

Information Literacy Skills Assessment for WSU Lower Undergraduates

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Abstract

Information literacy (IL) is a central WSU undergraduate learning outcome, one of the Seven UCORE Goals. Librarians are collaborating with a number of WSU academic units to assess student IL skill development.

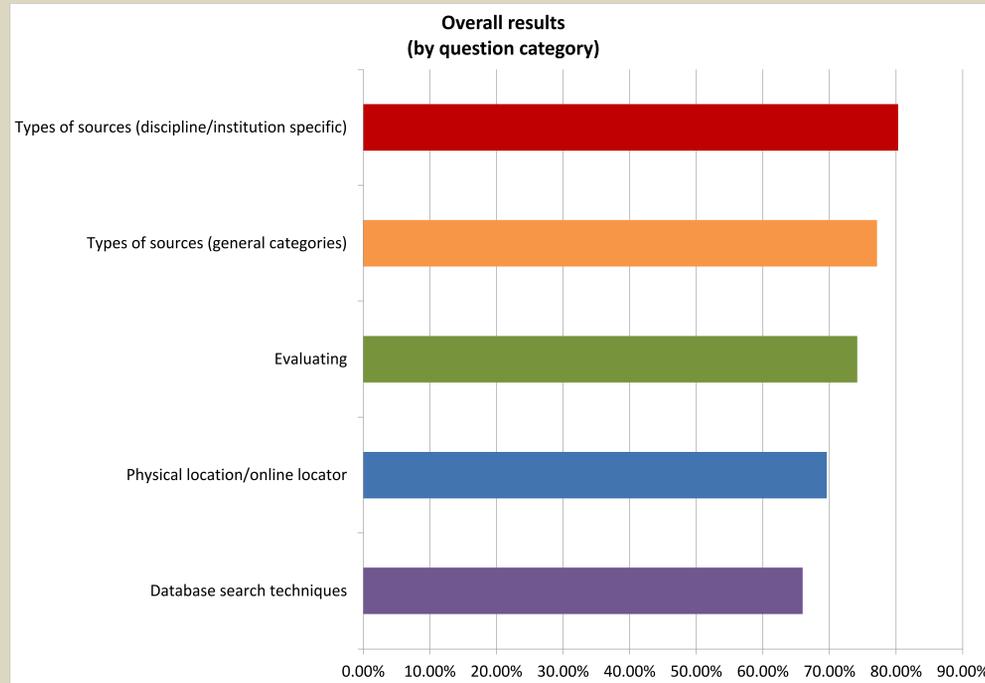
From fall 2010 to spring 2013, about 6400 WSU students (90%+ freshmen) took a ten question, multiple-choice, information literacy quiz. The ten questions any one student tackled were randomly generated from a bank of about 45 questions (the exact number varied over time).

This quiz, delivered in GenEd 110, Hist 120, and Hist 121, was taken online in either the WSU Libraries' Information Literacy Education learning management system, or later through Angel.

Students took the quiz after they studied the World Civilizations/History library tutorial at:

http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/electric/trainingmods/world_history/.

In nearly all instances, the score on the quiz (students had one attempt) became five percent of the student's overall grade in the course.



