

ST. JOHNS RIVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE LIBRARIES
REFERENCE AND INFORMATION SERVICES POLICY MANUAL

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Nature of Information Service

The nature of information services, as provided by the Public Services Department at St. Johns River Community College Libraries (SJRCC) is primarily to provide both instruction and assistance to the users in pursuit of information.

Users of these libraries will be College trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, and students (SJRCC, continuing or adult education, dually-enrolled, distance learners, and St. Leo University) as well as local educators, St. Leo Faculty and community patrons from the counties of Putnam, St. Johns, and Clay.

The character and extent of reference services will vary with the type of library user, with top priority given to clientele SJRCC is designed to serve.

The types of information services provided are divided into three categories: (1) direct personal assistance to locate information resources; (2) revised formal and informal instruction in the use of the library and its resources; and (3) the provision of interlibrary loan services.

B. Statement of Objectives

The broad objective of Public Services¹ at SJRCC Libraries is to provide the environment, library services, resources and personnel that will help meet the information needs of the users. SJRCC Libraries concur with the *Position Statement on Information Literacy* (Appendix A) from the National Council on Learning Resources approved by the American Association of Community Colleges and are committed to providing the Information Literacy instruction critical to the success of our patrons in higher education and lifelong learning. Any limitations and restrictions concerning library users and library

¹ Public Services is the department in the library which provides reference services.

services, resources, environment, or personnel will be defined in the body of this document.

SJRCC Libraries are fully committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Meeting the needs of persons with disabilities is a major objective of the Public Services Department of SJRCC Libraries and of the Libraries as a whole. (See Section X., "Providing Information Services for Persons with Disabilities.")

C. Purpose of the Policy Manual

The purpose of this manual is to state the nature, scope, and objectives of information services as provided by Public Services at SJRCC Libraries. It is to provide guidance, by way of a written document, to all users of the library by explaining the full scope of reference services² that can be expected from Public Services.

This policy manual is based on the standards set forth in A Commitment to Information Services: Development Guidelines prepared by the Standards Committee, Reference and Adult Services Division of the American Library Association.

² Reference services and information services will be used interchangeably in this document.

II. TYPES OF SERVICES PROVIDED

A. General Statement

Reference service consists of essentially three elements as stated in the introduction: (1) assistance provided to users in pursuit of information either in-person, by telephone or via email; (2) formal and informal instruction in the use of the library and its resources; and (3) interlibrary loan.

B. Lists of Services

1. Specific services by patron group:

a. Information service at desk:

(1). Administrators and faculty:

Information service--answers to specific questions regarding statistics, bibliographies, etc. Answers to specific questions will be given in detail, if desired, to the administration and faculty of SJRCC. Depending on the nature of the question, the answer may require an extensive in-depth report consisting of several typed pages. The answer may be

brief as in the case of an address or statistic provided over the phone or by email. Public Services librarians will provide one-on-one training on the Internet and online databases to administrators and faculty, and periodically offer training workshops. Public Services librarians will also create bibliographies and pathfinders on demand for any faculty member or administrator requesting them. The specific needs of college administrators will come before all other users of the libraries --followed by faculty.

(2). Students and community patrons:

Since the library is part of a community college where skills and knowledge are taught, the idea of teaching others how to help themselves will be the policy as regards information services to students and patrons. The burden of time consuming research is not the reference librarian's responsibility; it is up to the user needing information to perform his or her own research.

The user is expected to retrieve from the online public access catalog (LINCCWeb) or appropriate index all necessary books and journal articles relevant to information needs with minimal assistance from the reference librarian. The labor of obtaining and retrieving relevant information for specific information needs will be the responsibility of the user as much as he or she is physically capable of doing so. (See Section X., "Providing Information Services for Persons with Disabilities.")

The reference librarian's role is to give assistance by way of formulating research strategies, suggestions and guidance to additional sources of information the patron may have overlooked, to explain the use and function of reference tools, and to suggest additional subject headings to consult. Bibliographies will not be produced by the reference librarian for individual patrons or students. Bibliographies and pathfinders will be created for student guidance if

the reference librarian sees a demand for a particular subject.

b. Email information service:

All library patrons may email the Public Services Librarian at any SJRCC campus library. They may either email directly from <<http://www.sjrcc.edu/libraries/publicservices.htm>> or use the Ask-A-Librarian feature found at <<http://www.linccweb.org/ask>>.

