This report includes five sections: 1) a description of the library instruction plan for FYS; 2) a summary of the librarians’ reflections on FYS, what worked well and what could be improved; 3) a summary of the FYS faculty survey results along with faculty comments; 4) a summary of the students’ feedback. 5) action steps going forward.

Section 1: Library Instruction Plan

The goal of the class was for students to become information literate and critical thinkers in a post-truth world. Our lesson plan addressed the following student learning outcomes:

- Students will understand the purpose of conducting secondary research
- Students will recognize their own assumptions and biases through which they filter information
- Students will evaluate information to determine if it is trustworthy
- Students will evaluate information to determine if it is substantial

We used a “flipped classroom” approach to introduce these concepts. For the pre-assignment, we asked students to go to the FYS 2017-18 LibGuide: [http://belmont.libguides.com/fys2017](http://belmont.libguides.com/fys2017) and complete the activities on the page before class. The in-class activity involved group work in which students used various search tools (Google, Google Scholar, OneSearch, etc.) to find information on a sample topic and discussed the trustworthiness of the sources they found.

We also asked instructors to have their students read Plato’s “Allegory of the Cave” prior to class. The video referenced Plato, and we tried to connect our instruction to the larger theme of FYS, “ways of knowing.”

Our curriculum was based on ACRL’s [Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education](https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframe) and focused on the threshold concept: [Authority is constructed and contextual](https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframe).

Our goal was to reach 100% of FYS classes. There was a slight increase in the numbers this year:

- 87% of sections scheduled library instruction (67 out of 77)
- 88% of instructors requested library instruction (44 out of 50)

Section Two: Librarians’ Reflections

The librarians liked the biggest change we made to the lesson, which was for students to find their own sources to evaluate rather than us selecting them ahead of time. As a result, the students seemed more invested in the in-class activity, defending the sources they chose, rather than just going through the checklist of criteria that we previously provided for them. One librarian did ask the students to create a checklist of sorts at the beginning of the activity, before they chose sources, so they would have some
things in mind to look for. Many librarians used the sample topic, “Should GMO foods be labelled,” but others selected a topic relevant to the class. Both options seemed to work pretty well as long as the students cared about the topic. Most students, for example, had strong opinions about GMOs, and so they jumped into the activity wanting to find sources to support their opinions. The students selected a variety of source types of varying quality, which made for good discussion, but it did require some sensitivity when students chose poor quality sources. We wanted to use those sources as teaching examples without making the students feel like they had failed the activity.

The OneSearch LibWizard was a great pre-assignment that prepared students for the in-class work, but the other pre-assignments were less connected to the class. There was really no time to discuss the post-truth video and the survey was only given passing mention in class. The classroom assessment activity really only addressed the last two student learning outcomes.

With some revisions to the pre-assignment, several librarians want to continue with this format next year, but a few librarians left class wondering, “okay, what did the students learn?” There seems to be a need for some follow-up to the lesson, possibly an assignment or the online tutorial for students to demonstrate their learning.

Finally, several librarians mentioned that travelling to classrooms across campus, never quite knowing what kind of setup to expect, sometimes made teaching more difficult. Faculty also expressed their desire to bring students to the library for instruction. We are still hopeful that we can get a new and improved library classroom.

Section Three: Faculty Survey

The survey was sent to 500 instructors at the end of the semester and was completed by 18 instructors for a response rate of 36%.

Almost every question was rated “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” with just a handful rated “Neither Agree or Disagree” and one “Disagree” for three questions. Faculty comments:

- The 50 minute class was too short to cover all the research mechanics
- The content seemed a bit rushed for the class time allowed. Most of students already knew how to access information online and I think it would be helpful to target the databases across the disciplines and demonstrate how to access them for the prompt you already use with a focus on information reliability. The students who met with individual library faculty reported excellent results.
- This was my first time to have a library faculty member come in for this particular assignment and I need to do a better job of setting it up. In particular, I need to make more clear to my students when/how they will be doing this type of research so they will a) pay closer attention, and b) remember to use what they've learned, when the time comes. It was a good and helpful session this time and will be even better when I do more groundwork for it.
- I had one student who seemed pretty convinced that “Googling” and "Wikipedia" were the way to go. She has some problems with authority in general. I thought Lina's approach to dealing
with her attitude problem in class was very good in that she calmly addressed the student and helped her see the false narrative about research the student had created in her own mind.

