprising that “Googling” has become second nature. But, as the Internet has expanded over the years, many college students turn to the Web not simply for quick, meaningless information but as the starting point for serious academic research” (p. 4). While students are confident in their Internet searching ability, “most don’t know the origin or validity of the content they find” (Ishizuka, 2005, p. 19). This demonstrates the importance of information literacy instruction and education, which seeks to educate students to “recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information” (American Library Association [ALA], 1989, para. 3). While it shows that academic libraries are losing their cache as the starting point for academic research, it also demonstrates the important role academic libraries should play in educating students on the proper methods for conducting college-level research in an ever-increasingly digital and knowledge-focused environment (Rockman, 2004).

Traditionally, information literacy education has had a disciplinary home in academic libraries. As Wright (2000) states, “academic libraries are among the leaders in higher education
working to realize” the integration of information literacy education across the curriculum.

Library instruction dates back to the 1800s in the United States, when academic libraries offered bibliographic instruction (Hernon, 1982; Salony, 1995) focused on the development of basic library research skills. Through the 1970s, academic librarians partnered with faculty members to “develop competence in the use of the library for research purposes” (Rockman, 2004). By the end of the 1980s, the American Library Association (ALA) (1989) developed a definition for information literacy to describe academic library instruction: the ability of individuals to “recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information” (para. 3). In 2000, the Association of College and Research Libraries expanded the American Library Association’s definition and added performance indicators and outcomes with the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. According to the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) (2000), the central goals of information literacy education are:

- determine the extent of information needed
- access the needed information effectively and efficiently
- evaluate information and its sources critically
- incorporate selected information into one’s knowledge base
- use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally (p. 2-3)

To meet these standards and accreditation requirements (ALA, 1989; ACRL 2000; Middle States, 2006), academic libraries traditionally offer information literacy instruction to students through a number of different modalities. This includes delivering information literacy
instruction through course-integrated instruction. This method of instruction typically consists of a one-time instructional class as part of a general education or major course. These solitary instructional classes are designed to provide students with the necessary skills to complete a specific research or course assignment. The skills developed during these course-integrated instructional classes are intended to be transferable to other disciplines and assignments (Rockman, 2002; 2004). Other conventional methods of delivering information literacy instruction are through credit-bearing courses, either required by the institution or as an elective, self-paced tutorials, embedding librarians into a particular class, or faculty members teach their own information literacy instruction independent of the library (Eisenberg, Lowe, & Spritzer, 2004). Overall, the methods of teaching information literacy concepts and skills have primarily taken place as a complement to the traditional classroom environment. With the movement towards online classes, academic libraries are continuing to refine the traditional methods of educating students while at the same time developing new methods of instruction specifically for online students.

In higher education, technology now affords students the opportunity to obtain degrees through online courses and programs (Xu & Jaggars, 2013) previously unavailable to them due to geographic barriers or personal or professional responsibilities. An online course is defined as a class “in which 80 percent of the content is delivered online” (Allen & Seaman, 2013, p. 7). With “the number of students taking at least one online course” now reaching 6.7 million, online education has a considerable reach within higher education (Allen & Seaman, 2013, p. 4). According to Radford (2011), “participation in a distance education course was most common among undergraduates attending public 2-year colleges” (p. 3). With increasing enrollment in online courses (Allen & Seaman, 2013; Dahlstrom, Walker, & Dziuban, 2013), it is important for
academic libraries to understand the information literacy education needs of this student population and engage in providing this instruction.

While libraries have been innovative in developing new ways to reach online students through new methods of teaching information literacy (Daugherty & Russo, 2007), it is increasingly apparent that a significant number of faculty members teaching in the online environment are providing their own information literacy instruction to their students independent of the library (Bury, 2011; Cahoy & Moyo, 2006; Shaffer, Finkelstein, Woelfl, & Lyden, 2004; Thomsett-Scott & May, 2009). While the existing literature examines “how” academic libraries are providing information literacy instruction to online students (Daugherty & Russo, 2007), particularly to online community college students (Walsh, 2003), lacking in the literature is the recognition that it is primarily the course faculty members who determine if information literacy instruction will be a focus of the course.

While academic libraries offer accessible information literacy instruction in a range of modalities congruent with the various methods of instructional delivery found in the traditional classroom environment (Standards for Distance Learning Library Services, 2008), what is lacking from the research is evidence of how faculty members are providing information literacy instruction within their online courses to distance education students outside of the instruction provided by academic librarians (Cahoy & Moyo, 2006; Moyo & Cahoy, 2006; Shaffer, Finkelstein, Woelfl, & Lyden, 2004; Thomsett-Scott & May, 2009) and whether their content is consistent and reflective of the Association of College and Research Libraries standards. For community college libraries this is of particular importance as “community colleges out-pace other institutions in the areas of distance education and online learning” (Dahlstrom, Eden,
Arroway, Grajek, & Hatch, 2012) and also because of the increased need for information literacy education based on the needs of this student population.

This study examines how community college faculty members teach information literacy in online courses and how this instruction meets or does not meet Association of College and Research Libraries standards and guidelines. The results of this study will not only benefit community college libraries as they look for ways to ensure information literacy education is reaching online students but also benefit academic libraries at bachelors, masters, and doctoral levels institutions. First, it provides evidence of how faculty members are teaching information literacy concepts and topics to online students. Second, it provides a foundation of understanding as to how the information literacy concepts taught by online faculty members meets the existing Association of College and Research Libraries standards. Ultimately, this study is intended to inform how academic librarians at institutions of higher education, specifically community colleges, can partner with online faculty members to provide necessary resources, professional development, or direct information literacy instruction to improve the overall quality of distance education.

Research Problem

Academic libraries have created a number of resources and services to teach information literacy in an online classroom environment. This includes course-integrated instruction in which a librarian teaches a course session or module, self-paced online tutorials, or embedded librarians in an online course (Daugherty & Russo, 2007; Eisenberg, Lowe, & Spritzer, 2004). Distance learning faculty members traditionally have relied on these resources and services offered by academic libraries to deliver information literacy instruction (Cahoy & Moyo, 2006). However, a portion of faculty members at all institutions of higher education have always taught
information literacy to their students independent of their academic library (Bury, 2011; Cahoy & Moyo, 2006; Shaffer, Finkelstein, Woelfl, & Lyden, 2004; Thomsett-Scott & May, 2009). Although this is a known reality, little is known about how faculty members are teaching information literacy to online students and if that instruction meets current national standards.

**Justification for the Research Problem**

Over the last two decades there has been significant research on how academic libraries are providing information literacy education to distance learning and online students (Daugherty & Russo, 2007). This is through course-integrated instruction, which consists of a one-time instructional session, self-paced online tutorials, embedded librarians, handouts and other supplemental materials, and faculty delivering instruction independent of the library (Eisenberg, Lowe, & Spitzer, 2004). While the current literature focuses on how academic libraries are providing information literacy education on campus and in an online environment, a gap in the literature exists in examining how faculty members are teaching information literacy in online courses independent of the library.

The percentage of faculty delivering information literacy independent of the library ranges significantly based on specific institutional-level considerations (Cahoy & Moyo, 2006; Gonzales, 2001; Leckie & Fullerton, 1999; McGuinness, 2006; Shaffer, Finkelstein, Woelfl, & Lyden, 2004; Thomsett-Scott & May, 2009). For example, at York University in Canada, over 50 percent of faculty members taught information literacy independent of the library (Bury, 2011). While this number may be smaller at many institutions, it is essential for academic librarians to understand how information literacy concepts are being taught in the online environment and whether the concepts being taught map to the Association of College and
Research Libraries standards for information literacy, so they can continue to evolve and meet the needs of their college community.

Discussion to Audience

While academic libraries can provide a range of resources and services to teaching faculty to support information literacy being delivered across the curriculum, academic libraries are better able to assess the level of student learning when faculty use library online tutorials, embed a librarian in their online course; collaborate on instruction to student (Cook, 2002; Daugherty & Russo, 2007; Hemming and Montet, 2010; Wassenich, 2007). Consequently, there is a limited understanding of how faculty members are teaching information literacy when their academic library is not involved in the instruction. This study provides academic libraries with relevant information and insight about how information literacy is being taught in online courses. This study also aims to help academic libraries identify areas of collaboration between faculty and libraries to ensure students are consistently meeting national information literacy standards set by Association of College and Research Libraries.

Significance of Research Problem

National & Regional Context. For institutions accredited by the Middle States Association on Higher Education (2006), the need to ensure that information literacy education is found throughout the curricula is an essential component of an institution’s educational offerings (Middle States, 2006). According to Asher, Duke, & Green (2010), while the technology that is used to search the library’s collections offered a general barrier to student success, once students were given general instruction on how to use the technological tools, technology was no longer a barrier. Instead, “students exhibited a lack of understanding of search logic, how to build a
search to narrow/expand results, how to use subject headings, and how various search engines (including Google) organized and display results” (Asher, Duke, & Green, 2010, p. 6).

In considering the level in which community college students are receiving information literacy education in online courses, it is important to separate computer and information technology literacy from information literacy (Breivik, 2005; Rockman, 2004). Gibson (2007) states, both information literacy and computer and information technology literacy “have distinct lineages that are now converging” (p. 23). While this convergence makes sense in the evolution of information literacy instruction because of the ubiquitous nature of technology, it is important to understand that information literacy “is an intellectual framework for understanding, finding, evaluating, and using information--activities which may be accomplished in part by fluency with information technology, in part by sound investigative methods, but most important, through critical discernment and reasoning” (ACRL, 2000, para. 8). The lack of information literacy knowledge by undergraduate students is shown not only in how they access information but also how they critically evaluate the information they find (Fain, 2011; Hargittai, 2010; Hargittai, Fullerton, Menchen-Trevino, Thomas, 2010). Asher, Duke, & Green (2010) argue librarians are “marginal to students’ academic world” (p. 8). One participant in that study noted the importance of professors collaborating with librarians early in a student’s academic career to ensure they have the skills to succeed throughout their college education (Asher, Duke, & Green, 2010). While students may not know to request information literacy education, they understand that knowing how to research is valuable in their academic success (Lebbin, 2006; Morrison, 1997). Gross and Latham (2007) found undergraduate students’ perceived information literacy skill level and compared that to their actual skill level. They determined that about half of students are information literate when they enter college. While this is encouraging, Burhanna,
Seeholze, and Salem (2009) have shown that while students use technology to meet their information needs on a regular basis, they are not sophisticated in their level of information literacy.

**Local Context.** Suburban County Community College, a pseudonym for the research site for this study, serves students from both Delaware and Chester counties in southeastern Pennsylvania. Founded in 1967, the College currently enrolls 28,000 students with a full time equivalency of 9,313 students (Fall Third Week, 2013). The College began offering online courses in 1998 and now “offers over 100 courses within a full and accelerated semester format” (Suburban County Community College, 2013). As of Fall 2011, the college enrolled 4,352 students in online courses, which is a 17.9 percent increase over the previous fall semester (Fall Third Week, 2013). The increase in online students at Suburban County Community College mirrors the trend found throughout higher education (Allen & Seaman, 2013, Radford, 2011). As the online population of students continues to grow at Suburban County Community College, it is important to understand how these students are receiving information literacy education. The information literacy program at Suburban County Community College centers on the standards, performance indicators, and outcomes developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries (2000). The information literacy program ensures consistent information literacy instruction for all content taught by faculty librarians. With the growth in online course offering, the library has not seen an increase in one-time information literacy instructional sessions or other instruction opportunities with these students. This means that faculty members are teaching information literacy to this growing student population particularly in ENG 100: English Composition I and ENG 112: English Composition II as information literacy is an explicit course competency.
Following the model of library instruction in the 1980s, Suburban County Community College utilized a bibliographic instruction pedagogy, which focused primarily on how to access the library’s collection (SCCC Library Faculty Librarians, 2004). In the early 1990s, library instruction moved from focusing on access of resources towards delivering information literacy education as defined by the American Library Association (SCCC Library Faculty Librarians, 2004). In developing the information literacy program for the College, the library understood that information literacy instruction was not solely the responsibility of the library and faculty librarians but the responsibility of all faculty members (SCCC Library Faculty Librarians, 2004).

To ensure students are receiving information literacy education and fulfilling the institution’s Competency requirement for all graduating students (Suburban County Community College, 2014), the library implemented five models for information literacy education (SCCC Library Faculty Librarians, 2004). The five models are: teach-the-teacher, self-paced online tutorial, faculty partnership for integration, optional credit bearing course, and the traditional “one shot” instructional session (SCCC Library Faculty Librarians, 2004). While the majority of information literacy education is delivered through the traditional “one shot” model, the teach-the-teacher model encourages faculty to teach their own information literacy instructional sessions in their courses. This model is central to this study as the library has little understanding of how faculty members are teaching information literacy, particularly in an online course.

**Research Questions**

The central research question in this study is:

*How are community college faculty members teaching information literacy (as defined by the Association of College and Research Libraries), in their online courses?*
Specifically, this research examines how full-time, tenured or tenure-track English faculty members in the Communications, Arts and Humanities division at Suburban County Community College are teaching information literacy concepts to students enrolled in either ENG 100: English Composition I or ENG 112: English Composition II. This study will utilize the Association of College and Research Libraries Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education (2000) to define information literacy. In defining online courses, this study will move beyond the definition provided by Allen and Seaman (2013), which only requires that “at least 80 percent of the content is delivered online” (p. 7) and instead require a course to fully be delivered online.

To guide the inquiry of this central question, there are three sub-questions:

- *How are community college faculty members defining information literacy?*
- *What information literacy concepts are considered essential by community college faculty to ensure student academic success?*
- *How do the information literacy concepts taught by community college faculty members reflect the standards set by the Association of College and Research Libraries?*

**Theoretical Framework**

To understand how community college faculty members are teaching information literacy concepts in their online classes independent of the academic library, online learning theory will be utilized as the theoretical framework to examine this topic. While this theory centers on how students learn in an online environment, it provides faculty members and instructional designers with an understanding of how educational content should be designed in an online environment to ensure student academic success. Dede (2007) argues that information technology is changing education because of the new set of “knowledge and skills” that employers are demanding,
“methods of research” which bring new pedagogical methods, and “the characteristics of students are changing” (p. 11). These three changes in education can be seen in the rise of online education. When considering how information literacy education is taught in an online environment, it is essential to understand the underlying theory that addresses this new instructional method. As Dede (2007) notes, “three competing schools of thought on how people learn—behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism—have strongly influenced the design of instructional technologies” (p. 17). Other schools of learning can be considered as part of online learning theory; however, behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism are considered the basis for this theory (Ally, 2004; Davidson-Shivers & Rasmussen, 2006; Dede, 2007).

Behaviorism school of learning views the learning process as a simple change in the behavior or in the learner’s ability to adapt their behavior to a specific stimulus (Ally, 2004; Davidson-Shivers & Rasmussen, 2006). The change in behavior is the result of environmental influences and the learner’s ability to respond. Behaviorists view the learners mind as a black box and “ignore the effects of thought processes that occur in the mind” (Ally, 2004, p. 8). Any complex learning that occurs is the result of gradual building of more complex patterns of stimulus and response by the learner. As Dede (2007) describes, behaviorist view of learning is applicable to the online environment because it allows students to develop a basic knowledge of a subject area. Behaviorism allows students to develop a general knowledge of the subject through basic recall of facts (Dede, 2007, p. 18). The learner is able to respond to the faculty member’s questions through the stimuli-response conditioning that is the foundation of this school of learning (Dede, 2007, p. 18). As Ally (2004) argues this is the “what” or factual knowledge of online learning theory (p. 7).
The second school of learning that forms online learning theory is cognitivism. According to Ally (2004), this is the “how” or the way information is processed in online learning theory (p. 7). This school of learning builds on previous theorists, such as Jean Piaget. As Mayes (2006) argues, the theory of Piaget informs how learners process information. Piaget argued that learners are not just conditioned to respond to questions asked by their instructors (Miller, 2002). Instead, learners are able to “construct their concepts through active and personal experimentation and observation” (Mayes, 2006, p. 14). Ally (2004) describes the steps in which information is processed in the learner’s mind. The first step is the reception of information by the learner. The information is moved to the learner’s short-term memory, if the information does not move to the learner’s short-term memory the information is lost. The information is then moved into the learner’s long-term memory. The information can be “assimilated or accommodated.” During assimilation, the information is changed to fit into existing cognitive structures. Accommodation occurs when an existing cognitive structure is changed to incorporate the new information” (Ally, 2004, p. 10). This allows learners to link the factual knowledge they developed together and offers a means for the learner to retrieve the information (Dede, 2007, p. 18).

The final school of learning that lays the foundation for online learning theory is constructivism. Constructivism is based on the idea that learners use previous personal experiences and social interactions to form meaning of the material that is being presented to them (Ally, 2004; Davidson-Shivers & Rasmussen, 2006). By processing the information presented to them and interpreting it based on their personal experience, learners are able to construct knowledge (Ally, 2004, p. 18). This school of learning is based on Lev Vygotsky’s thinking on social constructs (Miller, 2002; Wink & Putney, 2002). First, learners develop their
ability to process information based on social interaction and in collaboration with others (Mayes, 2006, p. 16). Constructivism allows students to develop high-level learning by constructing their own knowledge with the help of the instructor. This school of learning requires a change in the roles of instructors and students. Behaviorism and cognitivism often require a teacher-centered role in the instructional process while the constructivism approach offers a student-centered model in which the instructor acts as a guide (Dede, 2007, 19). In Ally’s (2004) model of online learning theory, constructivism is the “why” in which the learner understands and makes connections with the content.

What Ally (2004) describes is a theory that includes all three schools of learning. This multi-theory approach means that Online Learning Theory addresses the different learning styles and instructional approaches to help students learn. To develop background knowledge, a behaviorist approach can be employed. A cognitivist approach will allow the student to develop a deeper understanding of what they learned by making links between their different factual knowledge. The constructivist approach allows students to apply what they learned to solve real problems.

The use of the Online Learning Theory helps guide this study in answering the stated research questions. As this study aims to understand how community college faculty members are teaching information literacy concepts in their online courses, it is important to use a theoretical framework that addresses education in an online environment. The integrated approach of Online Learning Theory (Ally 2004; Dede, 2007; Mayes, 2006) ensures that each task is properly developed to confirm learners are able to develop the appropriate skills and knowledge.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

According to Machi and McEvoy (2009), “the basic literature review summarizes and evaluates the existing knowledge on a particular topic” (p. 2). An advanced literature review serves to “identify a problem that demands original research (Machi & McEvoy, 2009, p. 3). This could provide “historical background,” “overview of the current context in which the research is situated,” “a discussion of relevant theories and concepts,” “introduce relevant terminology,” “describe related research in the field,” and “provide supporting evidence for a practical problem” (Ridley, 2009, p.16). This literature review examines the central themes surrounding the topic of information literacy in higher education and the teaching of information literacy education. The connection of information literacy to information technology proficiency is recognized as technology changes influence how information is distributed; however, it is important to make the distinction between information literacy and information technology proficiency (Breivik, 2005; Rockman, 2004). While there is a difference between information literacy education and the ability to use current information technology, a discussion of information literacy in the 21st century requires an understanding of how students interact with technology.

