Ekstrom Library Information Literacy Program
Student Knowledge Practices

Introduction
The knowledge practices defined in this document are intended to inform pedagogy and guide content development for information literacy and library research instruction in face-to-face and online contexts. This document is not prescriptive but provides a general overview of the information literacy practices, skills, and modes of thinking that students should be working towards developing in UofL courses. Knowledge practices are defined within three broad categories:

- **Lower-Division Courses**: Students should begin to conceptualize research as a process of critical inquiry in which they are active participants. Students should begin to develop foundational skills in finding, evaluating, and using information for college-level research assignments.

- **Upper-Division Courses**: Students should conceptualize research from a disciplinary perspective and begin to contribute to the creation of new knowledge from that perspective. Students should develop more nuanced skills in finding, evaluating, and using information to explore discipline-specific research questions.

- **Graduate Courses**: Students should begin to make substantial contributions to a disciplinary or interdisciplinary body of knowledge. Students should develop highly advanced skills in finding, evaluating, using, and disseminating information as active participants in a scholarly or professional community.

The knowledge practices incorporate language from the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education. Additionally, while the practices should be considered discipline-neutral, the lower-division practices are based in part on the learning outcomes for the English 101-102 composition sequence at UofL, and the upper-division practices are based in part on learning outcomes from research methods courses in the social sciences and other areas. Librarians should approach the knowledge practices with flexibility, tailoring library sessions and online guides/modules/tutorials to the goals and objectives of particular courses and assignments.

Information literacy instruction supports student success with research in a wide variety of contexts at the university. Individual class sessions and the instruction program as a whole are primarily assessed through post-session student surveys and faculty surveys. Online instruction is assessed through quizzes, activities, and/or completion logs. Given the customized nature of instruction and the diverse needs of both students and faculty across academic programs, we do not systematically assess learning outcomes for the entire student population we serve. Rather, we use the knowledge practices in this document as the foundation for instructional design, including the development of assessment measures for individual library sessions and online learning objects.

**Student Knowledge Practices (Lower-Division Courses)**
Students who are developing their information literacy skills will:

- Formulate viable exploratory research questions, conceptualizing research as a process of critical inquiry and discovery. [Research as Inquiry; Searching as Strategic Exploration]

- Recognize search tools (such as library databases, online search engines, etc.) appropriate for specific purposes and conduct strategic information searches, revising research questions and search strategies as needed. [Research as Inquiry; Searching as Strategic Exploration]
• Distinguish among common types of information sources (including primary and secondary sources) and explain key differences in creation and dissemination processes (such as peer review) across digital and print contexts. [Authority Is Constructed and Contextual; Information Creation as Process]

• Evaluate the credibility and relevance of information sources, applying specific evaluative criteria appropriate for the research context or situation. [Authority Is Constructed and Contextual; Information Creation as Process]

• Identify select themes and several points of view within the “conversation” surrounding a particular issue or topic. [Scholarship as Conversation]

• Apply appropriate citation conventions, demonstrating knowledge of basic intellectual property concepts and ethics. [Information Has Value]

Student Knowledge Practices (Upper-Division Courses)
Students who are developing their information literacy skills will:

• Define specific lines of inquiry within a disciplinary context and utilize appropriate discipline-specific search tools to conduct advanced searches for scholarship, statistics/data, archival materials, or other relevant sources. [Research as Inquiry; Searching as Strategic Exploration]

• Identify authoritative information sources in a particular discipline and/or specialty area (such as key texts, scholars, etc.). [Authority Is Constructed and Contextual; Scholarship as Conversation]

• Evaluate and analyze the credibility and relevance of scholarly literature and other information sources through a disciplinary lens, with particular attention to evidence, assumptions, and implications. [Authority Is Constructed and Contextual]

• Demonstrate an awareness of both privileged and marginalized information sources (such as peer-reviewed sources, social media sources, etc.), recognizing the strengths and limitations of various points of view. [Authority Is Constructed and Contextual; Information Has Value]

• Synthesize significant themes and identify potential gaps in knowledge within the disciplinary “conversation” surrounding a particular issue or topic. [Research as Inquiry; Scholarship as Conversation]

• Apply discipline-specific citation conventions, demonstrating a more nuanced understanding of intellectual property concepts and ethics. [Information Has Value]

Student Knowledge Practices (Graduate Courses)
At the graduate level, students should continue to develop the practices defined for upper-division courses, in addition to the following:

• Distinguish among traditional venues (such as subscription-based journals and databases) and alternative venues (such as open access publications and social media) for the dissemination of scholarship and make informed choices about where to publish. [Information Creation as Process; Scholarship as Conversation]

• Evaluate the influence and impact of particular scholarly contributions in context, using appropriate disciplinary metrics, such as impact factor, altmetrics, etc. [Authority Is Constructed and Contextual; Information Has Value]

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• Identify the scope and potential limitations of a particular disciplinary perspective and recognize the potential value of additional disciplinary perspectives (i.e., interdisciplinarity). [Research as Inquiry; Scholarship as Conversation; Searching as Strategic Exploration]

• Apply relevant principles of copyright and fair use to the process of creating and disseminating scholarship, demonstrating an understanding of authors’ rights. [Information Creation as Process; Information Has Value]

• Organize and manage the information seeking process for large-scale research projects, using appropriate citation management tools and strategies. [Information Creation as Process; Searching as Strategic Exploration]