(Orange Park Campus: ericbiggs@sjrcc.edu)

(Palatka Campus: robbieallen@sjrcc.edu)

(St. Augustine Campus: roycebass@sjrcc.edu)

c. Instruction in the use of the library:

Formal library instruction is available for any college course offered by SJRCC upon request of the instructor. Topics frequently discussed include how to use the online public access catalog, electronic resources, reference books, and services such as interlibrary loan.

To orient new students to library services, librarians offer instruction to all

Composition I classes in order to explain library resources and services that will help students successfully research a topic and complete academic assignments.

This instruction is also provided for high school classes by scheduled appointment made several days in advance.

Brief informal instruction in how to use the library, its services, and resources are also provided to any individual student or patron when needed.

- d. Bibliographic verification of items in the library or outside the library:
Assistance will be provided for bibliographic verification of items in or outside the library--including assistance in obtaining items by purchase, copy or loan if materials are not available in the collection.

It is the responsibility of students and patrons to first consult the online public access catalog for bibliographic verification of books and journals in the libraries.

The Public Services librarians and Adjunct Librarians will always instruct library users on how to look up a particular author, title or subject and therefore it is extremely important that they are familiar and comfortable with using the LINCCWeb system. However, the student or patron is expected to actually do the search insofar as they are capable of doing so. (See Section X., "Providing Information Services for Persons with Disabilities.")

- e. Instruction in research methodology and bibliography:

The Public Services librarians will instruct the patron in how to perform a literature search and how to cite publications in a bibliography. For the latter task, the librarian directs the inquiring patron to the "Cite Your Sources" link on the Library's website at <http://sjrcc.edu/libraries/>.

- f. Assistance in locating library materials:

Retrieval of library materials (books, magazines, microforms, etc.) will be provided for persons with disabilities. Assistance in locating and retrieving library materials will be provided for students and patrons once they have informed the librarian that they have personally looked but were unable to locate the material they were seeking.

2. Interlibrary loan service:

a. Borrowing:

Trustees, administrators, staff, emeritus, faculty and retired faculty have the privilege of borrowing books and journal articles through the SJRCC Libraries' interlibrary loan service.

The Libraries will also provide interlibrary loan service to currently registered SJRCC students who are in good standing. St. Leo Faculty and St. Leo students, who are not dually-enrolled at SJRCC, are provided interlibrary loan service through the Cannon Memorial Library at St. Leo University.

Community patrons and Continuing/Adult Education students do not have interlibrary loan privileges in the SJRCC Libraries. These patrons will be referred to the nearest public library.

b. Renewing:

Renewal of ILL materials is at the lending library's discretion. Overdue items cannot be renewed.

c. Lending:

The SJRCC Libraries will lend books and photocopy journal articles that are part of its collection to fulfill interlibrary loan requests from other libraries. The loan period will be up to the discretion of the individual libraries. Generally, no charge will be assessed for this service.

No reference, oversized, rare books, magazines, or A/V materials will be interlibrary loaned.

3. Intralibrary loan service:

Intralibrary loan service (borrowing and lending among the SJRCC Libraries) will be provided for all patrons.

4. Information Literacy:

Bibliographies and other handouts will be created on any subject at the request of an instructor or college administrator. They will also be created based upon the needs of students and other patrons. Bibliographies will not be created for any individual student or patron.

5. Correspondence--answering inquiries from individuals:

The reference librarian will answer email, chat, and snail mail inquiries within the resources of the College's library. The reference librarian will make information referrals when necessary.

6. Photocopying:

If college administrators or faculty members need sections of a book, journal, or document photocopied, they may do so, provided that the request lies within the restraints of the copyright laws. Copies of a personal nature can be made on the copier provided for the public at a small fee per page.

7. Orientation and instructional services:

Librarians will provide instruction to all library users. Information Literacy tours of the library are available to all college courses offered by SJRCC. These orientation tours will cover the library's services and resources.

The Public Services Department welcomes requests from faculty members for any desired lecture concerning any part of the library and its services. The Public Services Department does request that faculty notify the reference librarian at least three days in advance so that there is sufficient time to schedule and prepare the lecture.

The librarian reserves the right to reschedule the time and date of any lecture due to illness of staff or excessive demands placed upon reference services by library users.

8. Open Computer Lab:

The computer lab is open to trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, St. Leo University Instructors and currently enrolled students (SJRCC, continuing or adult education,

dually-enrolled, distance learners and St. Leo)
of St. Johns River Community College.