Academic libraries have a long history of providing various levels of education on how students can use the resources they provide. As Salony (1995) notes, bibliographic instruction in academic libraries dates back to the 1880s. Hernon (1982) traces the history back to the 1820s where librarians at Harvard University would “occasionally lecture undergraduates” (p. 18). By the 1970s, academic libraries expanded partnerships with teaching faculty to teaching information literacy instructional sessions (Rockman, 2004). Currently, academic libraries offer
various approaches to teach information literacy including credit-bearing courses and course-integrated instruction (Rockman, 2002; Walsh, 2008).

**Digital Natives**

In his 2001 article, Marc Pensky introduced the concept of digital natives and digital immigrants. Prensky (2001a) argues that the “rapid dissemination of digital technology in the last decade of the twentieth century” created a “singularity – an event which changes things so fundamentally that there is absolutely no going back” (p. 1). The change is in how individuals interact with technology. Those individuals who “spent their entire lives surrounded by and using computers, videogames, digital music players, video cams, cell phones, and all the other toys and tools of the digital age” are considered “digital natives” or “native speakers of the digital language of computers, video games and the Internet” (Prensky, 2001a, p. 1). Ultimately, “today’s students think and process information fundamentally differently from their predecessors” (p. 1). It is interesting how Prensky (2001a) describes student interaction and use of technology. He argues that digital immigrants, or those who were not born with technology, would “read the manual for a program rather than assume that the program itself will teach us to use it” (Prensky, 2001a, p. 3). This distinction is important when considering how students approach the understanding, finding, and use of information -- the concept of information literacy. It is understandable that students would believe they are information literate while searching for information when Google produces one million or more results with each search because it offers digital natives the “instant gratification and frequent reward” that they “thrive” on (Prensky, 2001a, p. 4).

In his follow-up piece, Prensky (2001b) argues that there is a change in cognitive function based on the ubiquitous nature of technology. Students’ minds work differently because
“the environment and culture in which people are raised affects and even determines many of their thought processes” (Prensky, 2001b, p. 4). This connects to the previous piece’s notion that students “thrive on instant gratification and frequent reward” (Prensky, 2001a, p. 4).

Eight years after his groundbreaking, two-part piece which coined the term digital native and digital immigrant, Prensky (2009) argued for a new term, “digital wisdom” (para. 2). “Digital wisdom is a twofold concept” which refers to “wisdom arising from the use of digital technology” and “wisdom in the prudent use of technology to enhance our capabilities” (Prensky, 2009, para. 2). In becoming a digital wise individual, a person must be information literate to use “the power of the digital enhancements to complement innate abilities and in the way in which he or she uses enhancements to facilitate wiser decision making” (Prensky, 2009, para. 10). As Prensky (2009) notes, this will require courses which will “offer students guidance in developing digital wisdom” (para. 28).

While the response to the concept of a digital native student has resulted in a strand in the scholarly literature, it is important to focus on how this impacts information literacy education. Selwyn (2009) argues that those identified as part of this digital native generation were “rather more limited in scope than the digital native rhetoric would suggest” (p. 372). Kennedy, Judd, Churchward, Gray, and Krause (2008) found similar results with the student population in their study. They determined that the technology skills that students have “do not necessarily translate into sophisticated skills with other technologies or general information literacy” (Kennedy, Judd, Churchward, Gray, & Krause, 2008, p. 117). Understanding the actual information literacy knowledge that students possess is important when examining the level of information literacy education community college students are receiving in an online course.
Defining Information Literacy

Prior to the concept and definition of the term information literacy, academic libraries were providing specific education to students on the use of library resources. Bibliographic instruction centered on teaching students how to use the specific resources in a given library (Gibson, 2008). This level of instruction has roots in American higher education back to the 1800s (Hernon, 1982; Salony, 1995). It was not until 1974 that the term information literacy was coined by Paul G. Zurkowski to describe the changing form of library instruction (Gibson, 2008). In 1987 the American Library Association formed the ALA Presidential Committee on Information Literacy with the charge of reforming “curricula, teaching and learning practices, and education policy” (Gibson, 2008, p. 17). In 1989, the American Library Association formalized the term information literacy with a widely accepted definition (ALA, 1989). It was not until 2000 that the Association of College and Research Libraries translated the definition created by the American Library Association and applied it to college and research libraries (ALA, 1989; ACRL, 2000). The Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education took the main concepts from the American Library Association and applied them to institutions of higher education. The Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries (2000) offer standards, performance indicators, and outcomes to define the central goals of information literacy, which are:

- determine the extent of information needed
- access the needed information effectively and efficiently
- evaluate information and its sources critically
- incorporate selected information into one’s knowledge base
• use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
• understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally (ACRL, 2000, p. 2-3)

At a regional level, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education included information literacy as “an essential component of any educational program at the graduate or undergraduate levels” (Middle States, 2006, p. 42). In defining information literacy the Middle States Commission on Higher Education defines specific skills that should be achieved to ensure students are information literate. These skills are:

• determine the nature and extent of needed information
• access information effectively and efficiently
• evaluate critically the sources and content of information
• incorporate selected information in the learner’s knowledge base and value system
• use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
• understand the economic, legal and social issues surrounding the use of information and information technology
• observe laws, regulations, and institutional policies related to the access and use of information. (Middle States, 2006, p. 42).

The definitions for information literacy education, as determined by the American Library Association, Association of College and Research Libraries, and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education all center around the same skills and learning objectives. While institutions have determined how to achieve this in a traditional classroom environment, it is important to understand how these skills or learning outcomes are met through distance learning.
Students’ Information Literacy Skills and Knowledge

As Gross and Latham (2007) note, the demand of information literacy skills is more important in today’s information rich society. Students need these skills while pursuing a higher education and these skills are necessary for life-long learning (Gross & Latham, 2007). While these skills may be essential for individuals to function in American society, there is a disconnect with students. Students believe they have significant information literacy abilities, yet their performance on research and other information retrieval tasks indicates that this is not the case. Undergraduate students’ perception of their information literacy skills does not match their actual skill level. This lack of students’ understanding of their own information literacy knowledge can be a result of not fully understanding the concept of information literacy (Gross & Latham, 2007; Morrison, 1997; Seaman, 2002). The term information literacy and the library-centric professional language used by librarians contribute to this lack of understanding of the concept of information literacy (Smith & Oliver, 2005). Polger and Okamoto (2010) found that students are confused about the role of librarians and academic libraries. Seamans (2002) found that students did not view library staff as part of the information support network. Maybee (2006) argues that information literacy does not focus on the skills students actually need, which may cause this confusion.

While students lack an understanding of the concept and terminology of information literacy (Gross & Latham, 2007; Morrison, 1997; Seamans, 2002; Smith & Oliver, 2005), recent studies have focused specifically on the level of information literacy knowledge students possess. Seamans (2002) noted that students expect library staff to acknowledge resources that students use as part of information literacy sessions. This is the result of students utilizing free, web-based resources instead of library subscription-based resources (Metzger, Flanagan, &
Zwarun, 2003). Gross and Latham (2007) found that students who excel academically often have more information literacy knowledge. Lebbin (2006) found that students had a positive perception of information literacy and believed that it improved their academic performance. This seems contradictory to earlier statements about what students think they know about information literacy. An important insight by Lebbin (2006) was that students had to move beyond the academic and professional language used by librarians to understand the concept.

**Information Literacy and Online Students**

In considering how information literacy education is taught to online students, libraries implement multiple methods of instruction because of the difficulty of reaching these students (Dewald, Scholz-Crane, Booth, & Levine, 2000; Buck, Islam, & Syrkin, 2006). Some of the methods used by academic libraries to integrate information literacy instruction into an online student’s curriculum are: credit-bearing course, embedding librarians into a specific online course or program, or online tutorials (Daugherty & Russo, 2007). As Buck, Islam, and Syrkin (2006) suggest, an important part of teaching information literacy education online centers around determining the role of teaching faculty and librarians. As Wright (2000) notes, the importance is to integrate information literacy education into the curriculum instead of providing this education as an added component to the overall program.

One method to teaching information literacy to online students is through the use of an online tutorial (Cook, 2002; Daugherty & Russo, 2007). This is a standard feature of information literacy education for distance learning students. In Daugherty and Russo’s (2007) collection of approaches to teaching information literacy to students online, there are thirteen chapters that outline institution-specific approaches to online tutorial development. Each chapter offers a first-hand account of the process for institutions to develop an online tutorial. From a
community college perspective, Wassenich (2007) discusses Austin Community College’s approach. This community college identified English Composition I and other relevant courses to integrate information literacy into the curriculum. While Austin Community College recognized the positive impact of this online tutorial in teaching information literacy, Wassenich (2007) notes that “students do not communicate with each other or a librarian as a standard part of the tutorial” (p. 181). In another example of online tutorials, Cook (2002) notes that a goal for the online information literacy tutorial developed by Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania was to incorporate the ACRL information literacy standards. Of interest is the effectiveness of online tutorials to meet specific information literacy learning outcomes. Nichols, Shaffer, and Shockey (2003) found that students are learning the same amount of information literacy concepts through online tutorials as oppose to in traditional classroom instruction. While this approach offers instruction to a wide range of students in an asynchronous format that is available when the faculty member or students are interested in completing the work, it is not the exclusive model utilized within all online courses.

Librarians can also provide instruction to specific classes in a model similar to the one-shot informational literacy instructional session taught on-ground by embedding themselves as an instructor and participant within the online classroom environment. With an embedded model, academic librarians are linked with a specific class. Hemming and Montet (2010) describe the process for this model at a community college. Librarians create a tutorial and embed it in the course to facilitate a discussion through the discussion boards and then post additional assignment related material. While this method is common for on-ground teaching, in the online mode, the level of collaboration that is needed requires a strong partnership between faculty members and librarians. Consistent with the theme of collaborating with online course
faculty members, librarians can also work with faculty outside the learning management system through professional development workshops to provide faculty with the tools necessary to teach information literacy themselves (Miller, O’Donnell, Pomea, Rawson, Shepard, & Thomes, 2010). Miller, O’Donnell, Pomea, Rawson, Shepard, and Thomes (2010) found that this model offered an opportunity for libraries to partner and build strong relationships with other academic departments on campus.

**Faculty Teaching Information Literacy Education**

With the continuous evolution of library resources and services due to the ever changing technological advances and their clear influences on education, academic libraries endeavor to understand what resources and services are being used by their stakeholders. While previous studies offer specifics on the range of library resources and services (Daugherty & Russo, 2007), this study is primarily focused on the views of faculty members in relation to information literacy instruction within their online classroom. Online faculty often assume that students are entering their classes already equipped with the information literacy skills and knowledge necessary to complete course assignments (Cahoy & Moyo, 2006; Shaffer, Finkelstein, Woelfl, & Lyden, 2004; Thomsett-Scott & May, 2009). Shaffer et al. (2004) found that even when faculty members acknowledge that students are not prepared with the necessary information literacy skills and knowledge, they are “unwilling to give class time to library instruction” (p. 419). For faculty members who understand the importance of information literacy education, Bury (2011) found that only 10 percent of faculty members viewed information literacy education as the responsibility of only academic libraries. Other studies have found that approximately one third of faculty members view information literacy education as the role of the academic library (Thomsett-Scott & May, 2009).
Consequently, what is paradoxical for academic libraries is the percentage of faculty members who teach information literacy independent of their academic libraries. Bury (2011) found that approximately 54 percent of faculty members teach information literacy themselves. This is similar to other studies. Leckie and Fullerton (1999) found that between 30 and 50 percent of science and engineering faculty members are teaching information literacy. This range is similar to Gonzales (2001) who found that 28 percent of faculty members teach information literacy independent of their library. Shaffer et al. (2004) also found that faculty members are teaching information literacy themselves. This is relevant as it verifies that a large portion of information literacy instruction is happening outside the traditional information literacy programs offered by academic libraries. When faculty members are asked about the Association of College and Research Libraries standards, faculty members “have difficulty with the language of the IL outcomes” (Gullikson, 2006, p. 591).

Conclusion

Academic libraries have a tradition of providing library instruction dating back to the 1800s. As academic libraries increased the size of their collections and integrated new technology to locate material, the method and level of library instruction began to change. With the increased reliance on the Internet and computer technology to conduct research, outdated modes of instruction – bibliographic instruction – led to the development of information literacy as a term and discipline within academic libraries. While current students are considered digital natives and are comfortable using technology, they are often lacking the knowledge and skills necessary to conduct scholarly research (Gross & Latham, 2007). To meet this gap in knowledge and skills, academic libraries offer information literacy instruction through formalized programs. While academic librarians understand the need of faculty members to
teach information literacy independent of the library, little is known about how this instruction is being taught. As the research has shown at some institutions, half of faculty members are teaching this instruction independent of the library (Bury, 2011). The gap in the literature centers on what these faculty members are teaching and how this content maps to existing standards for information literacy.
Chapter Three: Qualitative Methodology & Research Design

Introduction

With the growth in online learning (Allen & Seaman, 2013; Dahlstrom, Walker, & Dziuban, 2013, Radford, 2011), it is important for academic libraries to understand how information literacy education is being taught. Within the scholarly research, there is a clear gap in understanding how faculty members are teaching information literacy. By examining this topic, academic libraries will be better positioned to collaborate with faculty to ensure all information literacy instruction is meeting regional accreditation and national information literacy standards (ALA, 1989; ACRL, 2000; Middle States, 2006). The purpose of this study is to explore in detail how a select number of community college faculty members are teaching information literacy in online courses.

This study examines how English faculty members at Suburban County Community College, a pseudonym for the research site location, are integrating information literacy instruction into their online courses. Specifically, faculty members teaching ENG 100: English Composition I or ENG 112: English Composition II, both research-rich introductory courses, are targeted in this study.

Research Tradition

“Research is one of many different ways of knowing or understanding” (Mertens, 2005, p. 2). In order to understand how information literacy is being taught to students independent of a formal program offered through an academic library, a qualitative research approach was utilized. “Qualitative methods are generally supported by the interpretivist’s paradigm, which portrays a world in which reality is socially constructed” (Glesne, 1999, p. 5). These “social realities are constructed by the participants in those social settings” (Glesne, 1999, p. 5). As this
research study focuses on a specific problem of practice, the use of qualitative research methods is appropriate as applied research “informs action, enhances decision making, and applies knowledge to solve human and societal problems” (Patton, 1980, p. 141). The use of a how research question “conveys an open and emerging design” (Creswell, 2009, p. 130). Because this research centers on allowing faculty members to explore their experiences teaching information literacy in their online courses, an appropriate research method is an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith et al., 2009). This approach was developed by Jonathan Smith in 1996 as a way “to understand the first-person perspective from the third-person position” (Larkins, Eatough, & Osborn 2011; Smith et al., 2012). This research method allowed the research participants to explore, focus on, and relay their priorities freely and provide an opportunity for others to decipher and utilize their accounts for their own application.

**Research Design**

In order to understand how faculty members are teaching information literacy outside the formal resources and services offered through an academic library, this study utilizes national standards and regional accreditor definition of information literacy (ALA 1989; ACRL 2000; Middle States, 2006) and interviews specifically conducted for this study of relevant community college faculty members. For a baseline understanding of how this study defines information literacy, the definition from the American Library Association (1989) serves as the foundation. To understand how this defined educational concept relates to higher education, the Association of College and Research Libraries (2000) Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education was utilized. The standards from the Association of College and Research Libraries are reflective of the same skills and learning objectives for information literacy defined by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (2006). The defined performance
indicators and outcomes statements from the Association of College and Research Libraries (2000) Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education were used to understand how the instruction being delivered by online faculty members independent of their academic library meets these standards.

An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis research approach relies “on small sample sizes” to allow for “understandings of this particular group rather than prematurely make more general claims” (Smith & Osborn, 2008, p. 55). The selection of faculty members for this study resulted “through purposive sampling, to find a more closely defined group for whom the research question will be significant” (Smith & Osborn, 2008, p. 56). This study targeted faculty members teaching two specific courses online - ENG 100 – English Composition I and ENG 112 – English Composition II. These courses were selected as they serve as general education requirements for degree seeking students across the college. Historically, English composition courses offer a solid platform for the introduction of information literacy as students are working through the process of research and writing throughout the arc of the course. The catalog course description for ENG 100: English Composition I is:

This course reviews the principles of composition, including rhetoric, grammar and usage, and emphasizes the writing of analytical essays and the study of principles underlying critical thinking. Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to: Demonstrate effective writing strategies after reading and assessing a variety of texts. Write assignments that consider various writing situations in terms of audience, purpose, tone, organization, format, style, point of view, and diction. Generate ideas, limit a topic, and formulate a thesis, utilizing prewriting techniques. Provide specific, concrete details to support the thesis. Organize essays using appropriate types of
development such as description, narration, definition, comparison/contrast, causal relationship, classification, example, process analysis, and argumentation. Compose an original, unified, multi-paragraph essay with introduction, conclusion, and transitions. Revise, edit, and proofread writing to produce final drafts with a minimum of errors in grammar, mechanics, and diction. Access and evaluate source material using current information literacy techniques. Summarize, paraphrase, and quote source material using MLA documentation. Prepare a documented essay free of plagiarism (Suburban County Community College, 2014).

The catalog course description for ENG 112: English Composition II is:

Composition II is a writing course with emphasis on both literature and research. The course develops critical thinking through the study of literature, the use of advanced research techniques, and the writing of analytical/critical and researched essays. Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to: Formulate an analytical/argumentative thesis. Express ideas logically and clearly in a coherent essay with sound, supportive data. Compose original, analytical/critical essays in response to literature. Analyze the short story, poetry and drama using the elements of literature such as plot, setting, character, point of view, form, tone, style, symbolism, and theme, from different critical perspectives. Access and evaluate source material using current information literacy skills. Summarize, paraphrase, quote and synthesize source material using MLA documentation. Apply research skills by composing a multi-source paper that proves a scholarly thesis and is free of plagiarism. Revise, edit, and proofread to produce polished, final drafts with a minimum of errors in grammar, mechanics and diction (Suburban County Community College, 2014).
Within both course descriptions, information literacy skills are identified. This indicates that both courses should address some or all of the defined learning objectives noted by the Association of College and Research Libraries. Faculty members teaching these courses online are a subset of the larger English faculty and provide an understanding of how information literacy is being taught in introductory English courses in the online environment. While these courses at Suburban County Community College explicitly state information literacy as a course competency, the concepts, skills, and abilities that information literacy education addresses are relevant to all courses that require students to use outside information to complete assignments and research projects.

