

Learning together

Case studies in implementing faculty learning
communities around information literacy

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ACRL ULS Professional Development Committee Presentation

Introductions



Jenny Dale
UNCG



Joanna Gadsby
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Hazel McClure
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Heather Snapp
FGCU

Slides link: go.uncg.edu/flcslides

Agenda

1. Welcome!
2. Background on faculty learning communities
3. Case studies
4. Q&A

What is a faculty learning community (FLC)?

According to Milton Cox (2004), a faculty learning community is a “cross-disciplinary faculty and staff group of six to fifteen members (eight to twelve members is the recommended size) who engage in an active, collaborative, year long program with a curriculum about enhancing teaching and learning and with frequent seminars and activities that provide learning, development, the scholarship of teaching, and community building” (p. 8).

Common characteristics of FLCs

Faculty learning communities tend to be:

- Peer-led, faculty-driven
- Cross-disciplinary
- Small (6-12 members is common)
- Structured and time-limited
- Focused on a specific issue

FLCs in the LIS literature

FLCs have been used to:

- Facilitate collaborative assignment design (Wishkoski et al., 2018)
- Develop “a sense of community for faculty with teaching, continuous learning, and educational research needs in a new medical school” (Mi, 2015, p. 28)
- Educate and engage faculty about scholarly communication (Bazeley et al., 2014)
- Facilitate collaborative creation of tools like a data literacy teaching toolkit (Burrell et al., 2020) and a research methods LibGuide (Little et al., 2010)
- Create and deploy surveys for students to self-assess their searching and research skills (Resnis et al., 2010)

Before we move on...

Please head to slido.com and enter the code #94163 to answer a quick poll question!

[Poll](#)



Case Studies



UNC Greensboro (UNCG)

Jenny Dale

Information literacy stipends at UNCG

- Information Literacy Course Development Award Program (2015-2018):
 - Instructors applied to work with at least one library partner to redesign a course to intentionally integrate IL
 - Proposals were evaluated based on: integration, scalability, feasibility, and collaboration
 - Instructors selected were awarded \$1000 stipends, disbursed upon completion of the course

Information literacy stipends at UNCG

- Information Literacy **Faculty** Development Award Program (2019-):
 - Instructors applied to work with at least one library partner to redesign a course to intentionally integrate IL **and agreed to participate in a learning community with other award recipients and their library partners**
 - Proposals were evaluated based on: integration, scalability, feasibility, and collaboration (for more information, see <https://go.uncg.edu/ilfacdev>)
 - Instructors selected were awarded **\$1250**

Fall 2019 IL Faculty Development Award Cohort

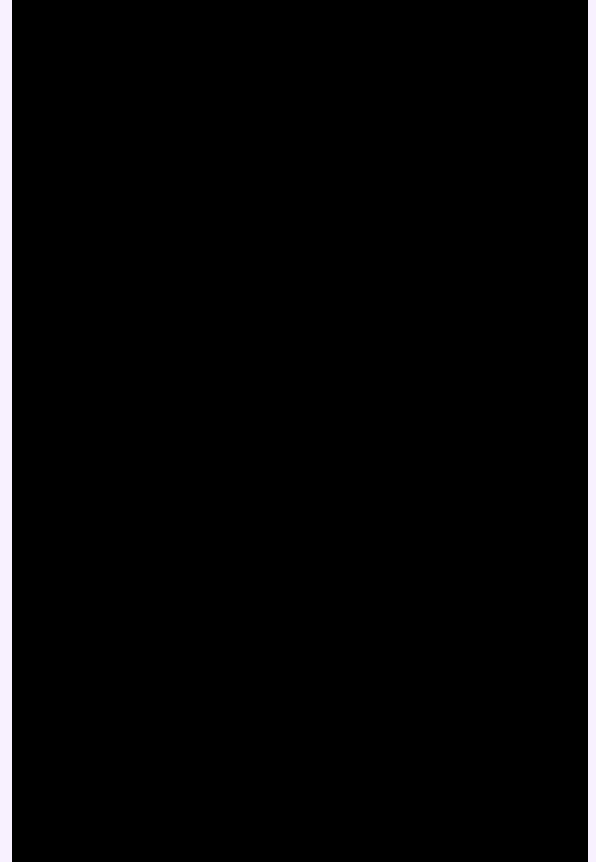
- Four course instructors
 - Interior Architecture (100-level) - first large enrollment class
 - Communication Studies (200-level)
 - Political Science (300-level)
 - Public Health Education (400-level) -first online class
- Six library partners
- One facilitator (me!)