- I appreciated having the students search for a source and then explain the quality of the source they found. It took them through a process that they needed to employ in their own research, and reinforced their ability to do that kind of search and evaluation of their sources.

When asked if the quality of the students’ work met their expectations most faculty said yes, but some gave the following comments:

- The student work related to the research was a mixed bag of quality. I could not tell the extent to which the library instruction impacted their research processes and so I can’t say if there is a direct correlation or if they seemed to feel more confident. They feel confident and complete as students already regardless of any demonstrable realities of their competence.
- Yes, just seeing the rough drafts I see great leaps have been made from using inappropriate sources to using scholarly, peer-reviewed ones that are appropriate for college-level work.
- Unfortunately this session did not translate into productive work for the students in their paper. Perhaps a follow up session would help after they do their research? Very few of my students utilized peer reviewed research in their original drafts and even after redirection they still had a hard time accessing and understanding what peer reviewed meant.
- No, but it was not because of the library instruction. I think students have challenges looking beyond the first page in Google Scholar and/or the Library search engine. Likewise, they often get stuck when the first search terms do not produce much. I don’t know how you could teach both the basics of source quality and what to do when nothing turns up in one 50-minute period!

Finally, we asked faculty if they wanted to keep library instruction as part of FYS and/or if they want to change anything.

- 100% want to keep library instruction as part of FYS
- 0% want to replace instruction with an online tutorial, but they were open to some other changes...
We asked, “Want to shake up library instruction for FYS? Check any of these ideas that seem appealing to you!” and received the following responses:

Faculty Comments:

- Maybe include more information on the library’s services in general.
- Students prefer self-directed learning. I think the notion of online tutorial materials would work very well.
- Follow up sessions - a follow up assignment that they might submit to the librarians?
• An online module that addresses "what to do when I can't find sources with the search terms I am using" might be helpful.
• I appreciate your instruction and enjoy the times when you visit my classes. The students don’t seem to have the capacity to absorb a lot of information at one time anymore, so a personal visit plus online supplements would be really helpful.
• Follow up assignment that they would submit to the librarians - I've had follow up assignments but they just don’t seem to stick well with the students. Would love any support or ideas from the library on how to improve this!
• In addition to the tool kit, I would want to keep library instruction.

Section Four: Student Feedback

At the end of some classes, students were asked to complete a “One Last Thing!” form and answer two questions. The 151 responses collected were evaluated and categorized by topic.

Question One: What is one thing you learned in the session today?

• 36% mentioned how to evaluate sources to determine if something is substantial
• 52% mentioned how to find sources (OneSearch, Databases, Library website, full text)
• 10% mentioned Google Scholar
• 5% mentioned basic information about the library (Research appointments, physical library)

Question Two: What is one thing that is still unclear?

• 42% said that nothing was unclear
• 19% said they were still unsure about evaluating information. This was an improvement from last year when 31% said they still felt unsure about this.
• 28% said they were unsure about how to find sources through the library
• 5% said they were unsure about the physical library
Section 5: Action Steps Going Forward

Several librarians and faculty were happy with this lesson because the learning was more self-directed by the students in class. This also resulted in much more manageable prep time for librarians for each class. On the other hand, there are some librarians and faculty who still want the students to have a deeper learning experience. As mentioned, we really only addressed the last two student learning outcomes in the class session:

- Students will evaluate information to determine if it is trustworthy
- Students will evaluate information to determine if it is substantial

The first two learning outcomes will require much more collaboration between librarians and faculty and an extended unit of instruction:

- Students will understand the purpose of conducting secondary research
- Students will recognize their own assumptions and biases through which they filter information

The online tutorial that was piloted in the fall might be a good solution. There are three modules, including content that’s not covered in our current lesson but that students and faculty both mentioned in their comments:

1. Library Basics
2. Search Strategies
3. Evaluating Information

Several faculty suggested the idea of follow-up assignments to in-class instruction. We think that is the best way for students to demonstrate their learning. We have recommended follow-up assignments before, without much faculty buy-in, but if we introduce them earlier...in May rather than in August, maybe faculty would have more time to integrate them into their syllabi.

Taking this into consideration, we will take the following actions:

- Meet with the FYS and FYW coordinators and the faculty who piloted the online tutorial to discuss its implementation
- Develop follow-up assignment options
- Attend the May FYS meeting to introduce the changes, the follow-up assignments, and encourage faculty to work with librarians over the summer in integration