Partnering for Student Success:
Promoting Integrative Learning in Information Literacy Instruction
(25 minute presentation)

Librarianship is definitely undergoing change…
In the face of the many developments that have been taking place in recent years in how people create, find and use information, and subsequently, in how they learn, it's increasingly important for libraries to continuously adapt to the new social, technological and scholarly terrain and to position themselves in the forefront of reshaping the learning enterprise.

Camila Alire (ALA President) recently wrote, in the latest issue of American Libraries, that libraries are facing a "<u>new normal</u>" with the continually advancing technologies, changing user behaviors, and the more recent troubling economic issues. However, she states that this may have a positive effect, in that we can take these new opportunities to <u>rethink</u> what we are doing to provide the best possible services to our users.

Libraries have long been viewed as early adopters of digital technologies, and have provided strong leadership in the changing landscape of user education. However, we must stay vigilant in thinking creatively and innovatively about how we reconceptualize, reconstruct, and reposition ourselves in supporting our users. The changes in technology, research, teaching and learning have created a very different context for the mission of libraries and we must take advantage of this opportunity to respond in proactive and visionary ways.

We've seen the emergence of new forms and channels of information creation & scholarly communication…
- The adoption of **blogs, wikis, and RSS feeds** encourages the collaborative creation and development of new information products
- **Institutional repositories** are becoming more and more prevalent and are promoting greater access to more unique resources.

As learning has become more **<u>collaborative</u>**, **<u>interactive</u>**, and **<u>visual</u>**, we must consider new approaches to our instructional services…..
- Physical space – learning commons promote flexible, collaborative learning; integrating new formats
- Virtual space – Increased demand for access to resources anywhere, anytime presents new opportunities to embed Info lit content…
  - Digital learning objects – screen capture presentations; video / audio clips; etc.
  - Online tutorials – becoming more interactive; more media-rich
  - Podcasting – re-usable content (inst'l sessions; speakers; tours; etc.)
  - Gaming/immersive environments – e.g. Second Life

- Personal learning environments (user sets own learning goals, tracks own progress, selects and organizes own content, interacts with others)

In light of these developments, we also find ourselves needing to **teach new content**

The Web 2.0 environment presents tremendous opportunities for teachers and learners to share in content formation and development…

- Technological changes (or, more precisely, sociotechnical changes) afford us the opportunity to engage more and more in *collective* information practices
- They enable "ordinary" people, as well as experts, to function as key components of, as one author put it, a *"collective information ecology";*
- In this environment, users are better able to see themselves as creators and contributors to the literature, rather than just consumers
- This shift allows us to extend our info lit efforts to complete the cycle of information creation and dissemination.
    - Most info lit programs have focused their efforts on the first few phases of info lit -- defining a need, the retrieval, evaluation and management of information -- but less so on effectively communicating new information to others

This trend of collaborative content development affords new talking points that can engage the learners more fully in all aspects of research and effective information literate practices.

New ways of accessing information, such as…
- federated searching tools
- link resolvers (SFX)
- social tagging
- visual retrieval tools, etc. (e,g, Credo concept mapping relating multiple tools)
- faceted navigation systems (contrasts with fixed taxonomies)

Multimedia development -- incorporate more visual and audio elements into presentations

Erosion of traditional information contexts (due to the collaborative development) presents new challenges…

Extra attention to issues of **authority** and **credibility** (since created by multiple people of unknown authority)

Issues of copyright and plagiarism become more apparent –
both from perspective of the ethical use of information…
but also from the perspective of users as authors, when their work may be used and cited by others…
Becomes more real.

These new technological capabilities and the shifts in the practices and processes that have become critical in effectively finding and using information have led to a widening scope of multiple literacies that are becoming more and more integral to what we must now be teaching…

Technology literacy – Defined by the U.S. Dept. of Education (1996) as "the skills and the ability to use computers and other technology to improve learning, productivity, and performance."
-- Often inherently associated with information literacy (ICT literacy).
      Example: *Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards for Information and Technology Literacy*

Media literacy – the ability to bring critical thinking skills to bear on all media – from television to music videos, films to commercials, web environments to billboards, and more…

Visual literacy – According to John Debes (credited with coining the term in 1969) = ability to "discriminate and interpret the visible actions, objects, symbols that one encounters in his environment."
- ◼ Not limited to new technologies and media, but is now more apparent…

Cultural literacy (or, Cultural Competence) – Ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures; includes fluency, or at least familiarity, with language, idioms, allusions, values, etc. that constitute a "culture."
- ◼ Since information from around the world is so readily available, this is more essential…

Civic literacy – the knowledge of how to actively participate and initiate change in your community and the greater society; democratic participation in a multicultural environment.

Critical literacy— "the ability to interpret texts *(broadly defined)* in an active, reflective manner in order to better understand power, inequality, and injustice in human relationships."
Considers societal issues like family, poverty, education, equity, equality to critique societal norms.

Relevant information skills are those that permit us to navigate the information landscape, but also to understand more fully how our lives are shaped by the information and the information choices that are available to us…
In a 1996 article, "Information Literacy as a Liberal Art," by Jeremy Shapiro and Shelley Hughes, they state that our goal should be nothing less than to teach what it means to be a free person in the Information Age...
They contend that information literacy must be framed in a much more multi-dimensional sense and it will require a new, multi-faceted curricular framework that includes the multiple literacies previously mentioned (and they advocate for a few additional ones, as well…).

Slide 6 – Integrative Learning

To accomplish this broader vision of information literacy, I think we must recognize that we will be much more effective if we work together to collaborate on developing systems of integrative learning…

"Fostering students' abilities to integrate learning—across courses, over time, and between campus and community life—is one of the most important goals and challenges of higher education…" in the 21st century.

