

# **Strengthening Multi-literacies through Departmental Collaborations**

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# ABSTRACT



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- ❖ Transitioning to college can be daunting especially with regards to the rigors and expectations of academic writing. In addition, grappling with diverse skills of college reading, writing, research, information literacy, termed “multi-literacy” in this context requires collaboration for students to make seamless transition.
- ❖ This study uses a first-year composition course to demonstrate how the research plan for an argumentative essay enhanced quality departmental collaboration. The instructor explained the writing style; the librarian provided guidance with DIL provisions; and the writing center oversaw the outlines and first draft of the essay.
- ❖ The collaboration showed that constructive partnerships through multi-literacy provide student-centered and better research skills for freshmen.

# Introduction

College experience can be exciting as well as demanding. Demanding because the skill sets required for making a smooth transition varies. These skills are critical thinking, writing, comprehension, research and information literacy. We summed these skills as multi-literacy.

## **Literacies defined:**

Literacy was previously associated with the reading and writing of print-based text (Thibaut and Curwood, 2018).



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# Introduction Continues....

Currently, the term literacy has changed and expanded to include:

- i. Visual Literacy.
- ii. Textual Literacy.
- iii. Digital Literacy.
- iv. Technological Literacy.
- v. Information literacy
- vi. Financial literacy
- vii. Media literacy etc



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# Introduction continues...

## Multi-literacies defined:

Stornaiulolo, et al. (2009) defined multiliteracy as literacy that understands negotiation of multiple linguistic and cultural differences through the design and redesign processes of learning situation. Jacobs (2013) cautioned that multi-literacies are not limited to digital technologies.

It captures the idea of integrated learning which is supposed to help students retain important information and develop the ability to visualize the large interrelated learning environment without missing the focal point.



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# Contextualization of Multi-literacies

- The concept of multi-literacy is understood from different perspectives; therefore, it is important to put in context.
- At the heart of the Library, Writing instructor and Writing Center collaboration in freshmen classes are information literacy, scholarly sources, ethical use of sources, academic writing strategies. We intended to integrate these skill sets in one collaboration.
- Therefore, multi-literacy in this collaboration combines the aforementioned competencies.



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## Problem statement and necessities of this collaboration

- The AUN Library does not have dedicated class sessions to reflect an inclusion of information literacy skills in the curriculum.
- The instructor works with library staff and learning resources to enhance academic writing and inculcate the ethical use of scholarly sources in research papers.
- The library collaborates with instructors to teach information and digital literacy skills to students.
- The writing center liaise with the instructor to mentor students on writing strategies

Therefore, these three departments need productive collaborations to achieve their respective goals

# Objectives of the collaboration



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- ✓ To teach the students the research process
- ✓ To emphasize to students the place of the library in scholarly research
- ✓ To show the students the various support services available for smooth transition into college research.
- ✓ To evaluate the impact of the collaboration on student research and writing skills.



# Methodology

The collaboration focused on first year students in a composition class.

1. The students are taught what argumentative writing comprises.
2. The students had a DIL tutorial with the library staff.
3. The students are given an assignment to produce a research plan for an approved argumentative topic.
4. The students are instructed to meet with writing center and library staff for specific components of their assignment.



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# Methodology continues ...

