NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

INSTITUTE INFORMATION LITERACY PLAN

APPROVED BY THE
COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
MAY 20, 2009

PREPARED BY THE
INFORMATION LITERACY SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM REVIEW COMMITTEE (UCRC)

NJIT Information Literacy Plan
Approved by UCRC - May 4, 2009

Goal and Rationale
The goal of the NJIT Information Literacy Plan is to ensure that NJIT undergraduate (UG) students graduate with adequate and competitive information literacy (IL) skills. This plan is intended to meet and/or exceed the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) IL skills accreditation requirements and the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education (NJCHE) academic licensure rules. IL is the ability to know when information is needed, to locate it efficiently regardless of its location, format or medium, to evaluate its relevance, authoritativeness, and validity, to use it to build new knowledge, and to communicate that knowledge. These competencies are defined in more detail by MSCHE, NJCHE and the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL).

Institutional Responsibilities
It is the responsibility of the NJIT UCRC (Undergraduate Curriculum Review Committee) within the GUR (General Undergraduate Requirements) and with the concurrence of the NJIT Committee on Academic Affairs (CAA) and the Provost to oversee the implementation of this IL plan and amend this plan, as necessary, to ensure its success. The UCRC will review designated courses with embedded IL within each academic department and program and will report their progress periodically to the Provost and to the CAA.

It is the responsibility of each and every academic department to provide the necessary instruction within every undergraduate program to ensure that all of their UG students graduate with adequate and competitive IL skills.

It is the responsibility of the NJIT library and librarians to assist faculty in identifying and/or developing relevant educational materials, to collaborate with other academic libraries in creating efficiencies, to benchmark NJIT IL programs against peer institutions, and provide guest lecturers within the limits of available staffing and resources.

Information Literacy (IL) Instruction
It is the responsibility of the individual academic departments to ensure that every undergraduate within existing required courses obtains the necessary instruction in the eight IL outcomes described in this plan. Generally, IL instruction shall occur as part of required courses within each major so that IL is embedded across the NJIT curriculum. However, electives may also be included if all electives in a particular program meet specified IL outcomes. Undergraduates shall receive sufficient IL instruction to insure that they are information literate within their chosen subject domain. In addition, every UG shall also receive at least three hours of introductory IL instruction within Humanities 101 and one hour within Humanities 102 (or another lower division GUR course).

Supplementary, review, and remedial IL instruction, as well as one-on-one assistance will continue to be provided through e-learning opportunities, occasional training sessions, and the research help desk provided by library staff and departmental faculty.

Minimum Outcomes

NJIT requires that minimum specific IL outcomes be met for every undergraduate student. Each NJIT academic department may add additional IL outcomes that meet the needs of their students within a particular academic program. Upon graduation, every NJIT UG student should be able to meet the eight outcomes described below.

(Note: Outcomes derived from UCLA core competencies with permission; see http://repositories.cdlib.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1004&context=uclalib.)

OUTCOMES	DESCRIPTION
1. Define the research topic and the need for information	a. Articulating a research question, problem, or issue. b. Obtaining background information to identify and define key concepts and terminology related to the research (e.g., putting the research question in context). c. Defining a manageable focus and timeline for completing the project. d. Identifying the types of materials that can be used for research (books, journals, Web sites, government documents, primary sources, datasets, media, technical reports, etc. (and that are needed and appropriate for the project. e. Recognizing that information may be limited, unavailable, or may not exist on a given topic.
2. Develop and implement an effective search strategy appropriate for an information need	a. Differentiating among the types of reference sources (specialized encyclopedias, article databases, citation indexes, bibliographies, library catalogs, search engines, etc.) and the purposes of each. b. Choosing and accessing appropriate reference sources for a given research question. c. Using search terms appropriate to the research tool and the topic. d. Transferring skills learned in previous research efforts to new projects.
3. Locate and retrieve information	a. Using the library's online catalog, online union catalogs, article databases, Web search engines, and other research tools effectively, in print and online. b. Interpreting citations accurately and using appropriate components of a citation to search for the items. c. Recognizing key elements of call numbers and URLs and using them to locate library materials and Web sites.
4. Evaluate information	a. Investigating the author's or sponsoring body's expertise, credibility, and points of view. b. Assessing the authority, accuracy, reliability, completeness, and timeliness of the information found in books, articles, Web sites, etc. c. Distinguishing between reliable and unreliable sources of information, scholarly and popular sources, substantiated facts and points of view.
5. Assess the research strategy	a. Determining whether the information retrieved is relevant and sufficient for the project or whether additional sources are needed. b. Analyzing successes and failures, revising research topics, and trying different techniques and research tools as needed.
6. Employ principles consistent with the ethical and legal uses of information	a. Demonstrating knowledge of the issues regarding intellectual property and plagiarism in a U.S. academic setting. b. Citing and acknowledging sources appropriately. c. Creating accurate references using a consistent citation style.
7. Organize, synthesize, and communicate information	a. Examining, categorizing, and storing citations to the materials discovered while conducting research, e.g., in reading and online searching. b. Managing the information selected and the research materials consulted. c. Using and integrating information from a variety of sources appropriate to the research question. d. Presenting the information in an effective and coherent manner to communicate it to others.
8. Effectively navigate the body of knowledge within the student's major discipline	a. Recognizing how the literature in the major discipline is organized. b. Distinguishing among primary, secondary, and tertiary sources in the major discipline and their uses. c. Using key research tools and databases in the major discipline.

