

## Profile of an Information Literate Student

An information literate student:

- Thinks about framing the question so that it is appropriate for the breadth and depth required for the research project, in the context of available resources and time for research;
- Ask questions for clarification after receiving an assignment;
- Knows where to start looking for information, is aware of a broad range of information sources (e.g., electronic and print periodicals, chapters in books, government documents, archival material, and microfilm), and can distinguish among the various types of resources (e.g., scholarly work, informed opinions of practitioners, and trade literature);
- Is familiar with major reference collections in his or her discipline and selects from among them appropriately;
- Conducts electronic database searches effectively (e.g., knows how to use quotation marks, Boolean operators such as or/and/not, and other technical strategies);
- Knows how to use discipline-specific strategies for field searches, such as archaeological recovery techniques, patient interviewing, or laboratory experimentation;
- Knows how to evaluate information sources;
- Is able to select key points from retrieved information and summarize them, rather than simply repeating material from research;
- Evaluates and explains or resolves contradictory information;
- Understands what plagiarism is and some of the complexities of copyright law, the ethical use of information, intellectual property, etc.;
- Has learned how to cite material appropriately and develop a bibliography;
- Confidently explores the recursive nature of the information literacy process to conduct research;
- Uses high-quality content and reflects evaluative thinking in the context of the student's academic level and discipline, as evidenced during classroom discussions, when writing papers, creating displays, or when speaking or performing publicly;
- Is able to develop new insights or theories, or discover previously unknown facts, based on material he or she already knew and the new information;
- Knows how to seek help from faculty members, reference librarians, and others outside the institution; and
- Recognizes that a set of specific information literacy skills is transferable and can be applied throughout life, for both professional and personal learning objectives.

This list was compiled as a result of two focus groups, one held at the University at Albany, State University of New York, and the other at Millersville University of Pennsylvania.