**The task of the assignment are as follows:**

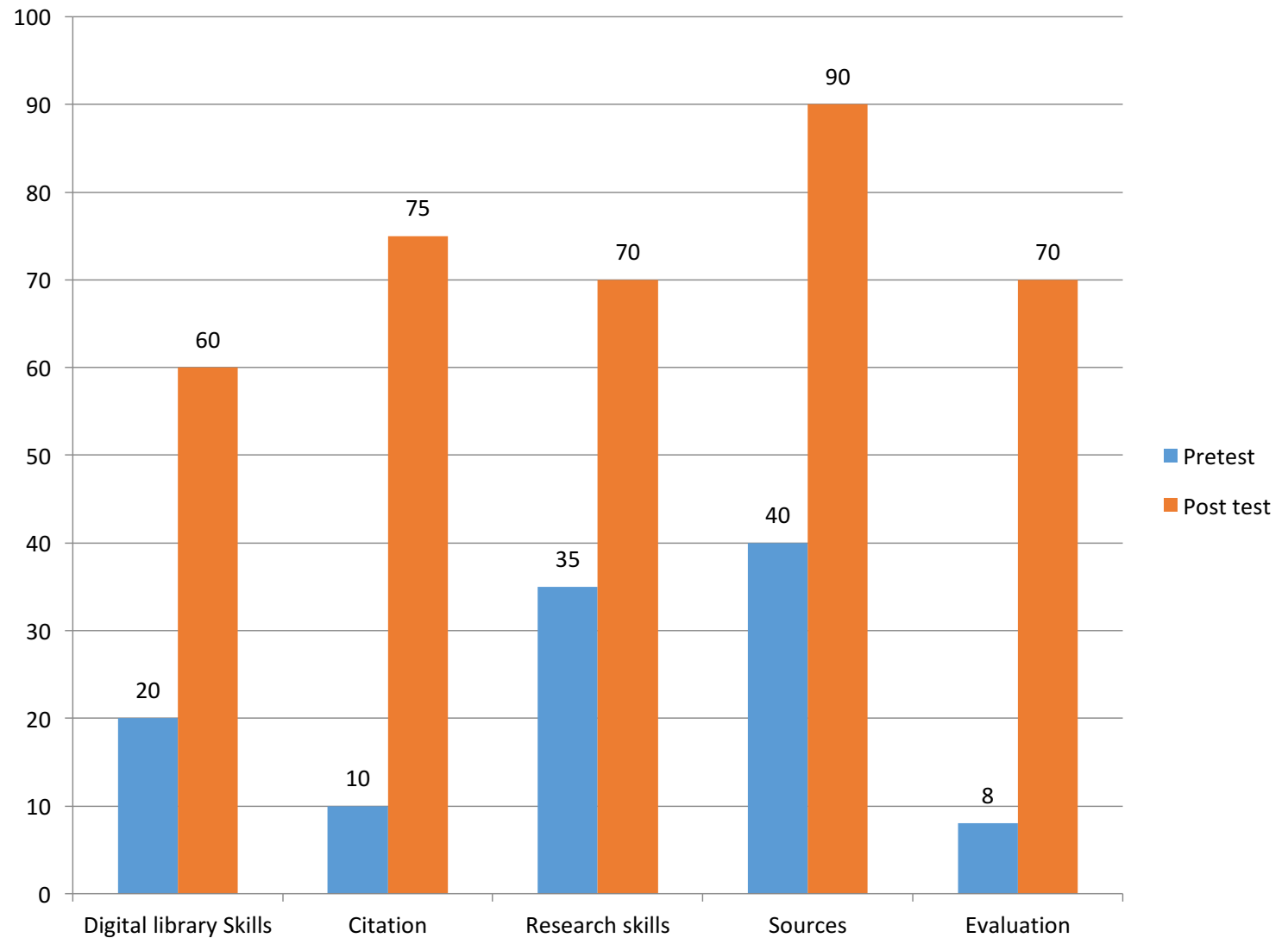
1. What's your general topic?
2. Refine (narrow down) your topic.
3. Create a clear argumentative thesis statement.
4. Determine your points in favor of the topic and list them.
5. Find 4 to 5 key sources using the CRAAP Test to evaluate your information sources between 2013 and 2020.
6. Anticipate the opinions opposing your topic and list them.
7. Find 3 key sources to support number 3.
8. List which library database used for numbers 5 and 7.
9. Name which of the library staff you consulted with for guidance with numbers 1, 2, 3, 5, 7 and 8.
10. Write an outline for your essay showing the introduction, body and conclusion.
11. Write the first draft of your introduction.
12. Organize your sources as a tentative works cited page in MLA.
13. Visit the Writing Center, drop in your assignment, and follow through the processes to have a stamp issued.
14. Submit the hard copy and upload same on Canvas on the designated date(s).



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# Comparing pre and Post test Survey

Chart



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# Conclusion

- i. The collaboration recorded an impressive student performance on student research and writing skills.
- ii. Students were comfortable with the mentorship at the Writing Center.
- iii. The students became conversant with research processes and steps, and this provided win-win outcomes for all departments involved.



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