Assistance will be provided to users of SJRCC's Open Computer Labs in accordance with the previously stated scope of reference services. The reference librarian's role is to explain the use and function of online reference tools and to suggest additional sources, subject headings or terms to be used. Students needing bibliographic and citation information will be directed to the "Cite Your Sources" link on the Library's website at <http://sjrcc.edu/libraries/>.

Assistance is also provided by Open Lab Assistants for basic software functions; however, in depth tutorials on the intricacies of specific software programs are outside the scope of reference services.

III. LIBRARY USERS

A. General Statement

Eligible users of the libraries include SJRCC trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, St. Leo University instructors and students (SJRCC, continuing or adult education, dually-enrolled,

distance learners and St. Leo), reciprocal borrowers (Any student enrolled at a Florida Community College or State University) as well as local educators and community patrons from the tri-county area of Putnam, Clay and St. Johns. Community patrons must be at least 18 years old. Patrons under the age of eighteen are welcome to visit the library but must be constantly accompanied and supervised by an adult.

B. Categories of Users

The users of the library consist of the following categories: (1) administrators, trustees, and faculty (2) career employees, (3) adjunct faculty, (4) students (SJRCC, continuing or adult education, distance learners, St. Leo University, or dually-enrolled), (5) local educators, (6) community patrons from the tri-county area and (7) reciprocal borrowers (Any student enrolled at a Florida Community/State College or State University).

IV. USER PRIORITY

Different users of the libraries will have slightly different rights to the totality of reference and information services as described herein.

The information needs of the college community--its faculty, students and administrators--will be the primary priority.

The information needs of community patrons and reciprocal borrowers will be the secondary priority.

However, within these categories, walk-in patrons are served first. Telephone requests from students or community patrons will be processed as time permits and after walk-in patrons are assisted. Email requests will be addresses as soon as possible.

V. DESK SERVICE POLICIES AND INSTRUCTIONS

A. General Guidelines for Desk Duty

1. Nature and extent of responsibilities:

The Public Services area will have a reference desk situated near the public access computers and reference book collection to assist patrons in finding the information they need.

The reference librarian's role is that of an educator who teaches patrons how to use reference tools so that they may find answers to questions

themselves. In other words, the reference librarian helps teach patrons how to help themselves.

2. Guidelines for handling inquiries:

These guidelines may vary at each campus library. Guidelines for handling general inquiries are as follows: general information questions (e.g. ready reference) will be answered at the reference desk by using ready-reference tools.

The emphasis at all times will be to help the users help themselves through instruction and guidance. If a question is beyond the scope of the collection, the librarian will suggest other nearby libraries or information centers.

3. Behavior and attitudes:

Services rendered by the professional librarian will follow the Library Bill of Rights and ALA's Code of Ethics.

a. Approachability:

A user-friendly attitude will be displayed to all library patrons.

The information needs of the patron at the desk will take priority over phone information requests--except those phone inquiries by college administrators and faculty.

b. Mobility:

There are times when services will require the librarian to leave the desk and go to other parts of the library. However, the librarian will be visible and accessible to all patrons as much as possible. The librarian will not be expected to travel outside of the library to other parts of the campus to answer any reference question.

4. Recording statistics and questions:

Each day, the reference librarian records Public Services statistics for the following categories: (1) General Questions, (2) Student Services Questions, (3) Reference Questions, (4) Telephone Questions, (5) Email Questions, (6) Ask-a-Librarian Questions, and (7) Information Literacy. At the end of the month, all monthly statistics will be compiled and submitted to the Campus Librarian or the Dean of Library Services.

5. Reporting problems:

Problems such as natural disasters, medical emergencies, violent, irate or perverted behavior will be reported immediately to appropriate college staff, depending on the problem. If the librarian in charge feels that the emergency presents imminent danger, the city police or sheriff will be called at 911.

B. General Instructions for Library Assistants:

Library assistants and student aides working in the library assist patrons at the circulation desk, shelve library items and help with any projects that the Circulation Manager and Librarians may have for them. Their tasks will generally not include information services. They are instructed not to give personal assistance to users in pursuit of information; formal or informal instruction in the use of the library or on-line information sources; or give advice or assistance in interlibrary loans. These tasks are reserved for the professional librarian on duty at the information desk. However, an assistant may answer general questions for students/patrons (e.g. Where is the public access catalog or How do I go about printing my document?) and provide basic software assistance (e.g. How do I save, print, Etc.?)