What we did synchronously

- Three facilitated face-to-face meetings
 - Meeting 1 (Sept. 2019): General introductions, goal-setting
 - Meeting 2 (Nov. 2019): Review of syllabi and assignments shared via Canvas; discussion of IL assessment; collaborative design of an optional final reflection assignment for students
 - Meeting 3 (Dec. 2019): Article discussion; reflection on original goals

What we did asynchronously

- Canvas organization participation
 - Discussion post required in lieu of Oct. 2019 meeting
 - Shared course materials (syllabi, research assignments)
 - Shared IL and assessment documents
 - Shared library-specific assignments



If I could turn back time

- Scheduling
 - Longer sessions, all scheduled from the beginning of the FLC
 - First session in early August, before the semester ramps up
- Collaboration
 - Options for peer observation among FLC members
 - Collaborative assignment design workshop before the start of the semester
- Engagement
 - More peer-to-peer leadership rather than all meetings facilitated by me



University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC)

Joanna Gadsby & Katy Sullivan

Faculty Learning Communities at UMBC

Facilitated and supported through the campus Faculty Development Center (FDC)

Year-long exploration of evidence-based teaching practices --
focus on learning over product

Existing relationship between FDC and the library

Our FLC: Cultivating Critical Thinking

Goal: To explore and create discipline-neutral content that facilitates critical thinking in the classroom

Kickoff meeting discussion:

- Shared knowledge of information literacy

- What participants would like to improve or explore

- Defining features matrix (pace, structure, process/product)

In-person meetings for 1 academic year > year-end presentation

Activities and Outcomes

Selected initial shared readings, then asked participants to select readings and lead discussions

Created bank of **learning activities**

- Included learning outcomes
- Discipline-neutral
- 1 class period or less
- Some adaptation for course level

Lessons Learned

Too product driven (not enough discovery/exploration)

Facilitators seen as “experts” - other participants hesitant to take a leadership role

Next time we’d propose a topic outside of librarian expertise

Meetings were too short and infrequent - needed more concentrated time

Grand Valley State University (GVSU)

Hazel McClure & Debbie Morrow



- **Learning Circles at Grand Valley**
- **Our Learning Circle topic**
- **What we did**
- **Outcomes**

Learning Circles at Grand Valley

- Faculty Teaching and Learning Center (FTLC) supports Faculty Learning Communities*
- Faculty led; some limited by department, some multidisciplinary
- Librarians are quite active in these
- Libraries have started their own summer Learning Circles (for faculty and staff)



*<https://www.gvsu.edu/ftlc/current-faculty-learning-communities-349.htm>

Our Learning Circle Topic

“Evaluating Resources, Misinformation, & Fake News: Promoting Advanced Information Literacy in the Classroom”

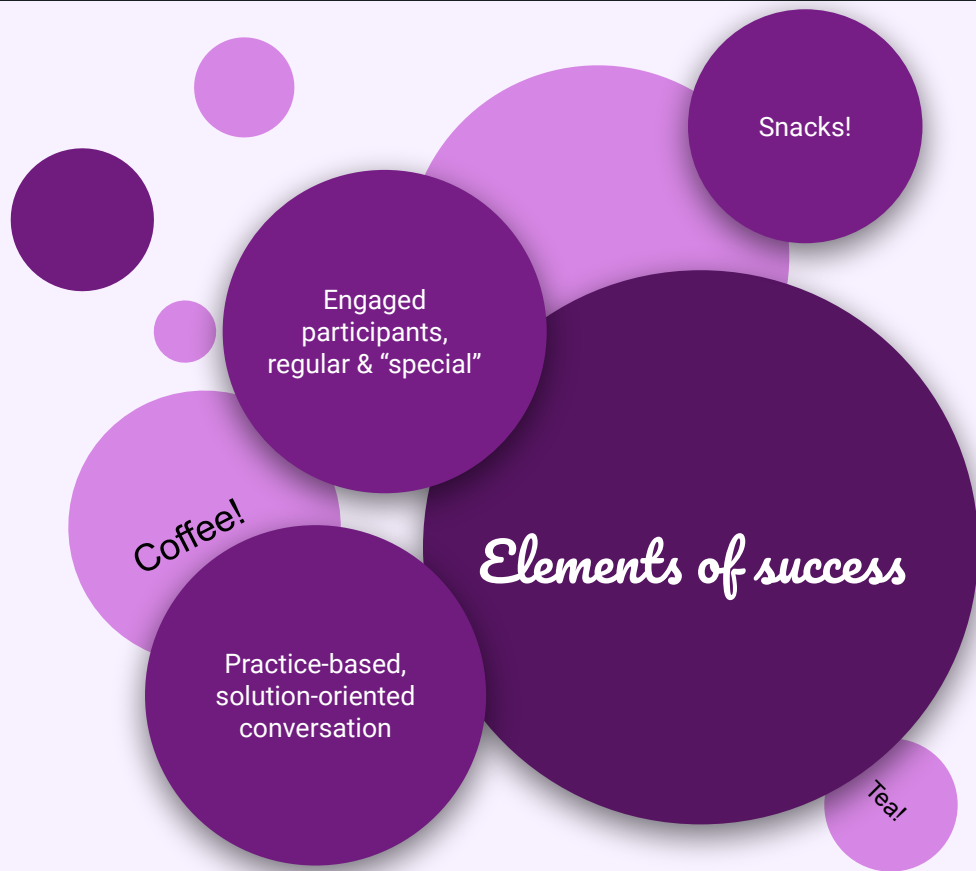
Goals:

- Take advantage of the historical moment
 - *But avoiding a rant!*
- Use thoughtful reading as a point of departure for thoughtful discussion
 - *Selecting the right (kind of) book*
- Relate IL and current events to relevant “teachable moments” in different disciplines
 - *Diverse participant disciplines or teaching styles*
- Our book selection: *Knowing More and Understanding Less in the Age of Big Data*, by philosopher Michael P. Lynch. Liveright, 2017.



