

ACRL Illinois Immersion '07
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Immersion was a grueling but enjoyable experience. Our time was scheduled from morning until night. However, I did come out of it with a good information literacy plan for our campus, and it's been exciting to think about beginning to implement it.

A plan

Probably the most helpful aspect of the immersion program was the meetings I had with my cohort and our leader, Randy Hensley. Randy gave me a lot of good feedback. He kept redirecting me, which required a lot more work, but I was happy with where I ended up. My plan ended up focusing on two outcomes. 1) To include more instruction in upper level classes, and 2) to integrate info lit more into the introductory ENG 111 classes I already teach. My plan then focused on steps to reaching these goals. I also looked at threats and opportunities, especially in the library and campus culture. For example, many of the undergraduate professors have not seen the library as a valuable resource for their students in the past, and therefore they may be reluctant to collaborate with librarians. I developed some strategies for handling this problem, such as focusing on newer professors and those who may be more open, and soft-selling what the library can do for them.

Information literacy

I also realized I need to develop a clear vision about what information literacy is and how it can fit into the institution. This is something that can hopefully be explored with the other librarians. We discussed doing some reading on the topic and meeting to discuss the concepts. There were some excellent readings for the Immersion program. I especially liked *The Courage to Teach* by Palmer. There were a few more recommended books that I would like to look at, including *Creativity in the Classroom* by Starko, *Creating Significant Learning* by Fink, and *What the Best College Teachers Do* by Ken Bain.

Assessment

One concept that was repeatedly addressed at Immersion was developing outcomes, both for our program, and for individual classes. Debra Gilchrist emphasized a specific form for the outcomes: verb (what will be done) + in order to + the hoped-for result. For example, one of my outcomes was "Include instruction in the upper level classes in order to teach students higher level skills." After developing an outcome, there were four more things to do for an instruction class: curriculum (what will be taught), pedagogy (how it will be taught), assessment (how students demonstrate what they learned), and criteria (defines if the student has done it well). For my plan I also developed some methods for implementing the plan and criteria for judging if I had succeeded. For example, I set a goal of teaching two upper-division classes in the next year, and getting at least 40% of the ENG 111 classes to incorporate the library instruction more into their classes. We also need to develop a plan for assessing the

program. Perhaps we could look at our annual survey to see if answers change related to instruction. We may want to add more questions related to instruction to the survey as well.

Campus politics

I found the sessions where we discussed campus politics interesting, partly because I realize how important it is for implementing a campus program. We did leadership profiles, and discovered that most of the librarians ranked very high in the human resource frame (building relationships) and low in the political frame (developing a power base and navigating organizational politics). I realized how even though being political is not my natural tendency, it's something I can work on developing in order to help the cause of the program. We also analyzed campus cultures, which ranged from control cultures (hierarchical & rule-oriented), competence cultures (achievement & competition), collaboration (relationships & working together) and cultivation (inspiration & creativity). I wasn't sure which culture are campus was, but I thought it might be closest to the cultivation culture, since it focuses on ideals, likes to be inspired, and doesn't tend to have a rigid structure. This brought up some interesting thoughts on how to approach this culture; particularly we may want to focus on ways to inspire those we talk to.

Creativity

One of the most enjoyable aspects of Immersion was being surrounded by fun, creative librarians. We had quite a few activities that encouraged our creative juices to flow. My group did a visual art display representing an information literacy program. I enacted a sock puppet teacher who walked people through the process. But perhaps my favorite was the rap song written and performed by another participant, Sam Wood. Here it is, for your enjoyment as well! (Although it's not the same as seeing him do it!)

Info Literacy has got me down, man
I need to find a research plan
These books and journals and online sources
I find a plethora of tools divorces
Me from the work i want to achieve
Have i got this all wrong? maybe i just need to believe
That identifying my need and following the steps
Laid out by librarians - they know what's best -
Can help me now, help me for the rest of my life
Help me write about Camus and physics and strife
I'll take these skills wherever i go
Self-sustaining researcher in the know
It'll take some time, it won't be easy
Shattering stereotypes and the thought that libraries are cheesy
And old and lame and so twentieth century
The combine the best of all worlds, the plan that is meant for me
Thank you, librarians, for showing me the path
To Info Literacy and slaying ignorance's wrath

I wish I had done the program track so I could have learned some of the things that produced such creative librarians! Perhaps next time!