Library assistants are responsible for referring any reference questions to the reference librarian on duty. If a professional librarian is not available, patrons are to complete a "Reference/Research Question Referral" form so that the reference librarian can respond to the request for information when he/she returns.

C. Telephone Services

1. Incoming calls:

a. General guidelines:

In general, the time involved answering incoming telephone reference questions will be kept to a minimum. All incoming telephone reference questions will be referred to the reference librarian on duty at the reference desk. The questions of users who are actually in the library will be given priority over phone queries, the exception being faculty and administration phone queries. Every effort will be made to acknowledge the patron waiting for assistance.

Reference/Research Question Referral sheets are located near the telephone in the circulation area so that questions can be written down. The

caller is told that the question will be answered as soon as possible. Ready-reference questions from students or patrons will be answered by phone in the above manner. A "ready-reference" question is one that can be answered within approximately five minutes-- usually from a single source (e.g. The World Almanac). If the question is of a research nature, patrons will be invited to come to the library and speak with the reference librarian on duty about resources to consult in the library so that they may do their own research.

b. Paging patrons:

The Privacy Act governs the notification of patrons. It is the policy of the Library that any telephone calls requesting patrons to be paged will be transferred to the local campus' 24/7 security telephone.

The Library will page a patron only at the request of the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs, the College Security Department or any law enforcement agency.

c. Checking for a library item:

Computers to access LINCCWeb, the online public access catalog, are available in the library.

If a patron calls to request information on library holdings from the online public access catalog, the search will be conducted if it does not involve more than three titles. All searches will be made immediately when possible. If an immediate response is not possible, the librarian will contact the patron when the search is completed.

d. Circulation inquiries (checking shelves for materials):

The library provides open stacks for patrons to freely browse and find the information resources they need. All users are encouraged to find information on their own from the electronic resources, books, magazines, or audiovisuals, available in the library.

If a patron other than an administrator or faculty member calls and asks whether a title is physically on the shelves, the patron is told that the library is an open-stacks library; as such, each patron is expected to search for his or her materials as far as he or

she is capable of doing so. (See Section X., "Providing Information Services for Persons with Disabilities.")

e. Personal calls:

The librarian on duty at the reference desk should refrain from making excessive personal telephone calls to outside parties. Likewise, the librarian on reference desk duty should also try to abstain from receiving personal phone calls from outside parties as much as possible.

f. Emergency and nuisance calls:

For the most part, emergency phone calls for patrons to the library will be immediately referred either to the security guard on duty or another appropriate party. (For a more complete explanation, see "Paging patrons" p.19). No collect phone calls are accepted by the library.

Occasionally, the library is the recipient of "nuisance" phone calls. Such phone calls will be defined as those which request (or demand) excessive library services over the phone. In

such a case, the patron will be told the policy of information service over the phone as explained in this document. The patron will be politely but firmly requested to visit our facilities to seek their own information. In short, the policy is that telephone information requests must be limited to quick, ready reference questions and not excessive research questions.

g. Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD):

The phone number of the Florida Relay Service (FRS) is available at each campus library. When a patron with a hearing disability needs to contact the library by phone, he or she is able to call the FRS number using a TDD; FRS will then contact the library and relay the patron's message. Likewise, library staff can call the FRS "voice" phone number with a message for the patron, and FRS will call the patron on a TDD. Each campus library is equipped with a video phone for hearing impaired patrons.

2. Outgoing calls:

a. General guidelines for making calls:

Reference questions are accepted over the

telephone. The reference librarian will decide at the time of the phone call whether or not to write the message down and call back later, or answer the question immediately.

b. Patron use of phone:

In emergencies, patrons will be permitted to use the phone at the Reference Desk provided a staff member dials the number.

c. Personal calls:

Personal calls by librarians on duty are acceptable, but they must be kept to a minimum.

D. Circulation Functions of Information Staff

1. Reference books and other restricted materials:

a. Reference collection:

Reference books as a rule do not circulate. Only the Public Services librarian will make the decision regarding the check-out of any reference book on a case-by-case basis. Some reference books, due to their expense or difficulty to replace should they be lost, will never be checked out (e.g.: Groves Dictionary of Music). Other books will be considered depending on the needs of the patron, cost of

the books, and ease with which they may be purchased again should they become lost.

b. Audio Visual Materials:

The SJRCC Libraries own a collection of videocassette tapes and DVDs. Students may check out three circulating videos at a time for a three-day loan period. SJRCC faculty, administrators and staff have a three-week loan limit.

