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Integrating the Information Search Process into One-Shot Course-Related Information Literacy Instruction: Experiences at Bennett College for Women

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Integrating the Information Search Process Into One-Shot Course-Related Information Literacy Instruction: Experiences at Bennett College for Women

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One-Shot Challenges

Information literacy instruction focuses on engaging students in critical thinking about the process of research; however:

- 50-75 minutes to cover everything.
- No opportunity for follow-up unless the student comes back to the library.
- Session may not be tied to a particular assignment or assignments.
- Faculty expect resource coverage.
One Approach: Kuhlthau’s Information Search Process (ISP)*

- Provides a framework for explaining the research process to students while balancing in coverage of resources.
- Places focus on the cognitive (thoughts), affective (feelings), and physical (actions) aspects of research.
- Helps the librarian draw connections between his or her own experiences as a researcher and those of the student.

# Kuhlthau’s ISP Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISP Stage</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Feelings</th>
<th>Thoughts</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Task Initiation</td>
<td>Prepare to Choose Topic</td>
<td>Uncertainty</td>
<td>Ambiguity</td>
<td>Seeking Relevant Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Topic Selection</td>
<td>Choose Topic</td>
<td>Optimism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Prefocus Exploration</td>
<td>Seek Focus Through Initial Information Gathering</td>
<td>Confusion, Frustration, Doubt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Focus Formulation</td>
<td>Find Focus</td>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Information Collection</td>
<td>Collect Focused Information</td>
<td>Sense of Direction / Confidence</td>
<td>Specificity</td>
<td>Seeking Pertinent Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Search Closure</td>
<td>Conclude Information Gathering</td>
<td>Relief</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Starting Writing</td>
<td>Produce Paper or Project</td>
<td>Satisfaction or Dissatisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Integrating the ISP Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISP Stage</th>
<th>Session Translation</th>
<th>Feelings Addressed</th>
<th>Session Topic</th>
<th>Resources Covered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Task Initiation</td>
<td>Getting Your Assignment</td>
<td>Uncertainty</td>
<td>Resist the Internet</td>
<td>Encyclopedias</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Topic Selection</td>
<td>Selecting Your Topic</td>
<td>Optimism</td>
<td>General vs. Subject</td>
<td>Periodical Databases</td>
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<td>3. Prefocus Exploration</td>
<td>Finding Your Focus</td>
<td>Frustration</td>
<td>Popular vs. Peer -Review</td>
<td>Catalog and NetLibrary</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Focus Formulation</td>
<td>Digging In</td>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td>Periodical vs. Book</td>
<td>Example Websites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Information Collection</td>
<td>Putting It All Together</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluating Websites</td>
<td>Plagiarism Helps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Search Closure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Plagiarism</td>
<td>Citation Style Helps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Starting Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Citation Style</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Experiences at Bennett College

- All-female, historically black college
- +/-695 FT students
- Limited library research experience
- Significant research anxiety
- Strong presence of one-shot instruction sessions in lower-division courses
- Slower growth of multi-session instruction
- Positive faculty relationships with librarians
- Coordination of assignments to instruction sessions is varied
Experiences at Bennett College

- One-shot sessions organized around ISP-coordinated stages:
  - Getting Your Assignment
  - Selecting Your Topic
  - Finding Your Focus
  - Digging In
  - Putting It All Together

- Session topics and resources are aligned to ISP-coordinated stages.
- Session explicitly addresses the feelings commonly associated with each stage.
- Handouts and online course guides are coordinated to session presentation.
Online Course Guides

Holgate Library

HI 325 - History of Slavery in the U.S.

Dictionaries & Encyclopedias

Credo Reference
Over 1,000,000 articles from 100 authoritative, peer-reviewed dictionaries and encyclopedias.

Encyclopedia Britannica
Over 120,000 articles, an updated world atlas, thousands of images and videos, an online dictionary and thesaurus, over 300,000 articles from respected magazines and journals, news headlines, a guide to the Web’s best sites, and much more.

Gale Virtual Reference Library
Provides respected authoritative essays on varied topics from numerous subject areas, all in E-Book reference title format. Provides access to over 20 unique reference encyclopedias.

Funk and Wagnalls New World Encyclopedia
Updated annually, this database includes over 25,000 articles covering an array of subject areas.

Print Resources

American History Dictionaries and Encyclopedias
Webster’s Guide to American History, Ref. E174.5 W4
Research Strategies Workbook

Workbook Modules

This workbook is divided into the following five modules with some brief exercises to help you focus your research and writing. Each of these modules will help you refine your topic, locate good sources of information, and organize your final product.

I. Defining Your Topic
II. Finding Articles
III. Finding Materials in the Library Catalog and Through Other Libraries
IV. Finding Materials on the World Wide Web
V. Acknowledging Your Sources

Getting Additional Help

The library staff is available to help you at any point with your research and with this workbook. You are encouraged strongly to start your research inside the library. This will make it easier for you to get help as you learn how to use the library website, catalog, and databases; peruse the reference collection; pick up helpful handouts; and locate and print articles. In addition, you may want to consider attending one of our weekly instruction sessions or set up a one-on-one consultation with a librarian.

Remember, the library staff is here to help you!
What Is Gained

The ISP-coordinated session provides a framework in which to:

- Keep focus on the research process.
- Address students’ thoughts, feelings, and actions as they engage in research.
- Draw connections between the experiences of all researchers, novice and expert alike.
- Maintain an intuitive ordering of topics and resources.
- Meet faculty expectations of resource coverage while keeping focus on research process.
- Increase relevance even when it is not coordinated with a specific assignment.
What Is Lost

With additional time spent on the research process, several common features of the one-shot session are reduced or lost, including:

- Less time to introduce resources.
- Less time to introduce search strategies (e.g., Boolean operators, search limiters, subject headings).
- Less time for policies and procedures.
- Less time for guided practice.
Conclusions

Since adopting an ISP-coordinated session outline for one-shot instruction:

○ 95% of students reported greater confidence.
○ 94% reported that they felt more in control of their research topics.

○ 88% of faculty reported that students produced better or more refined research topics.
○ 88% reported that students used better books and articles.
○ 100% reported that students had made better use of the Internet.
○ 75% reported less plagiarism.
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