**Recruitment and Access**

Recruitment of research participants first occurred by determining those faculty members who were eligible to participate in this study. The current and previous semester course schedules were reviewed to determine which faculty members were teaching either ENG 100: English Composition I or ENG 112: English Composition II online. Once a complete list of faculty members teaching ENG 100 or ENG 112 was compiled, all full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty members were highlighted. This study focused specifically on full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty members, as they are the population that design both courses and author the institution’s Master Course Outlines. A Master Course Outline is an official document that lists the course competencies, lists the topics that should be covered, describes instructional activities, and provides a sample syllabus. Full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty members were contacted through an official letter from the student researcher to determine their interest in participating in this study. After receiving institutional approval for this research study through the Institution Review Board, the researcher was able to directly contact identified participants.
without the need to proceed through a gatekeeper. This was possible because the researcher is an employee at Suburban County Community College. As this study is targeted toward a subset of the entire English faculty, there were a limited number of faculty members who were qualified to participate in this study. The initial goal was to interview a minimum of three English faculty members teaching fully online versions of ENG 100: English Composition I or ENG 112: English Composition II. After reviewing the course schedules for the current and previous semesters, the researcher contacted six full time, tenured or tenure-track faculty members. Of the six faculty members contacted, four agreed to participate in this study. As this study is focused on English faculty members teaching a specific online course, there are no additional inclusion or exclusion criteria based on gender, ethnicity/race, socio-economic level, literacy level, health, or other factors used for participating in this study. Each identified faculty member was fully aware of the parameters of this study to ensure they are capable of providing the researcher with informed consent. Faculty members agreeing to participate in this study were informed that this research received approval from both the Northeastern University and Suburban County Community College Institutional Review Boards.

**Positionality Statement**

“Researchers have opinions about the problems in their field” (Machi & McEvoy, 2009, p. 19). While researchers bring preconceptions to their research, it is important to understand that “qualitative research is not primarily concerned with eliminating variance between researchers in the values and expectations they bring to the study” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 108). Instead, it is important to understand how a researcher’s positionality “influences the conduct and conclusions of the study” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 108).
The researcher for this study has worked in academic libraries for the past 10 years, initially as a reference librarian at a small liberal arts college. In this role, the researcher answered student, faculty, and staff reference and research questions and taught course-integrated information literacy classes. After four years, the researcher changed roles and focused on managing electronic resources for the same academic library. While there was a change in title and role at the institution, the researcher continued teaching within the library’s information literacy program. Four years ago, the researcher changed positions and institutions and currently serves as a faculty librarian at a community college and maintains responsibility for the library’s information literacy program, as well as ensuring access to equitable resources and services for distance-learning students. In this role, the researcher communicates with faculty members on integrating information literacy instruction in all modalities of instruction and has developed new programs and services to meet the information literacy needs of distance learning and online students. This includes a new, synchronous workshop program. The researcher also worked with faculty members through membership on key institutional committees to develop new college academic learning goals, which includes information literacy. At the departmental level, the researcher has worked with the English faculty members in redesigning ENG 100: English Composition I and ENG 112 English Composition II to meet the new information literacy college academic learning goals. This work focused on the development of a Master Course Outline for both courses but did not relate to how or by what means individual English faculty members are teaching information literacy in online courses.

Backyard research refers to researchers conducting a study at their “own organization, or friends, or immediate work setting” (Creswell, 2009, p. 177). Researching in one’s own backyard provides a convenient location; however, may cause problems in accurately reporting
the data (Creswell, 2009). With this particular study, there is no supervisory relationship between the researcher and the research study participants. As both the researcher and research participants are faculty members at Suburban County Community College, this ensures equal status and does not place anyone in an elevated position. In addition, the use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis methodology was deliberately selected as the research method because even though it does not require a researcher to be an insider within the group being studied, it does stress the importance of a researcher understanding and having the ability to relate to the study participants (Smith, Flowers, & Larkings, 2009).

To avoid researcher bias, the researcher employed a number of methods to ensure the validity of this research study. First, the researcher disclosed in this positionality statement the connection between the researcher and research study participants. The researcher is using the existing scholarly literature to “orient the study and the findings” (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009, 181). The researcher employed open-ended research questions throughout the research interview process. This allowed the study participants to guide the direction of this study. The researcher employed a “thorough and systematic” analysis of the interview transcripts (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009, p. 181).

**Data Collection**

Central in an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis is understanding “how participants perceive and make sense of things which are happening to them” (Smith & Osborn, 2008, p. 57). While IPA offers a number of ways to collect data, the primary form of data collection takes place “through semi-structured interviews” (Smith & Osborn, 2008, p. 57). The interviews were a “dialogue whereby initial questions are modified in the light of the
participants’ responses” (Smith & Osborn, 2008, p. 57). Ultimately, the goal was for the participants in this study to tell “their own stories, in their own words” (Smith et al., 2012, p. 57).

For this particular research study, interviews were conducted in person or, when that was not an option, through web conferencing. When a faculty member was not physically present to participate in this study, GoToMeeting was used to conduct the interview. This third-party web conferencing software allows for the researcher and interviewees to see each other through webcams so all physical cues were seen. This program also allowed for the recording of the web conferencing session. All interviews were conducted in a private setting to allow the research participants to feel comfortable discussing how they integrate information literacy education into their online courses.

At the start of each interview, the researcher discussed the parameters of the study and asked the participants if they had any questions before the formal interview began. As this was a semi-structured interview, an attempt was made to establish a friendly rapport with each participant (Smith & Osborn, 2008). After basic background questions were asked, the researcher asked more formal questions related to the study while allowing the participants to guide the direction of the interview, which Smith and Osborn (2008) suggest as it allows the participant to tell their story (p. 59).

**Data Storage**

All data associated with this research study was stored on the researcher’s password-protected personal computer and mobile device. This included recordings of the interviews conducted with research participants, transcripts of the recorded interviews, and the write-up of the research study. All paper copies of the research study materials were kept in a locked desk drawer at the researcher’s office. Following the doctoral thesis defense and the acceptance of the
finalized doctoral thesis, the researcher will destroy all electronic and physical copies of interview, transcripts, and interview recordings. The research participants’ informed consent forms will be kept in the same locked drawer for a period of three years, as required by the Institutional Review Board.

**Data Analysis**

After the interviews were completed, a third-party transcription service was utilized to transcribe the interviews for the researcher to analyze. As the interview is central to the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis approach, it is important that the researcher “engaging in an interpretative relationship with the transcript” (Smith & Osborn, 2008, p. 66). Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis does not require a specific data analysis method but requires: “(a) movement from what is unique to a participant to what is shared among the participants, (b) description of the experience which moves to an interpretation of the experience, (c) commitment to understanding the participant’s point of view, and (d) psychological focus on personal meaning-making within a particular context” (Cooper, Fleischer, and Cotton, 2012, p. 5). To accomplish this, the researcher read and reviewed the interview transcripts a number of times during the data analysis process making sure to only work with a single participant’s transcript before moving forward to work with the other interview participants. As outlined by Smith and Osborn (2008), during the first reading of the interview text the researcher made descriptive annotations on the transcript using the comment feature in Microsoft Office Word. During the second reading of the interview transcript the researcher identified any themes that were present in the content. At this point, the researcher produced a table indicating the themes that were identified in the interview transcript. This table included the identified themes, information about where the themes appear in the interview transcript, and excerpts from the
actual interview transcript. Once this process was completed for all interviews, the research produced a single table that identifies all relevant themes that addresses the central and sub-research questions. From the central themes table, the researcher began the process to identify central themes that appear across all interviews. The researcher produced another table that included the relevant themes across all interviews. It was important for the researcher to check “the transcript to make sure the connections work for the primary source material – the actual words of the participant” (Smith & Osborn, 2008, p. 72). This table included identifying information so the researcher could find the original source material in the interview transcript. All the tables were created using Microsoft Office productivity software.

It is from this final table that the researcher produced the study findings. As this is an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, the researcher focused on the experience of the research participants to find meaning in how faculty members are teaching information literacy in an online classroom environment.

Conclusion

This study explores how community college faculty members teach information literacy in introductory English courses independent of the formal information literacy program offered through their academic library. The researcher was interested in understanding what information literacy concepts the faculty members teach and how they relate to the ACRL national standards utilized by academic libraries in developing their formal information literacy programs. To answer the central research question of this study a qualitative research approach was used. Specifically, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was employed to interview a small number of relevant faculty members in the English Department. The researcher used a semi-structured interview approach to allow the study participants to fully describe how they teach
information literacy in their online courses. All central themes that appear through the range of interviews were identified to gain a full understanding and answer to the central research question. Ultimately, the results of this study offer academic libraries a clear understanding of how a select number of faculty members deliver information literacy instruction outside of any formal program from the library. For academic librarians engaged in the process of developing and delivering information literacy education, the results of this study offer evidence of areas where academic libraries can partner and collaborate with faculty members to ensure information literacy standards are being met.
Chapter Four: Summary of Research Findings

The purpose of this Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis research study is to understand how tenured and tenure-track English faculty members teach information literacy in fully online courses. The researcher invited six faculty members to participate in this research study. Of the six faculty members invited to participate in this study, four faculty members agreed to be interviewed during a ten-day period.

The interviews were designed to answer the primary research question of this study.

Research Questions

The central research question in this study is:

*How are community college faculty members teaching information literacy (as defined by the Association of College and Research Libraries), in their online courses?*

There are three sub-questions that were used to guide this research inquiry:

- *How are community college faculty members defining information literacy?*
- *What information literacy concepts are considered essential by community college faculty to ensure student academic success?*
- *How do the information literacy concepts taught by community college faculty members reflect the standards set by the Association of College and Research Libraries?*

Study Participants

Study participants for this research project were drawn from the ranks of full-time tenured or tenure-track English faculty members teaching either ENG 100: English Composition I or ENG 112: English Composition II as fully online courses. The selection of full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty members was to ensure that those participating in this research study were familiar with the Master Course Outlines for the courses identified for this study and that they
likely had participated in the creation or review of these documents. No additional characteristics were sought in identifying research participants. Of the four study participants, two are tenured faculty members and two are tenure-track faculty members.

**Alex.** Alex is a tenure-track English faculty member at Suburban County Community College and has been a college professor since 2001. After completing a Ph.D., Alex spent six years teaching at a small liberal arts college. After six years at this small liberal arts college, Alex accepted another teaching position at an institution that had a “really great writing program.” Alex decided to change the “idea of what academia meant and wanted to leave a real legacy” that did not focus entirely on publication production but instead on teaching. Central to this new focus was a desire to “teach somewhere where the kids really needed me.” It was this change that brought Alex to Suburban County Community College to focus on teaching “students who need me more and need the skills and knowledge that I have to impart much more.” Since arriving at Suburban County Community College, Alex typically teaches four to five sections of ENG 100: English Composition I and ENG 112: English Composition II each semester. In the semesters when Alex is not teaching a full load of ENG 100 and ENG 112, Alex teaches ENG 050 which is a developmental English course. Alex has been teaching ENG 100 or ENG 112 online for the past two academic years and stated, “I think my online courses are not very sophisticated at this point.” Alex thought the learning management system did not provide the functionality necessary to produce a high-level course.

**Jaime.** Jaime is a tenure-track English faculty member who has taught at Suburban County Community College since 2010. Jaime began teaching after completing a Masters of Fine Arts in 2008. Jaime was interested in teaching at a community college because “of the possibilities that open up to someone at the community college.” Typically, Jaime teaches four
or five sections of ENG 100: English Composition I and ENG 112: English Composition II in a semester. While Jaime has only been teaching online at Suburban County Community College for one year, Jaime has also taught online for other colleges for one and one half years.

**Jessie.** Jessie is a tenured English faculty member at Suburban County Community College and has worked at the college full-time since 2000. After completing a doctoral degree, Jessie taught as a visiting professor at a small liberal arts college and also served as an adjunct faculty member at Suburban County Community College. When a full-time, tenure-track position opened at the college, Jessie applied and was hired. Jessie thinks that “there’s something very real about our students that is not present at other institutions where they have a more exclusive admissions policy.” When Jessie began teaching at Suburban County Community College as a full-time faculty member, Jessie noted “feeling like you’re really contributing something to the community and working with such a diverse population of student who are frequently very needy, was actually very appealing to me.” Jessie typically teaches two or three sections of ENG 100: English Composition I or ENG 112: English Composition II each semester. Jessie was an early adopter, teaching online in 2004. Jessie primarily taught 200-level literature courses online to ensure students had options of upper-level English courses to take for their degree programs. In 2009, Jessie included sections of ENG 100 and ENG 112.

**Dylan.** Dylan is a tenured English faculty member at Suburban County Community College and has taught at the college level for the past 16 years. This includes not only the site of this study but other institutions, as well. Dylan was drawn to teaching at the community college level because of the “idea of working with an underserved population of students and families that don’t have a history of college education or higher education, and broaching that level for themselves and for their families.” Dylan notes that “the mission of a community
college is to be everything to everyone or die trying.” In a typical semester, Dylan teaches 4 sections of ENG 100: English Composition I or ENG 112: English Composition II out of a 5/5 load. Dylan started teaching online 3 years ago and while Dylan has taught both ENG 100 and ENG 112, the focus in recent semesters has been on ENG 112.

Themes

After analyzing the interview data from all four study participants, four superordinate and eight subordinate themes emerged. The four superordinate themes along with the subordinate themes are:


2. English faculty members primarily define information literacy as finding, evaluating, and documenting the sources needed for students’ writing. (2.1 Database searching, 2.2 Evaluation of sources, 2.3 Citations)

3. English faculty members use a mixture of personally-developed presentations and library-generated content to teach students in online courses how to find and evaluate information. (3.1 Database searching, 3.2 Evaluation of sources, 3.3 Online information literacy tutorial)

4. Although information literacy instruction often originates with English faculty members in the online classroom, there is a need for more content from the academic library. (4.1 Tutorial development, 4.2 Centralized content)

As the central research question for this study examines the relationship of what is taught in the online classroom to the national standards set by the Association of College and Research
Libraries (2000), the connection between this study’s superordinate and subordinate themes are mapped to the standards.

**Table 4.1**

*Connections Between Research Study Themes and the ACRL Standards*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superordinate Themes</th>
<th>Subordinate Themes</th>
<th>Connection to the ACRL Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **1. Community College**<br>English faculty members recognize an overarching definition of information literacy including components of the ACRL Standards (2000) and Framework (2015). | *Note on connection to the ACRL Standards: While each definition offered by the study participants addressed the overarching definition of information literacy, Standards One and Five were only partially addressed. Standard One was viewed more as a writing competency and the portion of the definition related to Standard Five focused primarily on plagiarism.* | **Standard One**: The information literate student determines the nature and extent of the information needed.  
**Standard Two**: The information literate student accesses needed information effectively and efficiently.  
**Standard Three**: The information literate student evaluates information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system.  
**Standard Four**: The information literate student, individually or as a member of a group, uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.  
**Standard Five**: The information literate student understands many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally. |
| **2. English faculty members primarily define information literacy as finding, evaluating, and documenting the sources needed for students’ writing.** | **2.1 Database searching** | **Standard Two**: The information literate student accesses needed information effectively and efficiently.  
**2.2 Evaluation of sources** | **Standard Three**: The information literate student evaluates information and its sources critically |
<table>
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<th>2.3 Citations</th>
<th><strong>Standard Five</strong>: The information literate student understands many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally.</th>
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<tr>
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<td>3.1 Database searching <strong>Standard Two</strong>: The information literate student accesses needed information effectively and efficiently.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>3.3 Online information literacy tutorial</td>
<td>3.3 Online information literacy tutorial <strong>Standard One</strong>: The information literate student determines the nature and extent of the information needed. <strong>Standard Two</strong>: The information literate student accesses needed information effectively and efficiently. <strong>Standard Three</strong>: The information literate student evaluates information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system. <strong>Standard Four</strong>: The information literate student, individually or as a member of a group, uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose. <strong>Standard Five</strong>: The information literate student understands many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally.</td>
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Community College English faculty members recognize an overarching definition of information literacy including components of the ACRL Standards (2000) and Framework (2015)

To understand how English faculty members are teaching information literacy in their online classrooms, it is important to understand how each study participant defines information literacy. After each participant was asked to define information literacy in their own words, study participants were asked if they were familiar with the Association of College and Research Libraries’ (2000) Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. Three of the study’s four participants were not familiar with the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) standards. Dylan and Jaime both stated that they assume they were exposed to the ACRL standards during recent campus and departmental discussions related to integrating information literacy into ENG 100: English Composition I but neither study participant could specifically remember the standards. Of the four participants, only Alex was familiar with the ACRL standards and was able to articulate how these standards informed the definition they offered and how the standards integrated into their classroom.

As Alex was the only study participant who was familiar with the ACRL standards, it was not a surprise that the definition Alex offered matched both the general definition from the American Library Association (1989) and the Association of College and Research Libraries (2000). Alex defined information literacy as “the ability of students to find, evaluate, and
incorporate different types of research data effectively and also understand the, I suppose, ethical factors pertaining to the use and/or misuse of research data.”

While the other three study participants were not explicitly familiar with the Association of College and Research Libraries standards, the definitions they offered addressed the major elements and concepts found in the ACRL standards for information literacy. This includes “understanding the process or research” in particular, “student[s] looking for a particular piece of information or something to support an argument.” Ultimately, Jessie and Dylan offered clear definitions of information literacy. Jessie stated that information literacy is:

The need to be able to perceive, to have that awareness that you need information first and foremost. Then, to be able to have that knowledge and the ability to go out and locate that information. To be able to sift through the information and have the ability to analyze it to see what is most specific for your particular information needs.

Dylan stated information literacy is:

The knowledge and skills students acquire to find and evaluate, and successfully use, information for their own purposes such as, say in an assignment like a research paper. Information [literacy] would be understanding what the different kinds of sources are, how to access them, how to evaluate them for both, just in general like, is it a credible source? Also, is it useful for what I’m trying to write about?

Each definition provided by the study’s participants directly informed how they taught information literacy in both the physical classroom and in the online environment.

English faculty members primarily define information literacy as finding, evaluating, and documenting the sources needed for students’ writing
When asked which information literacy concepts are essential for students to succeed in ENG 100: English Composition I or ENG 112: English Composition II, as well as academically in general, each study participant referenced the specific information literacy components from their stated definitions. When the faculty members who participated in this study taught information literacy concepts in their courses, they focused on the research process generally but spent time discussing how research played a role in the writing process. As ENG 100: English Composition I and ENG 112: English Composition II are both English courses centered on developing a competency in writing, it is understandable that the study’s participants would discuss the relationship between research and writing. Jaime elaborated on this point by stating “it kind of comes back to the writing process and the idea of integrating those things once they’ve been found. Being able to evaluate, is this something that will help me support my argument?” While integrating research into writing is an essential information literacy concept, the study participants viewed this as a writing issue. When discussing information literacy instructional topics, three subordinate themes developed. These are database searching, evaluation of sources, and citations.