2. Authorizing extended loans of periodicals:

Periodicals will be circulated to college trustees, administrators, faculty and staff. The length of check-out time will depend upon the need of the user and to what degree the journal is needed by other users in the library. Periodicals will be recalled after five workdays.

Back issues of Spanish language periodicals can be checked-out by students for three days.

E. Responsibility for Services During Night, and

Skeleton Coverage:

Public Services Librarians are scheduled to work during evening library hours. In the case that no librarian is available to do reference work due to

illness or a "skeleton" coverage situation, the library staff on duty at the circulation desk will complete a "Reference/Research Question Referral" form provided for this purpose. The patron will be contacted as soon as possible by the next reference librarian on duty.

In the case that the Circulation Manager or a Circulation Assistant is not available to do circulation duties due to illness or a "skeleton" coverage situation, the librarian on duty will assist library patrons with their circulation needs. Therefore, it is extremely important that the Public Services Librarians and Adjunct Librarians remain current with the use of the library management system, Aleph.

F. Referrals

1. Information:

If a reference question cannot be answered within the scope of the library's resources, the librarian on duty will suggest other possible outside sources to the patron.

2. Other libraries and services:

The patron may be referred to other libraries, which will have a high probability of meeting the information need.

G. Online Public Access Catalog Service

Inquiries about the catalog:

The librarian on duty will handle inquiries from students and patrons on how to use the online public access catalog. Therefore, the Public Services Librarians must remain current with the online public access catalog and its databases. The patron may also be given advice as to additional search strategies to use in order to expand the research. Patrons, after being instructed, will be expected to perform their own research in the online public access catalog. The librarian will not be expected to actually look up entries in the catalog if the patron is capable of doing so. The emphasis of Public Services will be to help patrons help themselves by teaching them how to use the library and its services. (For service to individuals with disabilities, see p.32)

H. Questions for Exams, Quizzes, Puzzles

The role of the librarian is to educate patrons in using information sources and not to answer questions regarding test items or puzzles for patrons.

I. Genealogical Questions

Patrons desiring answers to genealogical questions will be referred to the local public library in their county.

VI. INFORMATION LITERACY SERVICES

A. Reference-initiated

Bibliographies for various college departments and divisions will be created by the reference librarian without a formal request from the department. The library attempts to advertise the holdings of the reference collection to division heads, faculty and students. Bibliographies and pathfinders will not be created for individual patrons. However, they will be created based upon the needs of students and patrons.

User guides, help sheets, and fact sheets are provided for nonprint and electronic reference tools.

B. Users' Requests of Bibliographic Services

1. Individuals:

Bibliographies are not created at the request of a student or patron. This service will be provided, however, for administrators or faculty.

2. Courses:

Faculty members who request bibliographies covering their course material will be readily accommodated. A reasonable amount of time is needed in order to create the document that is required.

3. Administrative staff:

Administrative staff members who wish to have bibliographies created for them will have this service provided immediately.

VII. INFORMATION CORRESPONDENCE

A. General Information

Requests, traditional or electronic, sent to the reference librarian will be answered as soon as possible. If the request contains a research question that may involve a considerable amount of time to answer, the patron may be advised to visit our library and conduct his or her own research. The patron may be referred to another library if the question goes beyond the scope of the collection.

B. Bibliographical Information (Holdings)

Requests sent to the reference librarian concerning the library holdings for select bibliographical information will be answered as soon as possible. If

the list of desired holdings is excessive, the reference librarian may advise the patron to visit the library website and consult our online public access catalog or periodical holdings list.

C. Surveys

All surveys will be forwarded to the Dean of Library Services.

VIII. PHOTOCOPYING SERVICES

Photocopy machines will be provided for all library patrons. There is a per page fee.

Administrators and faculty have access to the library photocopier for copying library-related materials. Usage will be recorded on the log provided. There is a limit of 25 copies per month. Personal copies can be made on the copier provided for the public at a small fee per page. Special arrangements are made for evening faculty.

Requests from college administration and/or faculty for photocopies of any library print material will be filled as soon as possible. If faculty request excessive amounts of photocopies (e.g. 25 pages or more), they will be advised to check the material out temporarily and have the copying done by faculty support staff. All other

library patrons are responsible for making their own photocopies, unless they have disabilities. (The librarian will gladly assist patrons with disabilities. For more information, see Section X., "Providing Information Services for Persons with Disabilities.")

IX. ORIENTATION AND INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

See: II. B. 1. b. & d. and II. B. 6.

