

Program Plan For Information Literacy

Major Program Horticulture

Briefly describe how Information Literacy will be taught within your major program. List courses in which these skills will be embedded.

Making information literacy goals relevant to Horticulture and Plant Science requires attention to both the scientific basis of information and its application in cultivation of plants. Furthermore, the concept of information cannot be restricted to mere text and images; horticulturists and plant scientists routinely work with *genetic* information, through the creation and manipulation of heritable plant traits. The information literate student in horticulture and plant science must be able to: utilize technical resources, e.g., taxonomic keys for identification of plants; access and evaluate relatively unbiased sources of information for technical recommendations regarding horticultural practices; critically compare sources of information and resolve conflicting recommendations; develop observational skills; use the scientific method to obtain information, including the use of controlled trials to test effects of different horticultural practices; and understand the environmental, economic, ethical, legal and social issues surrounding the use of both technical and genetic information in horticultural practice and in the advancement of scientific knowledge.

Coursework and experiential learning in Horticulture and Plant Science will meet ACRL goals by: 1) Demonstrating how to define problems so that the nature and extent of information required to solve the problem is evident. 2) Providing both general instruction in accessing both technical scholarly literature and semi-technical, non-scholarly publications that address specific aspects of horticultural practice, and specific instruction in the use of unique horticultural information resources, such as plant databases and taxonomic keys. Laboratory experiences will familiarize students with the use of informal controlled trials to test effects of different horticultural practices. 3) Demonstrating how to evaluate information and its sources critically, to differentiate between objective evaluation and promotion, and to understand that seemingly objective research may be biased by sponsorship or the tendency to report only positive outcomes. 4) Students will learn to use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose, by defining goals with specific information requirements, using information in problem-solving applications, comparing aggregate information with individual results, and integrating different sources of information to present in written and oral reports. 5) Finally, students will become familiar with economic, legal and social issues surrounding the use of information, including intellectual property rights as applied to appropriate citation versus plagiarism of text, respect for intellectual property rights in plant patent / plant variety protection, environmental and ethical implications for the use of genetic information in crop improvement, and the environmental impact of information-based management.

Information Literacy is embedded in the Horticulture major through both course-specific and general instruction in courses included in the major. PLSC 216/217 and TURF 224W each include a session with an academic liaison from the Homer Babbidge Library to acquaint students with scholarly resources both in print and online. Several courses, including HORT 214, 215, 231, 245, and 257 provide instruction in appropriate use of online databases for selection of plant materials and plant identification. HORT 225, 238, 240W and 245 acquaint students with specialized professional and technical resources, both online and in print, for term papers and presentations. HORT 238 requires a research-based report on propagation of a selected plant

genus or species. An independent term project in PLSC 216/217 requires both subject-appropriate citations from a literature search on the selected topic and use of scientific methods to generate relevant data. Courses in plant materials, including TURF 124 and HORT 214, 215, 231 and 257 include instruction on using taxonomic keys for plant identification.

Are all these courses required of your students? If not, how will you assure that all students attain the exit expectations for Information Literacy.

PLSC 216/217 and HORT 238 are required of all students in the major. Subsets of the other courses are also required, for example students must take at least one course from among 214, 215 and 231, and two courses from among a list including 225 and 240W. Furthermore, PLSC 240W and 224W are options for Writing-in-the-Major under the University GER.

Date of Approval by Faculty or Appropriate Faculty Committee: 5 Feb 2007

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