**Database searching.** Each study participant expressed the importance of students developing the ability to effectively search for information using free Internet search tools and library subscription databases. At the basic level, the study participants discussed the importance of students learning how to find the link to subscription databases from the library’s website. This was an important point as students often do not know how to navigate the library’s website to find relevant research tools. While simply finding a link was important to all the study participants, they stressed the need for students to understand the difference between free Internet resources and library subscription databases. Jessie offered an analogy that illustrated
the difference between searching free resources on the Internet and the library’s subscription databases by saying “Wikipedia and Google are great, but they’re Little League. It’s time to step up to the Majors.” Alex discussed teaching students the difference between free Internet resources and when they are an appropriate source for academic writing and when students should search library subscription databases for more authoritative information. Alex stated:

We start off with them just finding useful articles and other kinds of data just using the free Internet, and then afterwards, they begin to learn how to find multimedia and news media sources from both databases and also from the free Internet.

When discussing database searching as an instructional topic, Jaime stated:

I mean, just the very basic like getting to things like the databases, getting to places where you can find reliable information. I mean, the Discover Box is great because it's something that people are very familiar with kind of just going to a general search engine and getting, you know, almost nearly universal kind of responses just through doing one keyword search, but when that doesn't work out for you, you know, what's the next step? And kind of having students be familiar with, you know, the variety of databases that we offer and that they're likely to encounter at their next institution because a lot of our students are looking to transfer and how to use those effectively.

While finding and using free Internet resources and library subscription databases are important, the study participants also stated the importance of learning how to be an effective researcher. Jaime states, “I do some work, you know, in Boolean searches even though that seems to be kind of becoming a more outdated system with the strength of the keyword search these days.”

Directly related to the topic of database searching, the study participants discussed the need to evaluate the sources that the students theoretically find as part of the research process.
Evaluation of sources. Evaluation of sources is viewed as an essential skill for students to succeed academically. This subordinate theme directly relates to the idea of knowing which research tool to use to find information. As Jaime stated, learning “how to use the databases and how to look at different types of information and how to find the type of information you’re looking for as quickly as possible” is essential in the research process. Specifically, Jaime is interested in students understanding that “different types of information can be found using different databases.” Jaime continued to discuss the need to evaluate the sources that students use in terms of what is found in each database. This requires students to develop a

Familiarity with what is the difference between an abstract and an article and what types of information you are looking at? You know, one is a review, but it doesn’t seem like a review, those kinds of things really being able to discern the motivation behind different types of sources that they [students] might find in, say, a database.

While the idea of evaluating the types of sources a student uses to support or refute an argument in their writing, the study participants focused their discussion of evaluation of sources on determining if a source is credible. As Dylan stated,

[a]t some levels, I’m more interested just that they can tell whether it’s a credible source or not. Maybe at a higher level I hopefully assume that they can do that. Hopefully they are able to do that. What I’m looking for is more that they can discern what’s actually useful to them.

When thinking about evaluation of sources, Jessie addressed the specific competencies that students should develop when evaluating a source. In evaluating a source, a student should look at “basic issues such as authorship, timeliness, depth, [and] credibility.” The role of the faculty member or librarian is to “[g]uide them through the process.”
Once students find and evaluate the sources they intend to use in their writing, the study participants discuss the importance of proper documentation.

Citations. The English faculty members interviewed in this study discussed the instructional topics related to information literacy in terms of the writing process. The final component that each study participant discussed was teaching students how to document the sources they use in their writing. Dylan stated, “I know some of my colleagues are much more sticklers on the form, the MLA format and everything, I know that I’m not. It’s not about the commas and putting it in this order. It’s about getting the information across to the reader.” The other three study participants discussed the importance for students to “learn how to document them [sources] and incorporate that information effectively into their papers.”

As part of ENG 100: English Composition I, the thought was that students should learn how to use the library’s subscription database’s generated citations. The majority of the databases that students use to research for their ENG 100 research papers generate a well-formatted citation that students can use as part of their writing with little editing required. It is in ENG 112: English Composition II that the study participants believed the students needed to have a better understanding of how to cite their sources outside of the database generated citations. This is because many of the sources students use as part of ENG 112 are print or articles that are reprinted in other publications. This makes proper citation difficult for many of the students.

To address each of these instructional topics, the study participants utilized different pedagogical strategies in their online classes. Each of these strategies was highlighted by a particular assignment that was developed specifically to reinforce the information literacy concepts.
English faculty members use a mixture of personally-developed presentations and library-generated content to teach students in online courses how to find and evaluate information.

To ensure students are receiving information literacy instructions as part of ENG 100: English Composition I and ENG 112: English Composition II, the faculty members that participated in this study described the pedagogical strategies they utilized to ensure students were leaving both courses with an increased information literacy knowledge, skills, and abilities. Each faculty member discussed their approach to teaching information literacy knowledge, skills, and abilities by connecting the research and writing process. To highlight how they addressed information literacy specifically in their online courses, they all discussed specific assignments that were designed to reinforce the Information Literacy Concepts Taught in the Online Classroom subordinate theme. With the connection between the research and writing process, each faculty member discussed the importance of the early stages of the research process. Jessie highlighted the approach that the study participants took in their courses.

The first thing is to develop their topic and their thesis. That’s their research question that they have in mind. That gets approved. Then, their set of notes, hunt and hunt to gather [their] sources. They have to put them in a working work-cited page.

As each study participant discussed their pedagogical strategies, three subordinate themes developed specifically related to information literacy instruction. These subordinate themes are database searching, evaluation of sources, and the online information literacy tutorial that was developed by the library.

**Database searching.** With each assignment discussed, the study participants highlighted the importance of students finding reliable and scholarly information through the library’s subscription databases. Alex starts by having students use an Internet search engine to find relevant resources for the first assignment in the course. Each study participant described a
range of assignments that each student completes either as part of ENG 100: English Composition I or ENG 112: English Composition II. Each faculty member used a scaffolding approach to writing and research. The first assignment utilized basic sources primarily from the free Internet and with each proceeding assignment required students to use database and library resources. While each study participant had assignments specific to their class, they all followed the same progression. The first assignment used Internet sources, the next assignment required students to use a combination of articles and Internet sources, and the final assignment is a three-to-five page research paper that uses relevant articles from library subscription databases.

The importance placed on subscription database and library resources progressing to the final research paper highlights the need for students to gain a solid understanding of how to effectively search subscription databases. Each study participant noted that this was a weakness in his or her pedagogical strategy. Alex discussed providing students with “instructions [on] access[ing] and navigat[ing] databases.” Dylan stated, “it’s really like here’s a PDF version of the PowerPoint I do in class. It’s just there. When I started teaching online and I realized how inadequate it was, I made it a little fuller.” Jaime offered a similar approach when discussing database instruction. “I have a PowerPoint with screenshots that kind of goes through some of the databases, what they look like, the various buttons you’re looking for at various steps.”

Jessie discussed the difficulty of teaching database searching in the online environment. Jessie requires that students use database sources for several papers as part of ENG 100: English Composition I and ENG 112: English Composition II. The assignment will specify the required number of database articles that students should have as part of their paper. Jessie describes how in a face-to-face course, Jessie is able to go through some sample database searches to show students the number of results they will likely retrieve based on the topics the class is writing
about for the assignment. In a face-to-face course, Jessie is able to demonstrate the use of database limiter and discuss appropriate methods for students to use to refine their searches. This process takes students through moving from a research question to a search strategy and implementing a search strategy in specific databases. Even as this process is demonstrated to students in class, Jessie noted that students still state that they could not find what they were looking for in the databases. With a face-to-face course, Jessie is able to have a conference with the student with a computer present to take the students through the process and demonstrate the process again. Jessie did note that the face-to-face students did not “seem as mature or as savvy as the students online,” there were other challenges. While the learning management system does provide data on student activity in the course, “it’s a lot easier to hide in an online class.” Specifically, Jessie noted that when students do have trouble, the face-to-face conference is not an option.

Ultimately, Jaime expressed the importance of teaching students how to effectively search the library’s subscription databases. “I think my students believe in like the luck of, like I put in these keywords and this pops up first, and so it must be the perfect thing to use in my argument.”

**Evaluation of sources.** Each participant discussed the importance of evaluation sources as part of the instructional topics theme that developed during the interview process. This subordinate theme continued when each faculty member discussed his or her pedagogical strategies. Understanding how to evaluate sources is important as Jaime’s comment indicated in relation to database searching. What each faculty member discussed was the importance of students knowing the type of source they have in front of them and whether it is an appropriate source to use to support their argument. Jaime noted “students have a hard time integrating
information that maybe refutes their main argument, but that is a valid use of information.” To address this each faculty member discussed how he or she utilized pre-writing assignment, which could include submitted a preliminary works cited page or annotated bibliography. Jessie discussed how a pre-writing assignment like this helps engage students in the discussion of the validity of each source. As Dylan noted, this is when synchronous communication is important. While each faculty member discussed how a one-on-one student interaction made teaching evaluation possible in their online courses, it was primarily the library’s resources that addressed this topic. Jaime discussed using library handouts that discuss the different types of information and tips for evaluating sources. For the evaluation of sources, each of the faculty members noted the importance of the library’s online tutorial that addresses this topic and other information literacy concepts in their online courses.

**Online Information Literacy Tutorial.** In 2011, the library at Suburban County Community College developed an online, self-paced information literacy tutorial as part of the overall information literacy program. This tool was designed for students who typically did not come to the library for a course-integrated information literacy class. The online information literacy tutorial contains six modules that: orient students to the library services offered at the college, discuss search strategies, types of information, searching databases, citations, and evaluating sources. This online tutorial was developed based on James Madison University Library’s Go for the Gold tutorial. The content was repurposed for a community college population and each module was designed based on institution-specific context.

In discussing pedagogical strategies, Dylan referenced the online information literacy tutorial created by the library and stated, “I think the module you guys made was awesome. Yeah. That was a huge part of it. I don’t know how, I don’t know what I would have done if
that wasn’t open to me.” Jaime’s comments on the online information literacy tutorial reinforce Dylan’s comments. Jaime stated, “actually I lean very heavily on the information literacy tutorial that we have available.” Alex made the parallel between the online information literacy tutorial and the in-person course-integrated information literacy class. Alex said, “I can’t force them to attend a library instruction session, however I do make them complete the information literacy workshop, the online thing that we have from the library website.”

Each participant discussed how he or she integrates the online information literacy tutorial into his or her online ENG 100 or ENG 112 courses. They required that students complete the entire tutorial during the course of the semester. This is either as a one-time assignment where students are provided the direct link to the tutorial or each module of the tutorial is offered throughout the semester to link directly to course content. The study participants who assigned this as a one-time assignment would integrate the final quiz into the learning management system. This would be either specific module questions or the entire quiz. Some of the study participants would assign portions of the quiz relevant to the content covered in class. Dylan noted that when the class is discussing how to search the library’s subscription databases, “I just rely on you all because you created that module. I just plug it in and I tell them [students] to go do the tutorial.” This approach typically did not include completing the online information literacy tutorial quiz.

While the online information literacy quiz was a key component of the four study participant’s online ENG 100 or ENG 112 courses, they also included other library-generated content. This included PDF versions of handouts available in the library and, as Jaime noted, “I also have, with permission, uploaded some of the materials that have been customized for me
from previous information literacy sessions.” These were in-person classes in which the presentations were uploaded into the learning management system.

While the library has created information literacy instruction content specifically for faculty to use in their online courses, the primary focus was on the online information literacy tutorial. When asked how the library could better serve the information literacy educational needs of online students, the study participants offered some clear thoughts.

**Although information literacy instruction often originates with English faculty members in the online classroom, there is a need for more content from the academic library**

In providing online information literacy educational content, the study participants acknowledged many of the existing digital learning objects that are available. Their primary focus was on the online information literacy tutorial as this provided a single point of entry for a complete information literacy lesson. The six modules of this tutorial cover the main information literacy concepts students enrolled in an introductory composition course would need to know. The study participants discussed the library’s LibGuides. These are digital versions of handouts academic libraries previously had in print. Jaime noted that “the LibGuides are great” as a resource for students and faculty. These guides are designed to provide students with subject-specific information to complete general or specific assignments. Currently, the library at Suburban County Community College has LibGuides devoted specifically to researching and writing an argumentative or persuasive essay and to conducting research for literary criticisms. These are the two primary assignments for ENG 100 and ENG 112.

In addition to the LibGuides, some of the study participants discussed the webinars the library offers. These are forty-five to sixty minute webinars on specific topics related to information literacy competencies. For students in ENG 100 or ENG 112 appropriate webinars
could be on developing research questions, conducting background research, searching multidisciplinary or subject specific databases, conducting literary criticism research, or MLA citation style. While many of the participants noted the educational value of these webinars, Jaime’s comments demonstrated these online workshops are not being fully utilized in ENG 100 or ENG 112. Jaime said,

I haven’t been as diligent in looking up the ideas that you have for your webinar schedule and things like that, but that is something that I’m hoping to look into for future semesters and really requiring students to attend or at least go through the recordings or something like that of these webinars because in a lot of ways information literacy is something that has to be understood kind of outside of the classroom, too.

As the study participants continued to discuss the relationship that the library could and should have with their online course, they offered suggestions that fell into two main subordinate themes. This was concept- or task-specific tutorial development in addition to the existing online information literacy tutorial and centralized content that can more easily be located and embedded into the learning management system. Ultimately, Jessie addresses the relationship of information literacy instruction to the academic library. Jessie states,

I feel a lot of this stuff [information literacy instruction] should be coming from me.

Again, using the library is for backup and reinforcement as opposed to the main gate of instruction. I find it’s [the library] fulfilling a lot of needs right now.

**Tutorial development.** Central to teaching information literacy in an online course is a range of digital learning objects that faculty members can use to integrate into their courses. These can be complete information literacy tutorials that cover all the content that undergraduate students should learn or components that faculty can pick and choose to integrate into their
courses. Jaime discussed the range of digital learning objects and synchronous workshops that are currently available for faculty members to integrate into their courses. Jaime noted, that for students

Sometimes finding their ways to LibGuides is a little bit problematic and/or signing into a webinar, say from home or whatever, and I just wonder if something like YouTube, where they’re well-versed in using these, obviously that’s a passive thing instead of an active thing like a webinar, but in terms of getting this information out there, they’re much more familiar with something like YouTube.

As part of the conversation, Jaime noted, “apparently the institution has a YouTube channel that just is not widely-used.” The issue with using YouTube is an institutional policy requires that the material posted by the library is only accessible with a direct link to the video. This makes discovering any videos or tutorials developed by the library difficult for students.

Dylan also discussed the importance of library-generated online tutorials for teaching information literacy. In discussing tutorials, Dylan discussed the need for these tutorial learning objects to be interactive. Specifically, Dylan discussed the need for students to “actually have to go in and do stuff.” In regards to database searching, Dylan suggested having tutorials that show a database search box where students have to enter search terms to view results. This could lead to content that addresses issues of evaluation and credibility.

Alex shared similar thoughts on tutorial development but instead focused on the idea of academic rigor. Alex stated, “the tutorials could be more rigorous. I think there could be more components.” Following this thought, Alex continued that the tutorials should “engage multiple types of learning.” Just as Dylan suggested interactive tutorials, Alex finished by stating, “I feel that the tutorial could be much more interactive.”
While much of the tutorial and digital learning object conversation centered on traditional educational content that would be delivered through a personal computer, Jaime discussed developing content that could be “pushed out to all their [students] phones.” When the researcher followed up this comment by asking if Jaime was referring to content specifically designed for mobile devices, Jaime said,

I do think so, especially with our population. I mean, in a lot of ways students are kind of inconsistently versed in technology, but I have met very few students that did not have a smartphone. In fact, teaching online I am aware that some of my students are taking my course on their smartphone.

Alex had a similar thought when the interview was discussing tutorial and learning object development. Alex stated, “[s]ome students only have a mobile device as their primary computer” and felt that the addition of mobile optimized tutorials would be beneficial to a community college student population.

As Jaime’s comments about discovering and accessing a tutorial would be easier for students if they were available on a platform students were familiar using. The same issue of discoverability and access was mentioned in regards to faculty members finding the content to incorporate into their courses.

Centralized content. Currently, the Suburban County Community College Library offers a range of digital learning objects and tutorials accessible on a variety of institutional platforms. This includes content design specifically in the library’s LibGuides platform, tutorials uploaded to YouTube, or content that is available to download from the institution’s website. Jessie discussed the importance of have a centralized place for enhanced tutorials, videos, and other content created using screen capturing software. The primary desire for a centralized location
for the digital learning objects created by the library was for all faculty teaching ENG 100: Composition I and/or ENG 112: English Composition II. As Jessie stated,

I know as much as we try to get information out there, I don’t know how many of our instructors, especially since our part-time population of instructors, is so vast. How many of them have this? Just the awareness that there are tutorials and things online and the use. I know in the classroom, I think I’m a little bit on the controlling side, in that I’m trying to do so much that the library is excellent reinforcement and backup.

This concern of knowing what educational content was available and how to discover and access the material was highlighted in each interview when the study participants discussed developing a relationship with their academic library.

Conclusion

This Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis research study sought to understand how English faculty members teach information literacy in fully-online courses. The selection of an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was to allowed each faculty member to communicate his or her experience teaching information literacy concepts in an online course. Based on the four interviews conducted in this study, four themes and seven subordinate themes emerged. These superordinate and subordinate themes worked towards addressing the central research question of this study, which is, how are community college faculty members teaching information literacy (as defined by the Association of College and Research Libraries), in their online courses? It is clear from the summary of findings that faculty members are integrating information literacy instruction into ENG 100: English Composition I and/or ENG 112: English Composition II. In the discussion of these findings the link between what is taught in these online courses will be connected to the Association of College and Research Libraries (2000)
Information literacy competency standards for higher education. The Association of College and Research Libraries (2000) standards have been identified as the central set of standards that address the needs set by the institution and regional accreditor.
Chapter Five: Discussion of Findings & Relevance to Practice

Introduction

This research study examines how community college English faculty members teach information literacy in their fully online ENG 100: English Composition I and ENG 112: English Composition II courses independent of any librarian-led instruction. While academic libraries provide a range of methods to teach information literacy that may include: course-integrated, credit-bearing, workshops, self-paced online tutorials, and through the creation of digital learning objects, the study sought to assess the effectiveness of the instruction in meeting the national standards set by the Association of College and Research Libraries (2000) when the library is not directly involved in or aware of the instruction.

What is noteworthy to this thesis is that after the original proposal was approved and the research study designed, and concurrent with the data collected, the Association of College and Research Libraries published in 2015 their new Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, replacing the Competency Standards (2000) used to inform this research. With, therefore, the benefit of the new Framework, this Chapter incorporates the new ACRL Frames (as they are referred to) (2015) into the analysis. Ultimately, through the analysis of these findings, implications for academic libraries and librarians are addressed to demonstrate how this research study informs current and future practice.