X. PROVIDING INFORMATION SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

A. The ADA and SJRCC Libraries

SJRCC Libraries are equal access/equal opportunity institutions, providing services and resources in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Each library's ADA Committee is responsible for surveying the needs of the users and implementing the necessary policies and procedures needed for recommended changes. Each campus library has a copy of its survey and progress report available for public inspection.

The SJRCC Libraries provide information concerning accessible services for individuals with disabilities. This information will be available in accessible formats. The Libraries provide services to

persons with disabilities that afford equal opportunity to obtain the same result, gain the same benefit and reach the same level of achievement as that provided to others.

All patrons (regardless of disabilities) may make appointments for individual services.

B. Patrons with Visual Disabilities

The reference librarian will physically perform all functions to aid these patrons in using the library. The library does not provide a reader service but does have Assistive Technologies.

1. Information service--same as services stated in part II of this manual.
2. Bibliographic verification--performed by reference librarian as needed.
3. Instruction in use of library--provided by the reference librarian.
4. Instruction in research methodology--provided by the reference librarian.

5. Assistance in locating material--all material/equipment will be retrieved by the reference librarian/library staff as needed.

C. Patrons with Physical Disabilities

The reference librarian will physically perform all functions to aid this patron in using the library. For persons with physical disabilities, the reference librarian/library staff will provide:

1. Information service--same as services listed in part II of this manual. The librarian will make all information accessible.
2. Bibliographic verification--same as for general patron. If needed, functions will be performed by the reference librarian.
3. Instruction in use of library--same as for the general patron except all information will be made accessible or performed by the reference librarian/library staff.
4. Instruction in research methodology--same as for general patron.
5. Assistance in locating material--if necessary, all

material will be retrieved by the reference librarian/library staff.

D. Patrons with Hearing Disabilities

The reference librarian and library staff will perform any functions that will aid this patron in using the library. The staff will employ any communication techniques (note writing, gestures, etc.) that are necessary in order to communicate with the patron. For information on TDD communication, see page 23. Video phones are accessible at each campus.

1. Information service--same as services listed in part II of this manual. The librarian will make all information accessible.
2. Bibliographic verification--same as for general patron. If needed, functions will be performed by the reference librarian.
3. Instruction in use of library--same as for the general patron except all information will be made accessible through appropriate communication methods and written documentation.
4. Instruction in research methodology--same as for

general patron and facilitated through appropriate communication methods and written documentation.

5. Assistance in locating material--if necessary, material and equipment will be retrieved by the reference librarian/library staff.

XI. Handling Complaints and Commendations

A. Complaints

Patrons are urged to fill out the suggestions form, "TELL US!" All complaints will be sent to the Dean of Library Services and will be handled discreetly by examining the nature of the complaint and dealing with it accordingly.

B. Commendations

Commendations are graciously accepted and shared with the person(s) being commended.

Appendix A

AACC Position Statement on Information Literacy

An important element of both teaching and learning in today's information age is information literacy -- the set of skills needed to find, access, retrieve, analyze, synthesize and use information effectively and ethically. A community college curriculum offers students an array of general education and workforce content through credit and noncredit coursework, continuing education and distributed education. Effective curricula offer both current and classic content across disciplines within a design that engages students, meets their learning needs, aids in student success in courses and retention in academic programs. Best practices in curriculum design and content include active learning techniques, a variety of formats that take learners beyond the textbook, the establishment of context, real life relevance, the integration of technology, meaningful assessment, and an integration of critical thinking that promotes the questioning and discussion of ideas. Classroom faculty should partner with library and learning resource center staff to form instructional teams to encourage information literacy outcomes in credit and noncredit instruction.

Information literacy, which encompasses information fluency and information technology mastery, is critical to success in higher education and lifelong learning. Rapid and continual changes in technology and the proliferation of information resources present students with an abundance of information through a variety of vetted and unvetted formats. This wide variety of choices raises questions about the reliability, authenticity, and validity of content and poses challenges for students trying to evaluate, understand, and apply the information. The Association of College and Research Libraries, in its Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education, notes that information literacy is considered a key outcome by several regional and discipline-specific accreditation bodies because of its close ties to students' competency with evaluating, managing, and using information.

Community college students must be information literate learners who can:

- Determine the extent of information needed
- Access needed information effectively and efficiently
- Evaluate information and its sources critically
- Incorporate selected information into their own knowledge base
- Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- Understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information
- Access and use information ethically.

Colleges should identify and provide personnel and resources appropriate for providing information literacy skills for all students.

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