

# Teamwork Makes the Dream Work:

## *Bringing the Campus Together Around Information Literacy*

Information literacy works best when it is applied across multiple settings and consistently to all students. That being said, this isn't something a library can do on its own. The following case study features libraries and librarians who have forged diverse partnerships to cultivate stronger IL skills across the first year experience.

### Building Relationships for Consistent Instruction at Dickinson College



Dickinson College's Waidner-Spahr Library attributes the success of its IL program to the spirit of continuous and collegial collaboration between the library and its campus partners. In particular, they have focused on three strategies:

- 1 Teaching FYE faculty how to embed IL in their assignments
- 2 Working with administrators to optimize instruction
- 3 Using the library space to host events and entice new opportunities

#### Teaching the Teachers

In partnership with the Writing Center, the library co-sponsors a workshop for FYE faculty, during which they discuss best practices for writing and research. One concept they brought to the faculty was "stealth lessons" in IL. For example, early in the semester students were required to read a scholarly article and answer questions about it. The catch was students had to retrieve the article on their own (after reading instructions or watching an online tutorial), rather than having it handed to them. This simple change in pedagogy has supported the library and helped students by acclimating them to the library's website, providing hands on research experience, and allowing librarians to focus on more advanced topics during in-class sessions.



#### Reaching Out to Administrators to Enhance Learning

With academic integrity being of the utmost importance to the college, the Waidner-Spahr Library was asked to work with the Provost's office to teach academic integrity and plagiarism avoidance via an online tutorial required of all new students. Following this successful engagement, the library teamed up with Academic Advising to give remedial help and additional support to struggling students. Some other relationships that have yielded meaningful results for the library include:

- **Academic Support Offices:** working to improve instructional librarians' teaching styles and learning spaces to better accommodate all students
- **Race and Ethnicity Center:** helping staff members recognize and avoid implicit bias
- **Disability Services:** broadening accessibility of spaces and resources for all users

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### **A Hub for Collaboration**

The library at Dickinson is a hub where student success across academic divisions and extracurricular activities is highlighted, helping the building function as an important gathering space. Students from all class levels can participate in library-sponsored events such as awards ceremonies, poetry readings, internship panels, and art displays. These outreach efforts maximize student exposure to library services while keeping the library staff engaged with the community.

When surveyed about the effectiveness of library instruction in the First Year Seminar, **95% of faculty reported that students applied some or all IL skills to the extent expected.**

### **Library Leadership: Actively the FYE at Bryant University**



**Bryant**  
UNIVERSITY

Bryant University is known for its rigorous academic programs, first year student experience, emphasis on students problem-solving in creative ways, and a campus-wide focus on student success. The Douglas and Judith Krupp Library embraces this with its own culture of flexibility, experimentation, and collaboration.

### **Innovating Within the Library and With Campus Departments**

In 2012, Bryant University launched the First-Year Gateway Program. When the library was chosen to help identify the skills deemed most important for graduates, librarians advocated for IL to be included as one of the program's five key learning outcomes. This proved an essential framework for what came next. The library helped create a Writing Workshop for all first year students, establishing an embedded librarian in each section of the course, and enabling the library to see all first year students within the course.

### **Forging Partnerships for Student Success**

Bryant developed its summer bridge course with input from the Associate Director of Library Services, an E-learning specialist, and subject matter experts from Undergraduate Advising and the Academic Center for Excellence. The goal was to build an engaging online experience that would help transition incoming students through issues such as university jargon, navigating the learning management system, joining a scholarly community, and more. As the program has progressed, different campus groups have been included to provide continual assessment, improvements, and updates.

Students have reported feeling more knowledgeable, engaged, and at ease with their transition after taking the course.

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**When the library extends its reach across campus, everybody wins. Faculty learn about more and better resources for their discipline; students become more integrated into the academic community while building essential IL skills; and institutional goals like retention, graduation, and employability all benefit too.**

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