Changing Landscape of Information Literacy

At the time of this study, there have been significant changes locally, regionally, and nationally as it relates to information literacy standards and practices. During the inception of this research and continuing through the completion of this study, Suburban County Community College was working through the process of revising the institution’s academic learning goals,
which all graduating degree students are required to meet. One of the revised College Academic Learning Goals is information literacy. During the process to revise the College Academic Learning Goals, there was significant campus discussion regarding information literacy. These discussions took place over the course of a few years in full faculty meetings, divisions meetings, and key college-wide committee meetings, which resulted in the new College Academic Learning Goals.

In addition to the local evolution of understanding information literacy within the context of the general education curriculum, regionally, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (2014) revised their Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation. The revised document reduced the number of standards but also reduces the specificity of each standard. This resulted in the removal of the specific section on information literacy previously found in the 2006 standards (Middle States, 2006). Information literacy is now simply a term in a list of attributes and activities associated with Standard III, which focuses on the student learning experience (Middle States, 2014). In addition to the Middle States revisions, the Association of College and Research Libraries (2000) revised the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. The changes were being drafted at the implementation of this study and as this research moved through the approval process as determined by the requirements of the program. At the time this research received Institutional Review Board approval from the degree granting institution and the research site, the Association of College and Research Libraries approved the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education (2015). The Association of College and Research Libraries (2015) Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education is a departure from the previous Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education (2000). The timing of this
study with regards to the newly published Frames (2015) provides a unique opportunity to offer information on how current practices relate to this progressive approach to Information Literacy on a national scale.

The ACRL (2015) Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education offers a “flexible option for implementation, rather than on a set of standards, learning outcomes, or any prescriptive enumeration of skills” (p. 2). The Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education (ACRL, 2015) includes six frames:

- Authority is Constructed and Contextual
- Information Creation as a Process
- Information has Value
- Research as Inquiry
- Scholarship as Conversation
- Searching as Strategic Exploration

What is important to note regarding the Frames is the Association of College and Research Libraries and committee that produced this document noted that “[n]either the knowledge practice nor the disposition that support each concept are intended to prescribe what local institutions should do in using the Framework; each library and its partners on campus will need to deploy these frames to best fit their own situation, including designing learning outcomes” (ACRL, 2015).

While the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education was approved by the Association of College and Research Libraries during the course of this study, it is important to understand how the finding from this study maps to the newly approved Frames.
Table 5.1

Connections Between Research Study Themes and the ACRL Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superordinate Themes</th>
<th>Subordinate Themes</th>
<th>Connection to the ACRL Framework</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Community College English faculty members recognize an overarching definition of information literacy including components of the ACRL Standards (2000) and Framework (2015).</td>
<td>*Note on connection to the ACRL Framework: While each definition offered by the study participants addressed the overarching definition of information literacy, Scholarship as Conversation and Information has Value were only partially addressed. Scholarship as Conversation was viewed more as a writing competency and the portion of the definition related to Information has Value focused primarily on plagiarism.</td>
<td><strong>Authority is Constructed and Contextual:</strong> Information resources reflect their creators’ expertise and credibility, and are evaluated based on the information need and the context in which the information will be used. Authority is constructed in that various communities may recognize different types of authority. It is contextual in that the information needed may help to determine the level of authority required. <strong>Information Creation as a Process:</strong> Information in any format is produced to convey a message and is shared via a selected delivery method. The iterative process of researching, creating, revising, and disseminating information vary, and the resulting product reflects these differences. <strong>Information has Value:</strong> Information possesses several dimensions of value, including as a commodity, as a means of education, as a means to influence, and as a means of negotiating and understanding the world. Legal and socioeconomic interests influence information production and dissemination. <strong>Research as Inquiry:</strong> Research is iterative and depends upon asking increasingly complex or new questions whose answers in turn</td>
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</table>
2. English faculty members primarily define information literacy as finding, evaluating, and documenting the sources needed for students’ writing.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>2.1 Database searching</th>
<th>Searching as Strategic Exploration: Searching for information is often nonlinear and iterative, requiring the evaluation of a range of information sources and the mental flexibility to pursue alternate avenues as new understanding develops.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Evaluation of sources</td>
<td><strong>Authority is Constructed and Contextual:</strong> Information resources reflect their creators’ expertise and credibility, and are evaluated based on the information need and the context in which the information will be used. Authority is constructed in that various communities may recognize different types of authority. It is contextual in that the information need may help to determine the level of authority required.</td>
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<td><strong>Information Creation as a Process:</strong> Information in any format is produced to convey a message and is shared via a selected delivery method. The iterative process of...</td>
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<td><strong>2.3 Citations</strong></td>
<td>Information has Value: Information possesses several dimensions of value, including as a commodity, as a means of education, as a means to influence, and as a means of negotiating and understanding the world. Legal and socioeconomic interests influence information production and dissemination.</td>
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<td><strong>3. English faculty members use a mixture of personally-developed presentations and library-generated content to teach students in online courses how to find and evaluate information.</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.1 Database searching</strong> Searching as Strategic Exploration: Searching for information is often nonlinear and iterative, requiring the evaluation of a range of information sources and the mental flexibility to pursue alternate avenues as new understanding develops.</td>
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<td><strong>3.3 Online information</strong></td>
<td><strong>Authority is Constructed and</strong></td>
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researching, creating, revising, and disseminating information vary, and the resulting product reflects these differences.
Contextual: Information resources reflect their creators’ expertise and credibility, and are evaluated based on the information need and the context in which the information will be used. Authority is constructed in that various communities may recognize different types of authority. It is contextual in that the information need may help to determine the level of authority required.

Information Creation as a Process: Information in any format is produced to convey a message and is shared via a selected delivery method. The iterative process of researching, creating, revising, and disseminating information vary, and the resulting product reflects these differences.

Information has Value: Information possesses several dimensions of value, including as a commodity, as a means of education, as a means to influence, and as a means of negotiating and understanding the world. Legal and socioeconomic interests influence information production and dissemination.

Research as Inquiry: Research is iterative and depends upon asking increasingly complex or new questions whose answers in turn develop additional questions or lines of inquiry in any field.

Scholarship as Conversation: Communities of scholars, researchers, or professionals engage in sustained discourse with new insights and discoveries occurring
Over time as a result of varied perspectives and interpretations.

**Searching as Strategic Exploration:** Searching for information is often nonlinear and iterative, requiring the evaluation of a range of information sources and the mental flexibility to pursue alternate avenues as new understanding develops.

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<th>4.1 Tutorial development</th>
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<td>4.2 Centralized content</td>
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**Overview of Themes**

This research study utilizes an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis methodology with semi-structured interviews as the primary source of data (Larkin & Osborn, 2014; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2008). The interview data allowed the researcher to understand the lived experience of the faculty members teaching information literacy in an online class (Larkin & Osborn, 2014; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2008). The qualitative approach allowed for a deeper understanding of how information literacy concepts were perceived and ultimately covered in the faculty members’ courses and how these concepts were delivered (Larkin & Osborn, 2014; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2008). In answering the research question of how are community college faculty members teaching information literacy (as defined by the Association of College and Research Libraries), in their online course, four superordinate themes and eight subordinate themes emerged. These superordinate themes and subordinate themes are:

2. English faculty members primarily define information literacy as finding, evaluating, and documenting the sources needed for students’ writing. (2.1 Database searching, 2.2 Evaluation of sources, 2.3 Citations)

3. English faculty members use a mixture of personally-developed presentations and library-generated content to teach students in online courses how to find and evaluate information. (3.1 Database searching, 3.2 Evaluation of sources, 3.3 Online information literacy tutorial)

4. Although information literacy instruction often originates with English faculty members in the online classroom, there is a need for more content from the academic library. (4.1 Tutorial development, 4.2 Centralized content)

While not every research study participant stressed the superordinate themes and subordinate themes at the same level, these themes represent the general consensus among the interview data (See Table 4.1: Emergence of Themes Via Study Participants).

**Discussion of Themes**

The emergence of significant themes and their application to the field within this study is attributable to the study’s theoretical framework and analytical approach. The use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of this study’s results is essential to understanding how faculty members are teaching information literacy in an online course (Larkin & Osborn, 2014; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2008). This selected methodology guided the researcher in the selection of study participants, the collection of data, analysis of the
findings, and the interpretation of the lived experience of those participating in this study (Larkin & Osborn, 2014; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2008).

The use of Online Learning Theory as the theoretical framework for this study provides a lens to interpret and analyze the interview data and results (Ally, 2004; Dede, 2007). Through the lens of Online Learning Theory (Ally, 2004; Dede, 2007), the results of this study can produce a greater understanding of how community college faculty members teach information literacy online. Particularly, this lens allowed the researcher to understand how students learn in an online environment and how faculty members should design their class and teach content to ensure students succeed academically (Dede, 2007).

In analyzing the data from this study, the results are placed into the existing scholarly literature to gain a comprehensive understanding of information literacy education in a fully online environment. Primary to placing the study results into the context of existing scholarly literature is also placing the study findings into the context of the Association of College and Research Libraries Standards (2000) and Framework (2015). While the literature review for this study indicated a gap in the existing literature, specifically, a lack of qualitative understanding of how faculty members teach information literacy within their online classes absent a pronounced collaboration with their academic library, the study results are easily connected to the various literature streams.

Community College English faculty members recognize an overarching definition of information literacy including components of the ACRL Standards (2000) and Framework (2015). The finding from this study provides evidence of how English faculty members at a large community college define information literacy as it relates to their instruction. Of the four participants in this study, Alex was able to provide a definition that clearly connected to the
Association of College and Research Libraries’ (2000) Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. Alex’s definition has the standards component of the information literacy definition stated by the American Library Association (1989). Alex’s definition included “the ability of students to find, evaluate, and incorporate different types of research data effectively and also understand the, I suppose, ethical factors pertaining to the use and/or misuse of research data.” Broadly defined, the Association for College and Research Libraries (2000) Standards focus on the following key points of information literacy:

• determine the extent of information needed
• access the needed information effectively and efficiently
• evaluate information and its sources critically
• incorporate selected information into one’s knowledge base
• use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
• understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally (ACRL, 2000, p. 2-3)

Alex’s definition touches upon the ability of students to access the information they need to answer their research questions, evaluate the information they find, incorporate the found information into their knowledge base, use the information effectively as it applies to their assignment, and finally use the information in an ethical manner that addresses both legal, ethical, and social uses. Also closely related to the Association of College and Research Libraries (2000) Standards was Jessie, who stated that information literacy was

[t]he need to be able to perceive, to have that awareness that you need information first and foremost. Then, to be able to have that knowledge and the ability to go out and
locate that information. To be able to sift through the information and have the ability to analyze it to see what is most specific for your particular information needs.

Jessie’s definition added a key, missing component from Alex’s definition. That is the awareness of the information need. While Jessie added this key component of the information literacy definition, Jessie did not include a clear discussion of the ethical and legal use of information. The other study participants highlighted many of the aspects of the broad definition outlined by the Association of College and Research Libraries (2000); however, like Alex and Jessie, each definition was missing a key component of the standards defined by the Association of College and Research Libraries. What the interviews demonstrate was that while these definition components include the central elements of the national standards, they did not include all of the elements a librarians would expect.

Similarly, when placing the definitions offered by the study participants into the context of the new, revised Association of College and Research Libraries (2015) Frames, the definitions do not include all the specific knowledge practices as outlined. While each definition offered by the study participants addressed the overarching definition of information literacy, Scholarship as Conversation and Information has Value were only partially addressed. Scholarship as Conversation was beheld by the participants as more of a writing competency and the portion of the definition offered by the study participants related to Information has Value focused primarily on plagiarism. The study participant’s uneven attentiveness to specific portions of the ACRL’s Standards (2000) and Frames (2015) may demonstrate that the English faculty members view many of the standards set by the Association of College and Research Libraries as explicitly and exclusively related to the writing process and not necessarily related to broader research skills or information literacy as an intrinsic value (Council of Writing Program
Another key element missing from several of the definitions offered by the research study participants was the understanding by students that they have an information need (ACRL, 2000). For the study participants, this was a critical area for the writing process (CWPA, NCTE, & NWP, 2011) and not the research process. The writing faculty members that participated in this study discussed the development of a thesis statement and how that thesis statement would inform the research process. While a thesis statement is a direct outcome of Standard One, “determine the extent of information needed” (ACRL, 2000) and Frame Four, Research as Inquiry (ACRL, 2015), as developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries, the faculty members participating in this study did not see the direct link between developing a thesis statement and the research process, as well as, the development of information literacy skills and knowledge. This is an area where direct collaboration between librarians and faculty members is needed to bring together this element of the research process to address the not only the writing, but also the research needs of students.

Another missing element from some of the definitions was a more thorough link to Standard Five offered by the Association of College and Research Libraries (2000), which focus on “the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information” (ACRL, 2000) as well as, Frame Three, “Information Has Value” (ACRL, 2015). The faculty members that participated in the study focus their definition on the legal aspects of the use of information but did not address the economic and social issues. This is an often-overlooked area of information literacy; however, with technology making the dissemination of information easier, the need to understand privacy, security, intellectual property, the cost to access information, and censorship
as they pertain to the free exchange of ideas is essential. To ensure these topics are covered in their entirety, a greater collaboration between English faculty members and librarians may be needed. Sult and Mills (2005) describe an effective collaboration between English faculty members and librarians to successfully integrate information literacy into the English composition curriculum. While information literacy exists as a component within the courses at the center of this study, ENG 100 is primarily a writing course and ENG 112 is an introduction to literature. Information Literacy Standards (ACRL, 2000) and Frames (ACRL, 2015), while present in the courses in some regard, may not be taught in their entirety due to the fact that certain components of the standards are not a good fit for the class. As Gullikson (2006) noted, “when faced with the large number of outcomes it is often difficult to simply prioritize what should be taught and when” (p. 591). This appears to be the case with ENG 100: English Composition I and ENG 112: English Composition II.

Overall, while elements of the Association of College and Research Libraries (2000) Standards and new Frames (2015) were missing from the formal definitions that some of the participants offered as part of this study, many of their components were found in the superordinate themes that emerged from the interviews. These themes can reassure academic libraries and librarians that English faculty members are generally aware of the goals of Information literacy instruction.

Concurrently, when examining these results through the lens of Online Learning Theory (Ally, 2004; Dede, 2007), the simplified definition of information literacy provided by the study participants may also serve as a predicate to a disparity on how information literacy is being taught in the online classroom. Approaching information literacy exclusively as an element in the writing process (CWPA, NCTE, & NWP, 2011) and not in a broader context may explain
why study participants provided a more Behaviorist approach to teaching these concepts as opposed to Cognitive and/or Constructivist (Ally, 2004; Dede, 2007, Mayes, 2006). Through the use of Online Learning Theory (Ally, 2004; Dede, 2007), these information literacy definitions can provide valuable insight into how English faculty members approach the teaching of information literacy in the online classroom.

**English faculty members primarily define information literacy as finding, evaluating, and documenting the sources needed for students’ writing.** While understanding how faculty members define information literacy, what is truly important is understanding which information literacy concepts they teach in their online classes. Within this superordinate theme were three subordinate themes related to information literacy. Within the comments that the participants made regarding their instructional topics was how the information literacy skills they focused on all related back to the writing process. This idea that the writing and research process are linked was central to how these participants approached teaching information literacy. What was clear from the interview data was how each participant connected database searching directly to information literacy. This connection clearly reflects Standard Two, access the needed information effectively and efficiently (ACRL, 2000). Specifically, comments made by the faculty members participating in this study directly relate to the third outcome of this Standard which is the ability of an “information literate student [to] retrieve information online or in person using a variety of methods” (p. 10).

Conversely, when looking at the new Association of College and Research Libraries (2015) Frame Six, Searching as Strategic Exploration, the goal of finding information extends even further by stating that, “searching for information is often nonlinear and iterative, requiring the evaluation of a range of information sources and the mental flexibility to pursue alternate
avenues as new understanding develops” (ACRL, 2015). This Framework insists that the information literate student to go further and not just focus on the efficiency of database searching, but also utilizing the information obtained as a means of learning. For the faculty members in this study, the focus was primarily on the functional use of the library’s subscription databases.

Some of the participants discussed the difference between free Internet resources and the subscription-based resources offered by the library. Alex discussed integrating an assignment into his course that required students to first use free Internet resources and as the course continues move toward subscription-based database resources. The focus on database resources was through a more Behaviorist approach of task-oriented teaching methods and specifically focused on how to find the information needed to support the argument being made in the writing assignment (Ally, 2004; Dede, 2007; Mayes, 2006). Study participants did not discuss methods of teaching that allowed students to develop and/or critically justify a search or research strategy. Uniquely, Jaime discussed teaching students keyword searching and the use of Boolean operators, however, the other study participants did not address these search strategy issues. As McGuinness (2006) notes, “the faculty’s apparent dependence on coursework assignment as a vehicle for information literacy” is problematic (p. 580). It was clear from the data that all study participants utilize this assignment-based approach when teaching database searching and did not include a more holistic approach that addresses the development of a viable research strategy, which may or may not employ Cognitive and/or Constructivist approaches.

What all study participants focused on when discussing information literacy concepts important to the course content was the need for students to evaluate the information that they use to support their writing. Jaime discussed the need for students to understand the different
types of information that is available to students. Dylan discussed the need for students to determine if a source is credible. Jessie discussed the need for both faculty members and librarians to serve as a guide for students when evaluating sources. This directly relates to Standard (ACRL, 2000) Three, evaluate information and its sources critically, developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries and Frames (2015) One and Two, Authority is Constructed and Contextual and Information Creation as a Process. Each participant discussed how they teach students to evaluate, not only the source to ensure it is appropriate for their writing, but also how the students can incorporate this information into their writing and knowledge-base. The reason the faculty members focused on this particular standard as an instruction topic, was because how important this information literacy skill was to the writing process. The need to understand how the source integrates into a writing assignment is an essential skill for any ENG 100: English Composition student according to the interview data. The faculty members’ embrace of this concept shows promise to the broader breath of the updated Frames (ACRL, 2015).

With both the ENG 100: English Composition I and ENG 112: English Composition II courses, the faculty stressed the need to teach students how to cite the sources they find through the libraries subscription databases. While three of the study participants discussed the need to teach proper MLA citation style to document the sources used, Dylan noted that it was more about the reader of the work finding the source and not necessarily about proper punctuation. While the documentation of sources relates to the Fifth Standard (2000) developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries and Frame (2015) Information has Value (ACRL, 2015), this is only a single component of a larger Standard and Frame. This Standard specifically examines “the economic, legal, and social information surrounding the use of
information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally” (ACRL, 2000) which is similar to the Frame. Likewise, the Frame (ACRL, 2015) notes the importance to understand the “socioeconomic interests [that] influence information production and dissemination” (p. 7).

Faculty members teaching composition courses should understand the idea of ownership as the Framework For Success in Postsecondary Writing (CWPA, NCTE, & NWP, 2011), discusses this idea. For faculty members teaching composition, understanding the production and dissemination of information is an important concept for them professionally but also for their students. This connection between the different Standards (ACRL, 2000) and Frameworks (ACRL, 2015; CWPA, NCTE, & NWP, 2011) can inform how this important information literacy concept is taught in the online classroom.