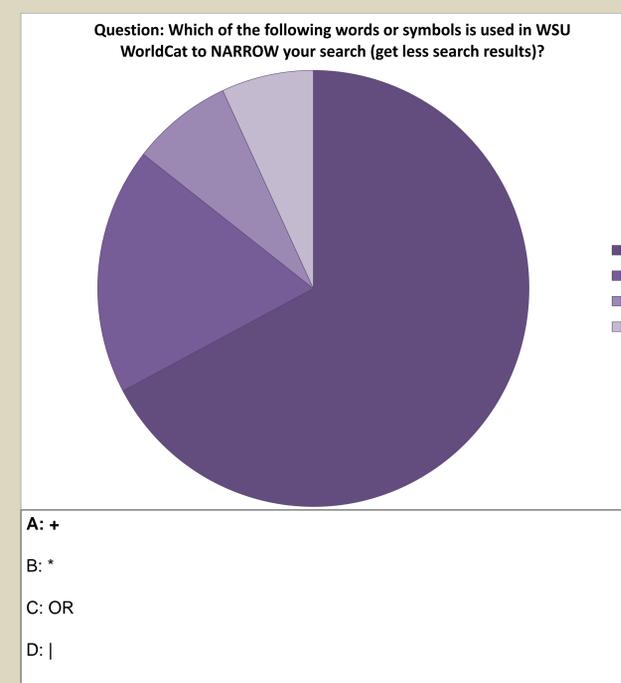
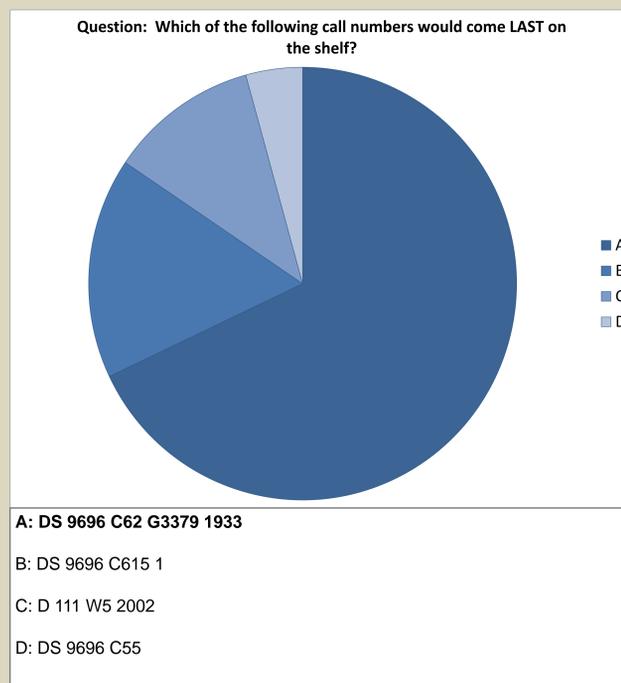
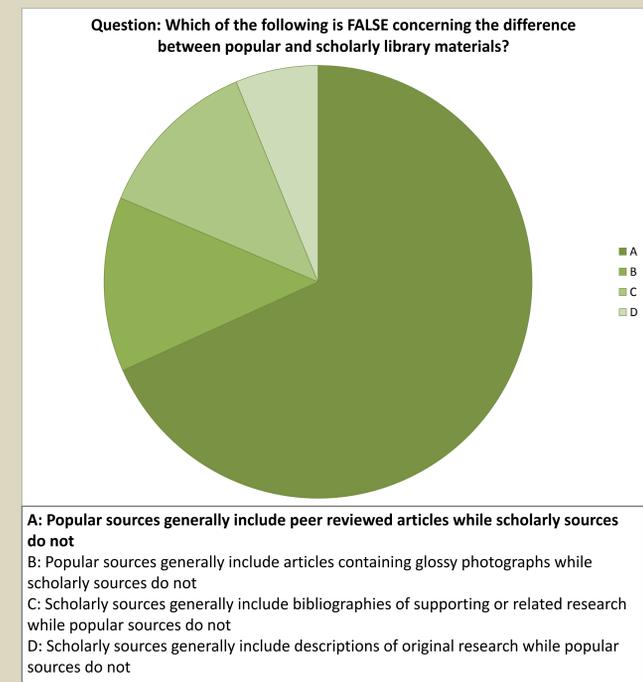
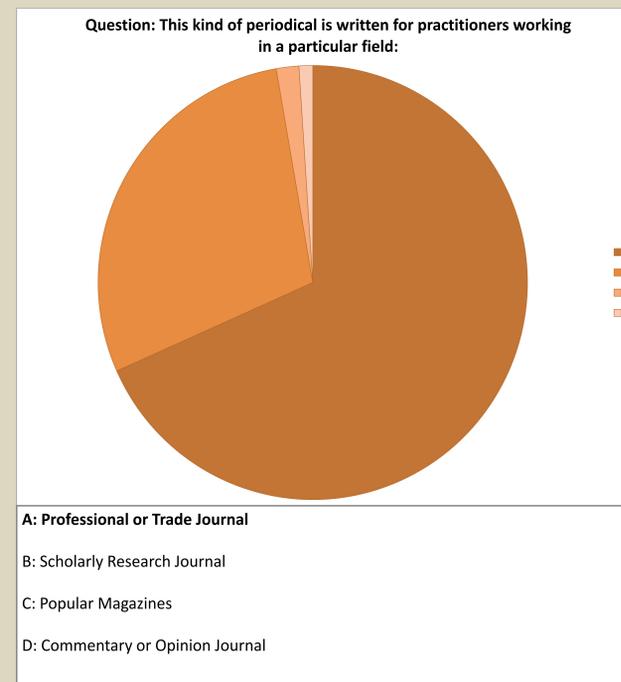
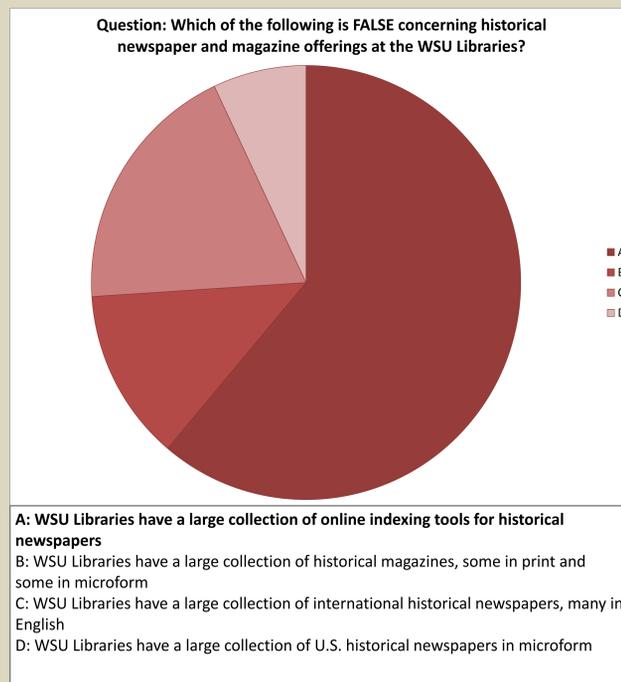
Results summary

Overall, students answered **correctly 72.98% (46905 / 64271)** of questions asked. They scored highest on questions relating to **identifying types of sources** and **evaluating source quality**.

Students struggled most with knowing the **physical locations** of varying kinds of library materials, understanding how to use **Boolean logic** and other **database search techniques**.

WSU Online students performed better than **Pullman campus students** overall and for each information literacy category (students from other campuses did not participate). The results did not change much over the three year period.

Sample question from each category



Future directions

- Tests for statistical significance have not been performed to explore the validity of the trends observed in the frequencies data. These tests will be run.
- The authors are currently inquiring about using this study in upcoming accreditation reports as a solid instance of systematic evaluation of a central undergraduate learning outcome.
- This study could also be replicated with upper division students and used to examine IL skill development over the entire undergraduate experience.