

## **NC Wesleyan College Information Competencies**

The ability to locate information efficiently and use it effectively is an essential factor in the success of our graduates' personal and professional lives. For students to be successful at Wesleyan and in their lives and careers, it is essential that they develop information literacy skills. These include the ability to recognize the need for information, and to locate, evaluate, organize, interpret, and communicate information in all formats. *The information competent student:*

### **1. Determines the nature and extent of the information needed.**

*Outcomes include but are not limited to:*

- 1a. Uses sources that are appropriate to the information need (i.e. assignment), such as:
  - encyclopedia article
  - book
  - magazine article
  - scholarly journal article
  - newspaper article
  - primary source
  - government publication
  - book and movie reviews
  - statistics
- 1b. Defines a research topic by conferring with instructors, participating in class discussions, peer workgroups, and electronic discussions.
- 1c. Uses general information reference sources to increase familiarity with the topic.
- 1d. Differentiates among major finding aids typically used in libraries: library catalog, research databases, Internet search engines.

### **2. Finds and uses search tools effectively, efficiently.**

- 2a. Finds and uses search tools appropriate to the task/assignment.
- 2b. Identifies the main concepts of a research topic and generate a list of search terms.
- 2c. Uses search strategies to find relevant information.
  - Examples of search strategies include but are not limited to:
    - Using keywords, synonyms, and/or subject headings to search for information on a topic.
    - Combining keywords or phrases to narrow search results.
    - Using vocabulary that is specific to the major or discipline to search for information.
    - Building a search strategy using AND, OR, NOT (Boolean operators)

### **3. Locates and obtains the information.**

- 3a. Uses item record information derived from electronic search tools to obtain materials.
  - Examples include but are not limited to:
    - Using library catalog records like Call Numbers and Library Locations to acquire materials in a library.
    - Using NetLibrary's Ebooks.
    - Using electronic research databases to print, email, and/or save electronic articles.
    - Using Journal Finder to locate articles in full text.

- 3b. Retrieves information in various formats both electronic and in person, including primary research through interviews, surveys and experiments, and the use of librarian services and Interlibrary Loan.

**4. Critically evaluates the information retrieved before using it.**

- 4a. Examines, compares, and evaluates information from more than one source for reliability, validity, accuracy, authority, timeliness, and perspective or bias.
- 4b. Distinguishes between primary and secondary sources.
- 4c. Evaluates the appropriateness of the source(s) to the task/assignment.
- 4d. Identifies omission in the coverage of a topic.
- 4e. Selects information that provides a history of evidence for a topic; such as the existence of a bibliography or evidence of support. (e.g. footnotes, references page)

**5. Organizes, Synthesizes, integrates, and ethically/legally applies information.**

- 5a. Organizes collected information that supports the purposes and format of the assignment. (e.g. outlines, drafts, presentations)
- 5b. Uses ideas and concepts gathered from information sources to create ideas, concepts, and/or conclusions that are new to the student.
- 5c. Understands plagiarism and paraphrases, summarizes, uses direct quotation, and cites information sources that they use in the completion of tasks/assignments.
- 5d. Demonstrates an understanding of institutional policies related to human subject research, when applicable.

The NCWC Information Skills Competencies were updated in 2008 from the version that was endorsed by faculty in 1998. All competencies have been adapted from Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Information Literacy Standards for Higher Education:  
<http://www.acrl.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/informationliteracycompetency.cfm#stan>

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