While understanding how faculty members define information literacy and identifying the relevant instructional topics informs how English faculty members are approaching information literacy in their online courses, the study must also explore the superordinate theme of pedagogical strategies and implementation. This will provide valuable insight and vital information necessary to answer this study’s research question.

**English faculty members use a mixture of personally-developed presentations and library-generated content to teach students in online courses how to find and evaluate information.** According to the data collected in this study, it is clear that while the pedagogical strategies that English faculty members use to teach information literacy may work to meet some of the Standards (ACRL, 2000) and Frames (ACRL, 2015) as developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries, the concepts that are taught do not adequately address all of the Standards (2000) or components of the Frames (2015). The primary focus of the faculty members that participated in this study was how teaching information literacy can help students
achieve the ultimate goal of either course, which is to continue to develop as a writer. The study participants described several pedagogical methods evaluating both their benefits and difficulties utilized to reach this end.

When teaching database searching, the participants in this study discuss the difficulty of translating what they had done in the physical classroom to teach these skills into the online environment. Online Learning Theory (Ally, 2004; Dede, 2007) provides faculty members with an understanding of how educational content should be designed in an online environment to ensure student academic success. The integrated approach of using Behaviorism, Cognitivist, and Constructivist approaches (Ally 2004; Dede, 2007; Mayes, 2006) ensures that each task that is created in the online learning environment is properly developed to ensure adequate learning is taking place. Conversely, each study participant discussed taking existing presentations that were used in a face-to-face class and uploading those presentations into the learning management system for use of the online students. Alex discussed embedding the instructional content of accessing databases into the assignment directions. Dylan and Jaime discussed using PowerPoint presentations with screenshots that look at database searching from a Behaviorist perspective. The data from this study demonstrates that faculty members are having trouble teaching this concept to students beyond the very basic concepts of navigating the library’s website and clicking on the appropriate links. For the faculty members in this study, and for this specific goal, the online environment and the approach of adapting instructional strategies previously utilized within face-to-face courses, proves to be the challenge. Jessie noted that in a face-to-face class, it is easier to demonstrate database searching as the students are in the room and can ask specific questions throughout the demonstration. This is a similar concern that the faculty who participated in the study discussed in relation to the evaluation of sources.
Evaluation of sources was the most challenging information literacy concept that each study participant identified when discussing information literacy instruction. While much of the evaluation process centers on the integration of information into a student’s writing, the pedagogical strategy to develop this competency was accomplished in the online classroom through pre-writing assignments (i.e. developing a thesis statement) and drafting which can more effectively integrate Online Learning Theory’s use of Behaviorist, Cognitivist, and Constructivist methodologies (Ally 2004; Dede, 2007; Mayes, 2006). The study data shows that while faculty members value this information literacy concept, the online environment makes it difficult to effectively teach this concept. All four participants discussed the rising need of one-on-one student conferences to more effectively work with students. Dylan offered ways to replicate this process in the online environment through the use of synchronous communication methods. While web conferencing software is available at Suburban County Community College, the primary method was through the use of telephone conversations. The primary use of the telephone to “meet” with students may be attributed to the learning management system at Suburban County Community College, which, after evaluation by the researcher, showed a limited functionality with synchronous conferencing tools. Some of the participants in this study also noted that they utilize pre-fabricated handouts created by the library that they uploaded into the learning management system to help teach this concept.

When looking at how information literacy concepts are taught in an online class, the faculty members discussed the important role the library plays in developing instructional content. For many of the information literacy topics taught in these two courses, faculty members relied heavily on the online, self-paced information literacy tutorial developed by the library at Suburban County Community College. This tutorial offered six modules that were
developed to directly connect to the Association of College and Research Libraries (2000) Standards. Dylan stated, “I don’t know what I would have done if that wasn’t open to me.” Along those lines, Jaime stated, “I lean very heavily on the information literacy tutorial.” Alex equated the information literacy tutorial to the course-integrated information literacy classes the library offers. As the research has shown, faculty members in online courses typically do rely heavily on information literacy tutorials (Cook, 2002; Daugherty & Russo, 2007; Gonzales, 2001). While addressing many of the ACRL Standards, it is important to note that this tutorial is not designed as a self-paced course and does not address all of the learning outcomes. Instead, this tutorial offers students a general introduction to information literacy concepts and demonstrates how to move through the research process in an efficient way and is not designed to be the primary source of instruction on the topic. At the institutional level, this tutorial was designed with learning outcomes associated with a general understanding of information literacy. For a college-level course that integrates information literacy into the course description and learning outcomes, this tutorial is intended to be just one component of a larger instructional strategy.

While this study focuses on faculty members teaching information literacy without the assistance of a librarian as one would find in the traditional classroom through a course-integrated information literacy instructional session, it is clear through the results of this study that the library has a significant role in developing information literacy instructional materials in the online environment. Throughout this study, the interview data demonstrates that faculty members are utilizing many of the library’s digital and analog learning objects to deliver instruction. Ultimately, this study reinforces what Wassenich (2007) found at Austin Community College with regard to the central role of the tutorial. As Buck, Islam, and Syrkin
(2006) found, teaching faculty members and librarians need to work together to determine each group’s appropriate role in the instructional process. The relationship of the academic library with teaching faculty in the instructional process centers on academic libraries developing tools to deliver library-specific content.

**Although information literacy instruction often originates with English faculty members in the online classroom, there is a need for more content from the academic library.** Traditional information literacy has found a disciplinary home in academic libraries as they have worked to integrate information literacy into the college curriculum (Wright, 2000). The interview data shows a dichotomy between faculty members viewing their academic library as a supplement or backup to the primary information literacy instruction that occurs in the classroom, whether online or face-to-face. This is at the same time that each study participant noted the importance of the library producing digital learning objects that they could integrate into their online course. These digital learning objects serve as the primary instructional content related to information literacy. The online, self-paced tutorial that was highlighted as part of this study is one of many digital learning objects that the library produces to support faculty in teaching information literacy education at Suburban County Community College. Currently, Suburban County Community College offers traditional handouts either in paper or electronically, short, video tutorials that focus on discrete information literacy skills and tasks, subject guides to connect users with relevant resources based on the subject area, online, synchronous workshops that address single information literacy skills or task, embedded librarians directly into online courses, and the online, self-paced tutorial. This is supported in the literature (Cook, 2002; Daugherty & Russo, 2007, Dewald, Scholz-Crane, Booth & Levine, 2000; Hemming & Montet, 2010, Nichols, Shaffer & Shockey, 2003) as libraries continue to
develop instructional material in a range of modalities for faculty member use. Alex noted the importance to move beyond the general online, self-paced information literacy tutorial and to increase the academic rigor. In addition to increasing the academic rigor of the tutorial, Alex suggested expanding the assessment elements to understand what students are learning and where they could improve. Given that Wassenich (2007) found that an online tutorial has positive impacts on student learning of information literacy, the need for academic libraries to increase the rigor of any digital learning objects created is supported by the literature. Both the existing literature, as well as, information provided by the research participants suggest that Academic libraries have an opportunity to incorporate the Association of College and Research Libraries (2015) Frames as the template and create a fully online, modular, self-paced tutorial that would comprehensively address each information literacy concept. As the Frames (ACRL, 2015) noted, they are not prescriptive but can be applied to each institution’s specific needs. The results of this study support a single, stand-alone tutorial that deliver what amounts to a single course in modular form and incorporate the guidelines of Online Learning Theory (Ally, 2004; Dede, 2007) via a variety of instructional strategies. Specifically, the tutorial could be developed to included Behaviorism, Cognitism, and Construtivism components in its design (Ally, 2004; Dede, 2007; Mayes, 2006). This model would allow faculty members to select and choose the modules that they want to integrate into their classes as they fit within the broader context of their overall course design.

While the development of a more robust and complete tutorial is recommended with enhanced assessment activities, the study participants also noted the importance of making that content easily accessible. Jaime noted that many of the digital objects that the research study’s institutional library produced were not easily accessible by students and suggested making the
content available through websites students already use such as YouTube. The suggestion is that if students were unable to access the content, faculty members would be less likely to integrate the content into their online classrooms.

Continuing this idea of ease of access, some of the research study participants noted the importance of designing specific digital learning objects specifically for mobile devices. Interesting data from this study suggests that students in fully online courses at community colleges are completing their coursework entirely or in part utilizing mobile devices. This would require academic libraries to develop digital learning objects that either utilize responsive web design or are specifically developed for mobile devices.

While the academic library associated with the research site created a range of digital learning objects, the faculty members participating in this study focused almost exclusively on the online, self-pace tutorial. The other digital learning objects were either too difficult to access or unknown to the faculty member. When considering accessibility, an academic library can address this issue by centralizing their digital learning objects using an institutional repository or a single YouTube channel.

In examining the four superordinate themes associated with this study and placing the interview data into the existing scholarly literature, there are a number of implications for academic libraries working to develop not only online instructional material, but also to support faculty-delivered information literacy instruction.

**Placing the Data in the Context of Online Learning Theory**

When examining the interview data through the theoretical lens of Online Learning Theory, it becomes apparent that many of the information literacy concepts are taught from a Behaviorist school of learning while only showing nods to Cognitive or Constructivist
methodologies that would allow for long-term or higher-level development of information literacy skills (Ally, 2004; Dede, 2007; Mayes, 2006). Initially, the disparity of teaching of methods becomes clear while the study participants are relaying their definition for information literacy. Several faculty members referred to information literacy and its related standards as an integral part of the writing process. They clearly stated that the development of these specific skills were integral to the success of the student’s writing, which would support the Behaviorist approach of teaching students that allow the recall of facts or in this case, skills, to achieve a certain outcome, writing (Dede, 2007). The definition provided by faculty members omit the opportunity for students to place the skills being taught within their course into a greater context of research to be applied in a more global sense through a more Cognitive and/or Constructivist approach (Ally, 2004, Dede, 2007, Mayes, 2006, Miller, 2002; Wink & Putney, 2002). As one would expect, this disparity is demonstrated consistently as the study participants go on to describe their teaching methods. When looking specifically at the manner in which databases are taught in the online environment, the faculty members that participated in this study discussed taking students through the steps to access the databases. As Dede (2007) would argue, this is a basic technique of conditioning students to recall the steps associated with finding the links to the databases. This does not require students to understand the more complex issues of selecting the right databases based on their research question. Students are not asked to make connections between their personal experiences as searchers or integrate the information into their knowledge base (Ally, 2004; Mayes, 2006). The faculty members in this study have the ability to integrate a more complete approach to learning in the online environment by allowing students to make the connection between academic research and the daily searching they conduct with free Internet search engines like Google (Ally, 2004; Davidson-Shiver & Rasmussen, 2006). Students would
be able to assign more meaning to the searching process and build on their existing knowledge base with a more complete approach. This would allow students to take this new information that they learned and move it to the long-term memory to fully integrate it into their knowledge base (Ally, 2004).

The approach to teaching students how to search databases differs from the approach the faculty in this study used to teaching the evaluation of sources. Here the faculty members specifically noted the need for students to take the behavioral tasks of evaluating the sources they found using basic, library-created handouts and fully integrate the learned approach of evaluation into their knowledge base, which requires instruction designed by the Cognitive school of learning (Ally, 2004). What was interesting in the data of how faculty members teaching evaluation of sources was the missing Constructivist approach where a connection is made to the previous personal experience of the student to form a greater meaning to the material (Ally, 2004; Davidson-Shivers & Rasmussen, 2006).

The faculty members that participated in this study also focused on the teaching of citation styles, particularly MLA. This topic lends itself to the Behaviorism school of learning, as students at the first-year level need to understand the basic formatting for citations. This Behaviorist approach would have students learn what components are required for a citation and the order they should appear in the citation (Ally, 2004). Students would not have to understand the broader points of how each component of a citation connects. While this approach works well for this topic, faculty members could improve student learning and address the American College and Research Libraries Standards (2000) and Frames (2015) more fully by taking a Cognitive and Constructivist approach to the this topic. Designing their instruction specifically to how students learn in the online environment, faculty members can ensure that the students in
their fully online courses are not only understanding the material that is presented to them but also are able to incorporate this information into the long-term memory and knowledge base (Ally, 2004; Dede, 2007)

**Implications for Practice**

This study demonstrates that while faculty members are teaching information literacy independently in online sections of ENG 100: English Composition I and ENG 112: English Composition II, there is still a place for the academic library in providing the educational content. Underlying the comments in all four interviews was the acknowledgement that the research and writing process are linked together and that the academic library was still the disciplinary home for information literacy education, but in several cases, was not viewed as the primary home for information literacy instruction. While the disciplinary home is still the academic library, as Jaime noted, information literacy instruction needs to happen both in the classroom – either in-person or online – and outside the classroom. Jessie took these comments further by indicating that the academic library was there to reinforce and backup the instruction provided by the faculty member in the online classroom. Moving forward, a strong and consistent partnership between academic libraries and identified course faculty will serve to determine what content is needed for information literacy education.

The findings from this study provide academic libraries with information they can use to improve existing and develop new online instructional content. What the data from this study demonstrated was that the faculty members that participated did not utilize the many short, video tutorials but preferred a single source of instructional material, which, both the literature, as well as the study participants agreed as taking the shape of an online, self-paced tutorial. Based on local needs and institutional goals, academic libraries have an exceptional opportunity to utilize
the data provided within this study to develop modular, self-paced, online tutorial(s) that address the range of learning outcomes identified by the newly published Association of College and Research Libraries (2015) Information Literacy Framework for Higher Education to guarantee that new instructional content not only addresses the new national standards, but also the themes identified within this study. Academic librarians who are versed in Online Learning Theory (Ally, 2004; Dede, 2007; Mayes, 2006) and best practices in online education can ensure the instructional materials they create provide the best opportunity for higher levels of student learning in the online environment. Based on the preference of the study participants, academic libraries have a prospect to develop more academically rigorous content that engage students at the general education level. As identified by the study participants, academic librarians should explore the feasibility of utilizing responsive web design within this tutorial to ensure those students using mobile devices can readily access its content.

The faculty members that participated in this study were interested in content that is also easily assessed. The research site’s institutional focus on assessment and the need to demonstrate student learning necessitate this. The study participants noted that these assessment activities should integrate into the institution’s learning management system to increase the ease of use for faculty members.

For academic libraries, it is important to understand that while faculty members are teaching information literacy without the traditional input of their academic library, it does not mean that they are not utilizing library created instructional content. This requires that academic libraries continue outreach efforts to make sure faculty members are not only aware of the online instructional content that is available, but also develop procedures to track the usage of digital learning objects. Locally, an investment in analytical tools will demonstrate the reach of the
instructional content created. Regardless of the size and scope of these digital learning objects that are created, it is essential that any content intended for student or faculty use is centrally located in a repository that is easily accessible by both. This could be an existing institutional repository or through a third-party platform like YouTube.

Limitations

With the significant discussion locally, regionally, and nationally related to information literacy, the increased conversation on this topic created increased attention to information literacy at Suburban County Community College. As Butin (2010) states, “researchers have long noted something called the “response effect bias,” where people will tell interviewers what they want to hear” (p. 97). While it is possible that the study participants had been generally familiar with the Association of College and Research Libraries (2000) Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education, this group of faculty may have been specifically acquainted with these standards as the research site recently approved information literacy as a College Academic Learning Goal. To meet the new Information Literacy College Academic Learning Goal, English faculty members worked closely with the library to ensure that ENG 100: English Composition I would meet the learning goal. This required a number of meetings with many English faculty members both prior to the study interviews and that continued beyond the study’s conclusion.

At the same time that Suburban County Community College was developing and approving this new Information Literacy College Academic Learning Goal, Middle States Commission of Higher Education (2014) revised their Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation. As part of this effort, Middle States revised and reduced the number of standards, which resulted in information literacy being removed from the document.
After town hall meetings and a vocal opposition to information literacy not appear in the document, Middle States has included this term in the revised standards (Evans, 2014).

This increased attention may have placed information literacy to the center of faculty thinking and unduly influenced their knowledge and understanding of this topic resulting in a false sense of how faculty members define information literacy.

Another limitation of this research study is the ability to generalize the results across all institutional classifications of higher education as this study utilized an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis approach. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis uses purposeful sampling of a small population. As the study participants are from a single department at a community college with varying levels of experience teaching information literacy in an online environment, it is difficult to extrapolate the study results to other institution types and disciplinary departments.

**Implications for Future Research**

While this study was conducted during at time of great change with information literacy standards in higher education, the results of this study have implications for future research. More research is needed to understand how information literacy is taught in the online environment. This will need researchers to think beyond tools and tutorials but how course content is designed specifically in the online environment. What this study showed was many of the faculty were repurposing content for the traditional classroom and uploading it into the online classroom. This does not address the three schools of learning identified in Online Learning Theory, which looks at how content is design for the online environment.

As academic libraries and institutions implement the recently published Information Literacy Frames (ACRL, 2015), researchers should examine how these Frames are being adapted
within the local context and how faculty members are interpreting these Frames in relation to their course material and instruction. When comparing the Frames (ACRL, 2015) to the Standards (ACRL, 2000) developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries, there is a significant difference in the language used and how it can be interpreted outside of the library and information science profession.

Since this study reveals the level of importance that faculty members place on digital learning objects, additional research is needed to focus on their design and implementation. Specifically, research should continue to examine the instructional design principles used in developing these tools, how faculty members use them as part of their online courses, and how students access the content.

Ultimately, as online learning continues to grow, academic libraries need to understand the lived experience of faculty members teaching information literacy in this context to ensure the full range of learning outcomes are met.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to gain a better understanding of how English faculty members integrate information literacy concepts into their online ENG 100: English Composition I and ENG 112: English Composition II courses. As the research shows, technology has made information readily available to anyone who is interested in finding it. While there is now an abundance of information available to anyone interested in conducting research, missing from this is the education of students on how to know what they need to research, how to effectively search for information, the critical thinking skills to evaluate the information they find, and the ability to not only integrate research into their writing but to do so in a legal and ethical manner. This study selected English faculty members because two of the general education, gateway
courses taught in that department specifically mentioned information literacy as a course competency. As Sult and Mills (2005) state, there is a natural link between information literacy and the content taught in a college-level composition course.