Outcomes Assessment

Each academic department must assess and document student IL outcomes meeting the MSCHE and NJCHE requirements. The form of the assessment remains within the purview of the department and the instructor(s). Documentation of student IL competency shall be archived for a reasonable period of time and be made available to the UCRC, other university officials, and accreditation agencies when requested. The UCRC may from time-to-time require an additional standardized assessment for purposes of benchmarking NJIT student progress and to ensure continuous improvement and consistency across the university.

Timeline

The planned implementation timeline is as follows:

1) Departments or colleges develop their own IL plan (using form in Appendix II), for each of their undergraduate programs, due to UCRC by October 15, 2009. The plan should demonstrate where and how each of the eight competencies as they are expressed in the major area are (or will be) taught and assessed. The assessments may be graded assignments such as researched essays, oral presentations, field projects, examinations, theses, and researching codes, regulations, standards, etc. The information plan, the course curricula, syllabi and examples of student work will be demanded by our accreditation bodies as evidence of NJIT's incorporation of IL skill development in each program.

2) UCRC reviews the IL plans and responds to the departments or colleges by December 1, 2009.

3) All programs start implementing their IL plans in Spring 2010 semester.

4) All programs archive assessment evidence supporting their IL plans (i.e., graded examples of student work) in Fall 2010 and Spring 2011, in time for the May 2011 accreditation visit.

APPENDIX I: RELATIONSHIP OF INFORMATION LITERACY TO HIGHER EDUCATION

NJIT is subject to information literacy standards from the following external agencies:

- **NJ State Licensure**
  New Jersey Commission on Higher Education (2008). *New Jersey Administrative Code Title 9a - Higher Education Chapter 1. Licensure Rules* Retrieved 22 October 2008 from http://www.state.nj.us/highereducation/PDFs/LicensureRulesEffectiveJuly_28_2008.pdf

- **Middle States**
  Middle States Commission on Higher Education (2006). *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education: Eligibility Requirements and Standards for Accreditation. 12th edition* Retrieved 23 October 2008 from http://www.msche.org/publications/CHX06_Aug08080728132708.pdf
  Information Literacy Concepts addressed in Standard 11, Educational Offerings

  Middle States Commission on Higher Education. (2003) *Developing Research & Communication Skills: Guidelines for Information Literacy in the Curriculum* Complete Handbook - http://www.msche.org/publications/Developing-Skills080111151714.pdf

- **ACRL Standards** Association of College and Research Libraries. (2000) *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education.* Retrieved 23 October 2008 from http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/standards/informationliteracycompetency.cfm

- **NJ State Dept of Education K-12**
  State of New Jersey Department of Education (2004) *Core Curriculum Content Standards for Technological Literacy*. Retrieved 22 October 2008 from
   Standard 8.2 Technological Literacy http://www.nj.gov/education/cccs/s8_tech.pdf

PROGRAM/SPECIALIZATION:_____

Faculty contact:_____

For each program (or specialization):
1. list course numbers in which one or more of the information literacy competencies is or will be taught
2. for each course listed, provide the assessment tool(s) that are or will be used (i.e., specific assignments that will be graded)
3. attach a syllabus for each course listed in the table
4. attach a copy of the curriculum
5. when required for accreditation documentation, attach sample student assignments per outcome (at least 3 assignments per course- low, med, high grade)

OUTCOMES	COURSES MEETING OUTCOMES (course #)	ASSESSMENT TOOLS USED PER COURSE LISTED
1. Define the research topic and the need for need for information		
2. Develop and implement an effective search strategy appropriate for an information need		
3. Locate and retrieve information		
4. Evaluate information		
5. Assess the research strategy		
6. Employ principles consistent with the ethical and legal uses of information		
7. Organize, synthesize, and communicate information		
8. Effectively navigate the body of knowledge within the student's major discipline		