What We Did

- Gathered interested, interesting folks
- Hosted in a central time/place with digital component (Blackboard)
- Nurtured conversations were flexible, topics were responsive
- Set a relaxed, warm atmosphere



Outcomes

- FTLC asked participants to submit short reflections
- CLAS invited us to host one of their Fall 2017 Teaching Roundtables
- Debbie mentored two students who prepared and led an annual Teach-In session on “Fact vs. Fake” in Fall 2017
- Hazel deepened the relationship between First-Year Writing and Library instruction, an ongoing collaboration
- Debbie presented this “big picture” at a Spring 2018 state library conference



Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU)

Heather Snapp

Faculty Learning Community:

- Context
- Structure & Content
- Activities
- After the FLC
- Outcomes

Context: Faculty Fellowship

- Through our Center for Faculty Development
- Focus: Integrating information literacy objectives more intentionally into assignments and courses
- Faculty Learning Community offered twice in Spring and Fall 2019 (5 sessions over 9 weeks)

1

Ignite Talk
(15 minutes)

2

Workshop:
Mind the Gap
(1 hour)

3

Faculty Learning
Community
(5 sessions)

4

Faculty Department
Meeting

5

One-on-One
Consultations

6

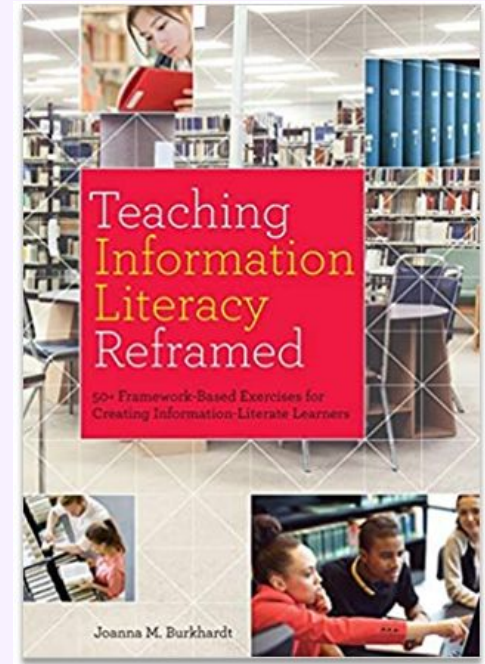
Shared Resources
(LibGuide/Blog)

ELC Structure and Content

Teaching Information Literacy Reframed

by Joanna M. Burkhardt

- Each chapter discusses one of the frames in 3-5 pages
- ~10 exercises for each frame
- The Framework provided structure and a shared vocabulary



ELC Structure and Content

Session 1

- What is information literacy?
- “A letter from a librarian to professors everywhere” by William Badke
- Ch. 1: “Decoding the Framework for Information Literacy”

Sessions 2-4

- Focused on 2 chapters/frames each
- What were your take-aways? What exercises could you use or modify for use in your course?

Session 5

- Ch. 8: “Creating Exercises, Rubrics, Learning Outcomes and Learning Assessments”
- Sharing of new or modified assignments (or plans for them)

Activities & Questions

- Facilitator Intro/Sharing
 - **Discussion**
 - Think-Pair-Share or
 - Write-Table-Share
 - Individual Reflection
 - Workshopping of Assignments*
- **Day 2:** What aspects of information literacy do you find that students struggle with in your course(s)? In what ways would you like to include information literacy components into an assignment or course?
 - **Day 4:** Have you incorporated any new information literacy aspects into your assignments? How could you in a future assignment or course?
 - **Day 5 :** The bigger picture: In order to make information stick and to transfer learning to real life, students must have a variety of practice. How can Information Literacy be incorporated across your discipline/major? What would it take to make that happen?

After the FLC

- One-on-one consultations with FLC participants to revamp assignments
- Wrote Innovative Assignment Design Grant with Composition Instructor
 - Modified unsuccessful source evaluation assignment
 - Focused on Authority is Constructed & Contextual
 - Resulted in more critical thinking and more authentic source evaluation
- Created LibGuide containing resources for faculty:
<https://fgcu.libguides.com/InfoLitResources>
- Blog posts to encourage use of intentional information literacy objectives

Outcomes

All participants who took assessment agreed:

- The FLC helped me understand information literacy concepts.
- I incorporated new assignments or modified existing ones.

80% of responders said:

- I would have liked more workshop time to create or modify my assignments during the FLC.

What they liked best:

- “The opportunity to interact with individuals across disciplines on information literacy. It gave me some great ideas and different perspectives for assignments/activities.”
- “Exchange of ideas and teaching practices”
- “Brainstorming and problem solving with colleagues”

Wrap-up poll

Please head to slido.com and enter the code #94163 to answer a quick poll question!

[Poll](#)



Thank you!
Questions?

Feel free to contact the panelists!

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Slides link: go.uncg.edu/flcslides

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