Through this study’s interview data, the study participants described what information literacy concepts they taught, their pedagogical approaches, and their perceived relationship with their library as they pertain to their online courses. The researcher then placed this data into the context of Online Learning Theory and the changing landscape of information literacy on the local, regional, and national levels. What this study found is that English faculty members consider database searching, evaluation of sources, and citations as essential to meeting the information literacy competency of their course insomuch as the competency directly affects their students’ ability to become effective writers. It is clear that English faculty members in the community college setting either find it difficult to effectively teach many of the information literacy concepts they identify as essential for students to conduct college level research within the online environment or find it easier to rely on library created resources. While not directly including the library in their instruction, all of the faculty members in this study utilized library-created content for instruction. The findings indicate that the development of robust and academically rigorous online tutorials that utilize best practices in online education and are readily available to both faculty and students is essential to ensure students are meeting the information literacy standards set by institutions and by the Association of College and Research Libraries new Frames (2015) It is also essential that today’s students know how to navigate and utilize resources in today’s information-dependent world.
Epilogue

For the researcher, this has already led to the revision and transition of the existing online, self-paced tutorial to a new learning platform with a design guided by Online Learning Theory that also allows for easy integration into the learning management system and the development of module-based assessments. During the revision process, the goal is to expand the existing six modules and increase the academic rigor of the content. This study also demonstrated for the researcher the importance of continuous communication with selected faculty members to continue to understand their lived experience teaching information literacy in ENG 100: English Composition I and ENG 112: English Composition II.

The researcher is also in the process of centralizing the current range of digital learning objects to ensure access to the content is findable for interested faculty. This central location will be clearly communicated with identified faculty members through the use of newsletters, flyers, and emails at the start, mid-point, and end of the semester. The expectation is for faculty to be better informed of the content that is available through the library and more fully meet the Association of College and Research Libraries (2000) Information Literacy Standards and ultimately the Frameworks (2015) within their classroom.
References


Bury, S. (2011). Faculty attitudes, perceptions and experiences of information literacy: A study across multiple disciplines at York University, Canada. *Journal of Information Literacy, 5*(1), 45-64. doi: 10.11645/5.1.1513


Nichols, J., Shaffer, B., & Shockey, K. (2003). Changing the face of instruction: Is online or in-class more effective?. *College and Research Libraries 64*(5), 378-388. doi: 10.5860/crl.64.5.378


SCCC Library Faculty Librarians. (2004). *Suburban County Community College information literacy plan*. Media, PA: Suburban County Community College.


Appendix A: Northeastern University IRB Approval

NOTIFICATION OF IRB ACTION

Date: February 23, 2015
IRB #: CPS15-01-11
Principal Investigator(s): Leslie Hitch
Michael LaMagna
Department: Doctor of Education Program
College of Professional Studies
Address: 20 Belvidere
Northeastern University
Title of Project: Exploring How English Faculty Members are Teaching
Information Literacy to Online Community College Students: An Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis
Participating Sites: Community College approval forthcoming
DHHS Review Category: Expedited #6, #7
Informed Consents: One (1) signed consent form
Monitoring Interval: 12 months

APPROVAL EXPIRATION DATE: FEBRUARY 22, 2016

Investigator’s Responsibilities:
1. The informed consent form bearing the IRB approval stamp must be used when
recruiting participants into the study.
2. The investigator must notify IRB immediately of unexpected adverse reactions, or new
information that may alter our perception of the benefit-risk ratio.
3. Study procedures and files are subject to audit any time.
4. Any modifications of the protocol or the informed consent as the study progresses must
be reviewed and approved by this committee prior to being instituted.
5. Continuing Review Approval for the proposal should be requested at least one month
prior to the expiration date above.
6. This approval applies to the protection of human subjects only. It does not apply to any
other university approvals that may be necessary.

C. Randall Cole
C. Randall Colvin, Ph.D., Chair
Northeastern University Institutional Review Board

Nan C. Regina, Director
Human Subject Research Protection

Northeastern University FWA #4630
March 11, 2015

Michael LaMagna,
Northeastern University

Dear Michael,

As part of our institutional practice of accepting approved studies from universities with federal-wide assurance (FWA), we hereby grant you authorization to conduct your study “Exploring how English Faculty Members are Teaching Information Literacy to Online Community College Students: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis” which was approved by Northeastern University (FWA00004630) on February 23, 2015. This approval is valid for 6 months as of the date stated above; the condition for this approval is that the Institution name remains anonymous.

If there are any changes to your IRB status, please inform the Office of Institutional Effectiveness immediately.

Sincerely,

Chris Tokpah, Ph.D.
Associate Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness
Chairman of IRB
Appendix C: Recruitment Letter

Doctoral Thesis Title: Exploring How English Faculty Members are Teaching Information Literacy to Online Community College Students: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Dear [insert potential research participant’s name],

As you are aware, I am a faculty librarian with responsibilities for the library’s information literacy program and library services for distance learners. In addition to my professional responsibilities at [insert name of institution], I am a doctoral candidate in Northeastern University’s College of Professional Studies pursuing an Ed.D. in Higher Education Administration. In partial fulfillment of my doctoral degree, I am conducting a research study that examines how English faculty members are teaching information literacy to online community college students.

I am writing to ask you to contribute to my study by participating in an interview. If you decide to participate, I will schedule an interview at a mutually agreed upon time and place or through a web conferencing program (GoToMeeting). The interview will last approximately 45 minutes. As this study is utilizing an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis, the interview will be semi-structured. I will ask for you permission to record the interview. The recording will be transcribed by a third-party transcription service. Once the transcript is received and approved, I will request that the third-party transcription service delete the audio file they sent. All identifying information, including your name will be removed from the transcript and you will be assigned a gender-neutral pseudonym. Your participation in this study will be confidential.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. There is no foreseeable risk or discomfort associated with your participation in this study.

There is no compensation or remuneration for participating in this study.

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact me at [insert email address] or my thesis advisor, Dr. Leslie Hitch, at lhitch@neu.edu.

If you are interested in participating in this research study, please contact me either by email at [insert email address] or by phone at [insert phone number] to schedule an interview time.

I look forward to hearing from you and hope you will participate in my doctoral thesis research.

Best regards,

Michael LaMagna
Appendix D: Letter of Consent

Northeastern University
Human Subject Research Protection

Informed Consent Document
Northeastern University
College of Professional Studies

Name of Investigators: Dr. Leslie Hitch, Principal Investigator, Michael LaMagna, Student Researcher

Doctoral Thesis Title: Exploring How English Faculty Members are Teaching Information Literacy to Online Community College Students: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

You are invited to participate in a research study. While you have already received a verbal statement about this research study, this form will reinforce the information you were already provided. You may ask the researcher any questions that you have about this study or the interview process. You are not required to participate in this study. If you decide to participate, the researcher will ask you to sign this statement and will provide you with a copy for your records.

The purpose of this research is to understand how English faculty members are teaching information literacy in their online courses to community college students. This study will utilize an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis as a means to understand a faculty member’s personal experience teaching information literacy. This research will benefit academic libraries as they continue to develop and expand their information literacy programs.

You are asked to participate in this study because you are an English faculty member that recently taught either ENG 100: English Composition I or ENG 112: English Composition II as a fully online course.

If you decide to take part in this research study, you will be asked to participate in an approximately 45 minute interview. This interview will take place at a location of your choosing or through web conferencing software (GoToMeeting). Only the student researcher, Michael LaMagna, will be involved in conducting the interview.

To ensure an accurate record of what is communicated during the interview, the researcher requests your permission to record the conversation. The researcher will use both a password-protected personal computer with a password-protected smartphone used as a backup to record the interview. The researcher will utilize a transcription service to transcribe the interview. The researcher will request that the third-party transcription service delete the sent audio files once the completed and approved transcripts are received. In addition, the researcher will delete the audio files on his personal computer and smartphone at the same time.

All identifying information, including your name will be removed from the transcript. You will be assigned a gender-neutral pseudonym which will appear in the transcript and all published documents.

There is no foreseeable risk or discomfort associated with your participation in this study. Your participation in this study will be confidential. Only the researcher on this study will see personal information about you. The doctoral thesis and any future publications will not use any information that can be used to identify you.

There are no direct benefits to you for participating. However, potential benefits of this research include providing evidence of how faculty members are teaching information literacy concepts to online students. It will provide a foundation of understanding as to how the information literacy concepts taught by online faculty members meet the existing Association of College and Research Libraries standards. Ultimately, the benefit of this study will inform how academic librarians at institutions of higher education, specifically community colleges, can partner with online faculty members to provide necessary resources, professional development, or direct information literacy instruction to improve the overall quality of information literacy within distance education.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You do not have to participate if you do not want to and you can refuse to answer any questions. Even if you begin the study, you may quit at any time.

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Michael LaMagna at the person mainly responsible for this research or Dr. Leslie Hitch at l.hitch@neu.edu, the Principal Investigator.
If you have any questions about your rights in this research, you may contact Nan C. Regina, Director, Human Subject Research Protection, 960 Renaissance Park, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115, by telephone at (617) 373-4588, or by email at n.regina@neu.edu. You may call anonymously if you wish.

I agree to participate in this research study.

Signature of interviewee agreeing to participate

Date

Printed name of person above

Signature of researcher who explained the study to the participant above and obtained consent

Date

Printed name of person above

Northeastern University - Human Subject Research Protection
Rev. 3/08/2014
Appendix E: Interview Procedures/Questions

Interview Protocol
Northeastern University
College of Professional Studies

Doctoral Thesis Title: Exploring How English Faculty Members are Teaching Information Literacy to Online Community College Students: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Name of Interviewer: Michael LaMagna, Student Researcher

Interviewee: ____________________________

Time of Interview: __________________________________

Date of Interview: __________________________________

Location of Interview: _______________________________

Introduction/Description of the Research Study
A. Purpose of the study

B. Data Collection Process

C. Explanation of what will be done with the data to protect the confidentiality of the participant

D. Describe the interview process including how long the interview will last

E. Answer any questions from the interviewee

(Turn on recording devices)

Interview Questions

Interviewee Background:
1. How long have you been teaching English at the college level?

2. What made you decide to pursue a career as a community college faculty member?

3. How many sections of ENG 100 or ENG 112 do you typically teach in a semester?
4. How long have you been teaching online?

Research Study Questions

1. How do you define information literacy?

2. What information literacy concepts do you view as essential for your students’ success in ENG 100 or ENG 112 and in other courses?

3. How do you approach teaching information literacy in your English classes, specifically ENG 100 or ENG 112?

4. Does your approach to teaching information literacy in your English classes, specifically ENG 100 or ENG 112 change with an online modality?

5. How do you integrate your information literacy instruction into your online sections of ENG 100 or ENG 112? Please give an example of an assignment or information sent to the students.

6. Are there specific skills or concepts that you are unable to teach effectively online?

7. How can your academic library facilitate your teaching of information literacy to your online students?

8. Are you familiar with the Association of College and Research Libraries’ Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education? If so, how does that inform your teaching of information literacy concepts in your online classes?

Conclude the Interview

A. Answer any questions from the interviewee

B. Thank the interviewee for their participation
Appendix F: ENG 100: English Composition I – Generic Syllabus

English 100: English Composition 1

Professor: 
Office Location: 
Phone: 
Email: 
Office Hours: 
Class Meeting Time/Location:

Catalog Course Description and Course Competencies:  
This course reviews the principles of composition, including rhetoric, grammar and usage. It emphasizes critical thinking, the recursive nature of writing, the writing of analytical essays, and the application of information literacy skills. Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Apply college-level critical thinking and writing in various rhetorical situations
2. Compose original, thesis-based essays with cogent, well-supported evidence
3. Use appropriate rhetorical techniques for a specific writing task
4. Demonstrate organizational skills in constructing an essay with an introduction, conclusion, and transitions
5. Explore and evaluate appropriate academic databases to find credible primary and secondary sources
6. Synthesize appropriate sources to produce a research paper with accurate documentation
7. Employ prewriting, drafting, and revision strategies
8. Apply formal conventions of standard English with respect to grammar, mechanics, and punctuation.

Prerequisites Required:  
Students who score at the developmental level on both the writing and reading placement tests are required to successfully complete Reading II (REA 050) and Developmental English (ENG 050) before taking English Composition I. A score of 500 on the SAT or 18 on the ACT can also qualify students for ENG 100.

Text(s), required: 

- Links for all readings in addition to the above texts are on the course calendar.
- Note: E-readings are subject to change; any changes will be announced via email and in class, when possible.

Methods of Evaluation:  
Informal Assignments:
  - in-class reading quizzes

Graded Assignments:
All assignments, with the exception of in-class activities, must be typed in 12 point Times New Roman font, double spaced.

All formal assignments must be submitted to TurnItIn.com.

I will provide written comments (on the paper) as well as a rubric, all of which will be viewable by the students on TurnItIn.com. Students are responsible for accessing and viewing their feedback. No written feedback will be given for late or short work. Formal assignments will generally be returned within two weeks from the due date; however, exceptions do happen, and student patience is appreciated.

Formal assignments will lose 5% for each 24 hour period they are late following the due date and time.

In-class writing/quizzes cannot be made up, but a student may take a quiz early if their absence is anticipated. The lowest three quiz grades will be dropped.

**Grading System:**
To move on to the next class, you must earn a D in this class. For transfer credit, you must earn a C. For each assignment, you will be graded on a rubric that breaks the assignment into its respective components (i.e. thesis, structure, grammar, etc.); for each component, you will earn points that correspond to the above grades.

Point Totals:
- Reading Quizzes: 30 points total (average of all quizzes with three lowest dropped)
- Short Formal Essays: 150 points total (50 points each)
- Final Essay: 100 points

Final Grades (out of 280 total possible points):
- F: 0 – 167 points
- D: 168 – 195 points
- C: 196 – 223 points
- B: 224 – 251 points
- A: 252 – 280 points

**Academic Policies**

**Revisions:**
You may choose to revise and resubmit one of your three shorter essays during the semester. However, you cannot revise and resubmit any paper for which you did not participate in peer
review. In other words, if you do not participate in in-class peer review, you lose the opportunity to revise that paper for a new grade.

All revision grades will be an average of the original and the revised grade. If a revised paper’s grade is lower than the original draft or no significant changes have been made, your grade will not change. Additionally, all Academic Dishonesty penalties apply; if the revised draft contains plagiarism or other academic dishonesty, the new grade for the paper will be a zero in accordance with our syllabus Academic Honesty policy.

**Attendance Policy:**
Attendance is expected at all class meetings. Students who do not attend and/or log in to class during the first three weeks of class or who only attend the first day of class and/or log in once WILL BE ASSIGNED THE REGISTRATION CODE OF 'NS' (NO SHOW) as of the 4th week of classes. Instructors will NOT withdraw students for nonattendance. Students will be responsible for withdrawing themselves from their courses and may do so until the semester Student Withdrawal date (XXXX). Students who wish to be withdrawn from a class after the Student Withdrawal date will need to meet with the appropriate administrator. Please refer to the Student Handbook for more details on this policy.

Students are responsible for any and all work missed during an absence. Do not email your instructor asking if we “did anything” in class the day of your absence; the answer is always yes, and it is your responsibility to keep up with the syllabus and any work required. Whether you are in class or not, your work is still due online, so do not mistake an absence for a deadline extension. It is highly recommended that you get an “absence buddy” to make you aware of any information you missed during an absence.

Please note that I reserve the right to mark you absent and/or ask you to leave class if you are late for class, leave early, are unprepared, are found texting in class, or are otherwise disruptive.

**Withdrawal:**
The Withdrawal Deadline is ----. For withdrawal policies and options, consult the Student Handbook.

Withdrawal Initiated by the College
The No Show Withdrawal (NS) is initiated by the instructor and is issued for all students who register for a course, but never attend any class during the first 3 weeks of classes (or in the case of internet courses for never having any online activity during the first 3 weeks of classes), or for having attended only the first class (or logged in only once during the first week) as documented by the Instructor’s attendance records. The NS is issued through the registrar’s office and results in no refund of tuition and fees to the student.

Final Grades: FA and NPA
If a student’s extensive absence from the class results in a failure in the course, the instructor should give a grade of FA (F for Absences). This grade requires filling in a comment box next to the final grade submission in XXXX the date that the student last attended the class, handed in an assignment, logged onto Web Study, or the like.
This grade is an option for instructors to use; it is not required. It is up to the instructor to determine the meaning of “extensive absence”. This grade is only to be used by way of an explanation of the student’s failing a class. The intent of this grade is to indicate that the failure was a result of not attending rather than not understanding. If this grade is used instructors must have some way of determining when a student last attended class. These records must be producible in the event of a student appeal of the grade.

The privilege of withdrawal without academic penalty will be denied to students who cheat or plagiarize.

**Academic Honesty Policy:**

*Academic dishonesty* includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, cribbing, or cheating on examinations or quizzes.

*Plagiarism* — unacknowledged borrowing or duplication of an author's words or ideas whether intentional or not.

Common forms: (a) text without quotation marks or proper documentation, (b) with documentation but without quotation marks or correct quotation format, (c) in paraphrase without proper documentation.

Every incident of academic dishonesty must be reported to the Provost by the faculty member who observes it. These incidents will be kept in a confidential file by the Provost so that a record of the number of infractions per student is available when reports are made. This file will not be generally available for faculty review.

**Penalties**

The privilege of withdrawal without academic penalty will be denied to students who cheat or plagiarize.

* First Infraction: The faculty member gives the student an "F" on the paper or examination in question. (For our class’s purposes, this can range from a 0 to any grade constituting an F, depending on the severity of the plagiarism). This action could result in a final grade for the course at least one letter grade lower than it otherwise would have been.

* Second Infraction: A second infraction in either the same or another course results in an automatic "F" in the course in which the second infraction occurred. The student is dropped from the course and barred from further class participation. The dean meets with the student involved and apprises him/her of the consequences.

* Third or Flagrant Infraction: A third or flagrant infraction is grounds for dismissal from the College. The student involved must appear for a hearing before the Student Conduct and Discipline Committee. Hearing procedures include the basic elements of due process as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. The Committee submits recommendations to the Provost.

* Review and Appeal (for First and Second Infractions): If the student believes he/she has been unjustly treated or over penalized, the first level of appeal is dean and the next is the Provost. Further appeal can be made by submitting a written request for a review of the case to the Student Conduct and Discipline Committee.

**Mutual Respect**
As this class is based primarily on discussion, respecting each other is key to our success. Students are expected to show respect for their classmates, themselves, and their instructors by conducting themselves with maturity, demonstrating sincere interest in the ideas of others, and employing good manners.

No part of my lecture (or laboratory) can be recorded (audio or video) without my written permission. A student requiring this particular academic accommodation must register with the Office of Disability Services at the beginning of each semester and then provide me with the official accommodation letter.

It is imperative that you, as students, arrive on time and prepared, do not speak when others are speaking, and turn off your cell phones. Disagreements are a central part of any good discussion, and I encourage you to disagree with each other and with me, so long as your viewpoint is expressed respectfully. Language or comments that are dismissive or disrespectful toward a person’s race, sex, sexuality, gender, religion, or other characteristics are not conducive to a civil, inclusive conversation and therefore will not be tolerated. Students are expected to show appreciation for the diversity of backgrounds and skills of their classmates.

I reserve the right to mark you absent and/or ask you to leave the class if you violate any of the above policies. Additionally, violations of equal educational opportunities should be reported according to procedures given in the Student Handbook. General complaint and sexual harassment complaint procedures are detailed in the Student Handbook.