Slide 7 – AACU Essential Learning Outcomes

This concept of integrated learning is reflected in a number of curricular development initiatives , perhaps most notably in these *Essential Learning Outcomes*, developed in 2005 by the American Association of Colleges & Universities…
These learning outcomes provide a new framework to guide students' cumulative progress through college.

While these Outcomes are focused on the higher education experience, I think we can place them in a broader context and relate them to the work that all types of libraries do to foster lifelong learning…..

Slide 8 – AASL/ACRL Blueprint for Collaboration

Collaborative integration also drove the development of a joint working group between ACRL and AASL to consider how to foster closer partnerships between school librarians and academic librarians, resulting in the *Blueprint for Collaboration* report.

While it was published in 2000, many of its recommendations are still valid, such as:
- Advocate a seamless continuation of AASL's Information Literacy Standards and ACRL's
- Encourage education faculty, library school faculty, academic librarians and/or school librarians to engage in research, co-publish, or jointly present at conferences.
- Co-sponsoring programming on model collaborations at the local, state and national levels
- Develop institutes, workshops, or conferences on writing partnering grants and networking.
- Promote regional networks of librarians, teachers, administrators, education students, and faculty to exchange ideas on information literacy programs and practices.

And more…..

At the local level, academic, school, and public librarians, as well as teachers, staff from writing centers, IT, community organizations and others must all be viewed as equal stakeholders, and we have to recognize when the goal (information literate patrons) is better served by collaboration and shared leadership….

While partnering may take more time and possibly more effort in the short run, as this statement says, we must have the strength to sustain ourselves as partners in the learning enterprise…
We will be most effective when we work together to contribute to truly integrative learning.

As we think about how we can work together to more effectively contribute to the development of a more information-literate public, each of us must consider, from our own institutional or organizational perspective, how much of an "engaged institution" we are.

An engaged institution offers more than just "service" or "outreach:"
- It includes a commitment to sharing and <u>reciprocity</u>; a "two-way" street

Such organizations are characterized by:
- **Responsiveness** to community, regional needs
- **Respect for partners --** not a patronizing perspective, but mutual learning
- **Academic neutrality** – maintain role of neutral facilitator even in face of contentious policy issues
- **Accessibility** – committed to helping users gain access to and take advantage of our resources, physical and virtual
- **Integration** – does institutional mission support addressing user needs more broadly?
- **Coordination** – requires strong communication system, including all stakeholders and participants
- **Resource partnerships** – commitment to sufficiently resourcing the initiatives; finding ways to optimize them through partnerships and cooperative efforts with government, business, non-profits, etc.

So there are plenty of arguments and supporting evidence, from all levels, to compel academic libraries to collaborate and work with other community partners to advance our broadened mission of information literacy.

But where to begin?

There are lots of examples that we can learn from, but a few of the more common types of initiatives include:

- Joint instructional sessions (perhaps the most obvious and most frequently utilized approach)
    - High school classes
    - Grade school groups
        - YMCA HOSTS Program – middle school students; help increase literacy levels; Marquette is host site
    - Summer programs –
        - Educational Opportunity program (EOP)
        - Health Career Opportunity Program (HCOP)
        - Urban Journalism program
- Embed info lit skills sequentially throughout the K-16 curriculum
    - K-12 is articulated in *Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards for Info and Technology Literacy*; doesn't include postsecondary education
    - Map AASL and state standards to ACRL standards
- Workshops, discussion forums, speakers
    - For patrons (with public libraries) –
        - Technology skills
        - Job search / resumes / interviewing
        - Health information
        - Personal finance information
    - For librarians, teachers – connect, share, and learn
        - student learning outcomes
        - standards
        - assessment
        - promotion
- Shared facilities
    - An agreement between distinct library service providers that serve their patrons in the same building
    - May be "shared space" or "co-location"
    - Several examples of public/community college facilities
        - Broward County Florida;
        - San Jose State University/San Jose PL
        - Tippecanoe County PL/Ivy Tech
- Collaborative collections
    - May be formal agreements or informal understandings
    - Signature collections that serve a broader constituency

- Open educational resources

- Shared digital learning objects (via IR); accessible through open web
  able to customize, mash up
- Assessment initiatives
  - Example: TRAILS project at Kent State Univ. – developed by KSU; for students in grades 6 & 9.
  - Just yesterday, saw announcement re: development of first national assessment for technology literacy; to be implemented in 2012, as part of National Assessment of Educational Progress (aka the "Nation's Report Card")…
    Something to watch for…..
- Events & exhibits
  - Speakers
  - City-wide reading projects
  - ALA traveling exhibits (Frankenstein; Lewis & Clark; etc.)
- Joint grant proposals
  - Take advantage of Marquette's FIC resources
  - Examples:
    - MATC, UWM Libraries, UWM SOIS, Marquette – working with CBOs
    - Joint integrated library systems (multiple locations around country)
    - Reading programs

What I have tried to lay out for your today is the *evolving information and learning landscape* within which we find ourselves. To be truly effective in this shifting environment, we need to be innovative in how we maximize our resources for the greatest impact.

I think that will most successfully come through collaborative partnerships in which each participant shares a vision,
one in which we foster a culture of learning that facilitates access to the resources our users need, when and where they need them,
and in which the library inserts itself and is integrated into the users' learning experiences at every possible venture.

I'm not sure we'll ever really get to a "new normal," but I believe that if we develop strong partnerships, we can broaden our perspectives and more easily adapt to the twists and turns that present themselves, and ultimately, better help our users take full advantage of the information resources that are available.