Students with Disabilities
Suburban County Community College policy complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Students requesting academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services and are responsible for picking up their accommodation letters at the beginning of each semester and presenting them to their instructors. I am available to discuss the approved accommodations that you may require in this course. If you have any questions, contact XXXX, Director of Disability Services, at XXXX or by email at XXXX. Students on Chester County Campuses can contact XXXX, Coordinator of Disability Services for Branch Campus Operations at XXXX or by email at XXXX.

Tutoring Resources
Students who need help planning, editing or documenting written assignments can schedule a tutoring session in the SCCC Learning Commons, Room 4500, Marple Campus. Students can also take advantage of AskOnline, an online tutoring service available through XXXX.

Please note that receiving tutoring does not guarantee a certain grade; it is just one of many resources available on the path to improving one’s writing.

English Department Assessment Statement:
SCCC is committed to the use of data to make improvements in all areas of the college. In order to improve learning experiences in individual courses, the use of student work is essential. Student work may be collected and used anonymously to confirm that competencies of
the course are being met, the course meets program outcomes and the course addresses any
College Academic Learning Goals for which the course is designated.

Calendar:

Items are due on the date listed. You must read the work listed, but need not complete the
written activities within the chapter unless they are specifically listed. The first page of
each work is listed for your convenience.

All formal written assignments are due by 5 pm on the due date listed; they will be
considered one day late after 5 pm. For each day an assignment is late, its grade will be
lowered by 5%. Readings marked with an asterisk* are e-readings, and the links are
available on the e-version of the calendar.

Week 1:
W: Introduction to Course Syllabus and Policies
F: *NPR’s “Code Switch”:
http://www.npr.org/blogs/codeswitch/2013/04/13/177126294/fivereasonswhypeoplecodeswitch

Week 2:
M: Dorwick: “Getting Called Fag” (Identity 3)
(Identity 24)
F: Baratunde: “How To Be Black” (Identity 42)

Week 3:
M: *“Where Yinz At: Why Pennsylvania is the most linguistically rich state in the country.”:
http://www.slate.com/articles/life/the_good_word/2014/04/pennsylvania_dialects_from_pittsburgh_to_philadelphia_speak_the_keystone.html
W: Ginsberg: “America” (Identity pg. 64)
F: ROUGH DRAFT OF ESSAY ONE DUE in class

Week 4:
M: Rose: “I Just Want to be Average” (Identity 122)
FINAL DRAFT OF ESSAY ONE DUE on TurnItIn by 5 pm
Learning”
http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/educationuprising/raiseyourhandifyouknowhowitfeels
F: Rainie: “Digital Natives Invade the Workplace” (Identity 226)

Week 5:
M: PRESIDENT’S DAY; NO CLASSES
W: FACULTY INSERVICE; NO CLASSES
F: Zaslow: “The Most Praised Generation Goes to Work” (Identity 220)

Week 6:
Conferences in my office all week. NO REGULAR CLASS MEETINGS.

Week 7:
M: Marche: “We Are Not All Created Equal: The Truth about the American Class System” (*Identity* 255)
W: ROUGH DRAFT OF ESSAY TWO DUE in class
F: Locating quality sources and representing them correctly in our papers; what is information literacy?

Week 8:
M: Margaret Atwood “Happy Endings”:  
http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~rebeccal/lit/238f11/pdfs/HappyEndings_Atwood.pdf  
FINAL DRAFT OF ESSAY TWO DUE on TurnItIn by 5 pm
W: Tannen: “Sex, Lies, and Conversation” (*Identity* 288)
F: Feldman: “Finding the ‘Liar’ in All of Us” (*Identity* 271)

Week 9: SPRING BREAK; NO CLASSES ALL WEEK

Week 10:
M: Chen: “Farewell, June Cleaver” (*Identity* 318)
W: Bernstein: “Sibling Rivalry Grows Up” (*Identity* 322)
F: DiFalco: “Internet Cheating” (*Identity* 284)

Week 11:
M: Dewoskin: “East Meets Tweet” (*Identity* 350)
W: Turkle: “How Computers Change the Way we Think” (*Identity* 339)
F: ROUGH DRAFT OF ESSAY THREE DUE in class
STUDENT WITHDRAWAL DEADLINE

Week 12:
M: Library Day (Absent students will need to participate in a library webinar to make up this essential session.)
FINAL DRAFT OF ESSAY THREE DUE on TurnItIn by 5 pm
W: Fletcher: “How Facebook is Redefining Privacy” (*Identity* 362)
F: Orenstein: “The Way We Live Now” (*Identity* 346)

Week 13:
M: * WaitButWhy: “Why Generation Y Yuppies are Unhappy”  
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/waitbutwhy/generationyunhappy_b_3930620.html  
W: Bradley: “People Don’t Hate Millennials”  
http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future_tense/2014/12/you_don_t_hate_millennials_you_hate_21st_century_technology.html  
F: Source Workshop
Week 14:
M: NPR “Don’t Trip Over Your Digital Footprint” (*Identity* 333)
W: Digital Footprint workshop
F: Abdulla: “The Revolution Will be Tweeted”

Week 15:
Conferences in my office all week. NO REGULAR CLASS MEETINGS

Week 16:
W: In-Class Activity: Citation Review
F: ROUGH DRAFT OF FINAL ESSAY DUE IN CLASS

Week 15
M: Peer Review of Revisions
FINAL DRAFT OF FINAL ESSAY DUE ON TURNITIN BY 5 PM

Final Exam Period: Date/Time TBA
● I will be available in my office during the final exam period for help with optional paper revisions; paper revisions will be due on Turnitin by 5 pm on the date of the final exam.

*Please note that all information on the syllabus above is tentative and subject to change*
Appendix G: ENG 112: English Composition II – Generic Syllabus

English 112: Writing about Literature – online – Fall 2015

Instructor:
Office
Office hours: .
PREFERRED CONTACT: WebStudy e-mail.
College e-mail

IF XXXX is down and you need to access WebStudy, do go to XXXX.webstudy.com

Course description and objectives: ENG 112 is a writing course emphasizing both literature and research that reinforces basic principles of composition learned in ENG 100. The course develops critical thinking through the study of literature and the use of advanced research techniques to write analytical/critical and researched essays.

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:
1. Demonstrate critical thinking and writing in response to literature.
2. Compose original, thesis-based analytical/critical essays in response to literature.
3. Express ideas logically and clearly using appropriate rhetorical techniques.
4. Analyze fiction, poetry, drama, and other literature using the elements of literature from different critical perspectives.
5. Access and evaluate source material using current information literacy skills.
6. Synthesize source material using MLA documentation in a plagiarism-free, multi-source essay/research paper based on a work of literature.
7. Revise, edit, and proofread to produce final drafts applying formal conventions of American English with respect to grammar, mechanics, and punctuation.

Required texts:
There are no required texts to purchase for this course. All reading material for this course is available in online form and linked to the class through Webstudy.
Please note that during the drama unit, students will be asked to access a copy of a specific film, which they will need to rent for viewing purposes.

Online texts for this class include the following:
Short story unit: Select short stories by Bierce, Conan Doyle, Chopin, Collings, Gilman, Henry, Marquez, Oates, Olsen, Porter, Wealty, and Wright
Drama unit: Shakespeare’s Hamlet
Poetry unit: Select poems by Bidart, Blanco, Cisneros, Cofer, Giovanni, Hongo, Hughes, Kizer, Kooser, Levertov, Marvell, Olds, Owen, Piercy, Pinsky, Poe, Pound, Randall, Rothke, Rumi, Thomas, Weigl, Wordsworth, and Yeats
MLA style guide: Purdue OWL MLA style guide

Recommended equipment: A binder for keeping all course materials together.
Students with special needs: Suburban County Community College policy complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Students requesting academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services and are responsible for picking up their accommodation letters at the beginning of each semester and presenting them to their instructors. I am available to discuss the approved accommodations that you may require in this course. If you have any questions, contact XXXX, Director of Disability Services, at XXXX or by email at XXXX. Students on Chester County Campuses can contact XXXX, Coordinator of Disability Services for Chester County Campuses at XXXX or by email at XXXX.

Grading: Short story essay test (15%), research paper rough draft (5%), research paper (20%), drama essay rough draft (7%), drama essay (10%), poetry essay rough draft (7%), poetry essay (10%); poetry presentation (5%); brief exercises and discussion assignments (21%).

Letter grade point scale: A= 100-93, B=92-80, C=79-70, D=69-60, F=59-0.

Short story test: At the end of our unit on the short story, students will compose an analytical essay based on one of the short stories they have read. Barring a student’s need for accommodations, this is a timed exercise.

Problem-solving research paper and its rough draft: The research paper is based on problem-solving for a particular issue raised in one of the short stories we will have read.

Rough drafts and final drafts of essays: Students will produce two formal essays during the course of the semester. Each is analytical in nature.

Poetry presentation: Each student will be responsible for developing a multimedia presentation of a specific poem.

Assignments and exercises: A variety of exercises such as brief writings, pre-writing exercises, and discussion forums have been developed in order to aid students in honing their critical thinking, analytical, writing, and documentation skills.

Policy for regarding due dates and late work: All deadlines are listed on the syllabus and in your WebStudy calendar, and they should be adhered to. However, should a documentable emergency arise in your life, please do not hesitate to contact me and we’ll make arrangements for making up major assignments and discussion posts. I will, however, ask that documentation of the emergency be provided. If work comes in late without any documentation about a legitimate emergency, then a “late fee” will be applied to the assignment. Barring emergencies, any late work must be turned in near the end of the unit. This deadline date is posted on the syllabus. Work not turned in by this last-call deadline will earn a zero.

Attendance policy: Please be aware of recent changes to the College Attendance & Withdrawal Policy. Attendance is expected at all class meetings. Students who do not attend and/or log in to class during the first three weeks of class or who only attend the first day of class and/or log in once WILL BE ASSIGNED THE REGISTRATION CODE OF 'NS' (NO SHOW) as of the 4th week of classes. Instructors will NOT withdraw students for non-attendance. Students will be responsible for withdrawing themselves from their courses and may do so until the semester Student Withdrawal date (see your student handbook for information). Students who wish to be
withdrawn from a class after the Student Withdrawal date will need to meet with the appropriate administrator. Please refer to the Student Handbook for more details on this policy.

Policy for revisions: In this class, we will be following the writing method known as “writing as a process.” This practice involves the process of drafting and revising. I am more than happy to provide students with feedback about any stage of the paper writing process – from planning to drafting before the paper is due. When a paper is turned in as a final draft, though, it has become just that: final.

Help with writing:
- Never hesitate to contact your instructor with your writing questions and concerns!
- Ask Online: An online tutoring service available 24/7, Ask Online provides students with tutoring assistance anytime, anywhere. It is designed to assist students with writing across the curriculum. With Ask Online, you can connect with an instructor and interact with a live tutor, submit writing to the online writing lab, submit a question and receive a reply from a tutor, and even schedule an appointment with a tutor.

Plagiarism: Please realize that I am more than willing to help students with proper documentation of outside material in their work! Proper documentation is essential in order to avoid plagiarizing. The use of another’s words or ideas without proper documentation is an academic crime. Any incidents of plagiarized work that occur in the class will have to be reported to the Provost’s Office. There will also be some sort of loss of points within the assignment in question. Consult the Student Handbook for more information about the college’s plagiarism policy.

Please be aware that your written assignments are filtered through turnitin-com, a plagiarism checking source.

Grading guidelines for the various assignments in the course are available in rubric form and can be accessed through the course’s timeline.

Student responsibility for correct and complete submission of work: Students should always verify that they have indeed “sent” or “posted” an assignment by its due date. Also, students should double check the file(s) that they are submitting to make sure they contain the specific document that is due and not another document by mistake. It is also a good idea to be sure that one’s file is not corrupt in any way.

WebStudy e-mail availability: Since this is an accelerated course, I will be online every day aside from the days listed at the top of the syllabus. You should expect a reply from me within less than twenty-four hours. If you do not hear from me, this usually means that I have not received your e-mail. So, do check your “sent” file and your “drafts” folder to make sure I’ve received your e-mail. Thanks!

Syllabus

Unit One: Short Story Analysis
Please note: For most of the weeks in our timeline, we have TWO deadlines – a Wednesday night deadline and a Monday night deadline.

Week one: 8/31 – 9/7
- Print out a copy of this syllabus so that you have hardcopy of it with you.
- Do participate in the “Icebreaker” forum so we know you’re with us and have no trouble accessing the course by Wednesday, 9/2, 11:59 p.m.
- Review the syllabus and ask any questions you might have about class policies and procedures.
- Read the materials in this week’s section of the timeline.
- Be sure to be in touch if you have any questions about the materials.
- **By Wed., 9/2, 11:59 p.m.:**
  - Read the powerpoint about “What to do with outside material” and complete brief writing assignment #1.
  - Read Kate Chopin’s “The Story of an Hour” and complete its discussion forum assignment.
- **By Mon., 9/7, 11:59 p.m.:**
  - Read Henry’s “The Gift of the Magi” and complete “brief writing assignment #2”
  - Read Olsen’s “I Stand Here Ironing” and complete its discussion assignment.
  - Read Bierce’s “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge” and complete its discussion assignment.

Week two: 9/7 – 9/14:
- Read the materials in this week’s section of the timeline.
- **By Wed., 9/9, 11:59 p.m.:**
  - Read Conan Doyle’s “The Adventure of the Speckled Band” and complete brief writing assignment #3.
- **By Mon., 9/14, 11:59 p.m.:**
  - Read Collings’ “Do You Speak English?” and complete “brief writing assignment #4”
  - Read Gilman’s “The Yellow Wallpaper” and complete its discussion assignment.
  - Read Oates’ “Where Are You Going…?” and complete its discussion assignment

Week three: 9/14- 9/21:
- Read the materials in this week’s section of the timeline.
- **By Wed., 9/16, 11:59 p.m.:**
  - Read Wright’s “The Man Who Was Almost a Man” and complete “brief writing assignment #5”
- **By Mon., 9/21, 11:59 p.m.:**
  - Read Marquez’ “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings” and complete “brief writing assignment #6”
  - Read Porter’s “The Jilting of Granny Weatherall” and complete “no-so-brief writing assignment #7”
  - Read Welty’s “A Worn Path” and prepare for the short story essay test.

**Last call for any late short story assignments is Wed., 9/23, 11:59 p.m.**
Week four: 9/21 – 9/28:
   This week you should take the short story essay test. Please note: the test window will close at FIVE P. M. Easter Standard Time on 9/28.

   If you plan on waiting until later in the week to take the short story essay test, it would be wise to begin the work for Unit Two.

   Unit Two: Problem Solving Research Paper
   • Review the material in the timeline about the research paper assignment, accessing quality sources for college level research papers, and the importance of appropriate citation of outside material into your papers.
   • **By Wed. 9/23, 11:59 p.m.** : Submit a working thesis statement for the research paper; be sure to check for your thesis being approved and any feedback.
   • **By Mon. 9/28, 11:59 p.m.** : Complete the library exercises about sources that are linked to the course under the LINKS tab and upload the certificate you receive in the appropriate assignment window.
   • **You should be gathering your sources for your paper at this point in time.**

Week five: 9/28 – 10/5:
   • **By Wed. 9/30, 11:59 p.m.** : Complete the external (Works Cited) and internal (in-text) documentation exercises in the timeline
   • **By Mon. 10/5, 11:59 p.m.** : Submit a working Works Cited page based on the criteria for sources found on both the paper assignment and its rubric that adheres to MLA style guidelines

Week six: 10/5 – 10/12:
   • Review the material in the timeline about formal outlining.

   • **By Wed. 10/7, 11:59 p.m.** : Submit a rough draft of “Part One” of the research paper.
   • **By Mon., 10/12, 11:59 p.m.** : Submit a working formal outline for your paper.

Week seven: 10/12 – 10/19:
   • Last call for any late research paper assignments is Wed., 10/14, 11:59 p.m
   • **By Mon., 10/19, 11:59 p.m.** : Submit your full rough draft of the research paper.

   **Note:** If you’re going to wait until the 26th to submit your research paper, you should begin reading Hamlet and preparing for the drama unit.

   Unit 3: Drama Analysis

Week eight: 10/19- 10/26:
   • Review the materials in the timeline about the drama unit and the performance theory paper.
• By Wed. 10/21 11:59 p.m.: Select the version of *Hamlet* you wish to view in the appropriate forum. (first come, first served)
• Begin reading Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, found in the LINKS tab.
• **Rough draft response should be submitted after rough draft has been returned and before the submission of the final draft.**
• By Mon. 10/26 11:59 p.m.: Submit the final draft of the research paper.

**Week nine: 10/26 – 11/2:**
• By Wed. 10/28 11:59 p.m.: Participate in the *Hamlet* play forum discussion.
• View your version of *Hamlet*.
• **By Mon. 11/2 11:59 p.m.:**
  o Participate in the *Hamlet* film forum discussion exercises.
  o Submit a working thesis for the drama paper; be sure to check back for feedback.
  o Complete “brief writing assignment #8”.

**Week ten: 11/2 – 11/9:**
• Last call for any late drama assignments is Wed., 11/4, 11:59 p.m.
• By Mon. 11/9 11:59 p.m.: Submit a rough draft of your drama paper; be sure to check back for feedback.

**Unit 4: Poetry Analysis**

**Week eleven: 11/9 – 11/16:**
• **Rough draft response should be submitted after rough draft has been returned and before the submission of the final draft.**
• Read the material for the poetry unit and its assignments in the timeline.
• Read “An Irish Airman Forsees His Death” and “The Shirt” under the LINKS tab.
• Review the powerpoint presentations about these poems in the timeline.
• Read the additional poems under the Unit Four section of the LINKS tab.
• **By Wed. 11/11, 11:59 p.m.:**
  o Select the poem for your poetry presentation in the appropriate forum.
• **By Mon. 11/16, 11:59 p.m.:**
  o Submit the final draft of your drama paper.

**Week twelve: 11/16 – 11/23:**
• By Wed., 11/18, 11:59 p.m.: Participate in the poetry discussion forum.
• By Mon., 11/23, 11:59 p.m.: Poetry presentations due

**Week thirteen: 11/23 – 11/30:**
• By Mon., 11/30, 11:59 p.m.: Participate in the poetry-presentations forum
  o Complete “brief writing assignment #9”
  o Review the sample student poetry paper and complete the response assignment.
• Submit a working thesis for the poetry paper; be sure to check back for feedback.

**Week fourteen: 11/30 – 12/7:**
• By Wed., 12/2, 11:59 p.m.:
  o Complete “brief writing assignment #10”.

By Mon., 12/7, 11:59 p.m.:
  o Submit rough draft of the poetry paper.

Week fifteen: 12/7 – 12/14:

  • Rough draft response should be submitted after rough draft has been returned and before the submission of the final draft. (It should be turned in no later than 11:59 p.m., 12/14.)

    Last call for any late poetry assignments is Wed., 12/9, 11:59 p.m.

    Submit the final draft of your poetry paper by 11:59 p.m. on 12/15.