

University Libraries Student Learning Goals and Outcomes

Created by the Libraries Teaching & Learning Group Learning Goals team

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Introduction

The University Libraries collaborates with educators to instill lifelong learning skills that students can transfer and apply beyond the university to the greater good of our knowledge-driven and globally oriented society. The Libraries play a vital role in fostering lifelong learning through a commitment to advancing intellectual discovery, the free exchange of ideas, evidence-based decision-making, and the growth and creation of knowledge.

The Libraries' teaching and learning program develops critical inquiry, information literacy, and research skills in our undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. This complex and multi-layered skill set is essential for the pursuit and development of knowledge in the 21st century, and includes accessing, analyzing, evaluating, synthesizing and producing knowledge.

These skills are best learned and understood when taught as part of the university curriculum and in conjunction with the companion skills of critical thinking, reading, writing, and production. They are developmental and must be introduced, applied, reinforced, and extended throughout a student's educational career through the endeavors of librarians, faculty, and instructors across the university.

About the Libraries' teaching and learning program

The Libraries' teaching and learning program includes all librarians who teach and a steering committee, the Libraries Teaching & Learning Group. Our teaching and learning program is made possible through faculty and instructor collaboration, and partnerships with teaching and learning programs and centers across all three campuses.

Our focus is on teaching research as a creative and iterative process, shaped by analytical and technology skills. We promote students' understanding of the role of the university library and librarians in supporting their research and ongoing intellectual growth. Our goal is to foster critical thinking and effective research and writing skills in students in support of the university curriculum. To these ends, librarians have a defined set of learning goals for University of Washington students.

University Libraries Student Learning Goals

Learning Goal 1: The University Libraries fosters critical inquiry and thinking skills in students.

Critical thinking encompasses problem solving, decision-making, reflective thinking, ethical reasoning, and the ability to question one's assumptions when evaluating evidence and arguments. Students who think critically acquire skills and familiarity with modes of inquiry and examination from diverse disciplinary perspectives, enabling them to access, interpret, analyze, and synthesize information.

Student Learning Outcomes associated with critical inquiry:

1. Student identifies and evaluates new and prior information relevant to a research topic in order to contextualize research questions or problems.

2. Student uses a variety of strategies and research finding tools (article databases, e-journals, catalogs, data sets, and more) in order to identify and use sources most appropriate to the research question or problem.
3. Student uses multiple forms of evidence gathered from various sources and evaluates the credibility and accuracy of each source in order to support research goals.
4. Student uses information across multiple formats (print, visual, multimedia, data, etc.) and genres in order to seek and evaluate relevant or appropriate evidence.
5. Student applies ethical and legal principles when accessing and using information sources from all formats and contexts.

Learning Goal 2: The University Libraries supports students in the creation of new knowledge and contributions to the greater scholarly and research community.

The creation and dissemination of new knowledge leads to sharing new understandings, solutions and perspectives in a purposeful and ethical way. Students who produce new knowledge acquire the skills needed to make effective use of multiple information sources and to participate in the collaborative production of intellectual property.

Student Learning Outcomes associated with knowledge production:

1. Student demonstrates awareness of discourses across academic disciplines, communities, and professions, including how each produces, contextualizes, and disseminates information.
2. Student synthesizes existing information and applies it to new settings and complex problems in order to generate new topics, hypotheses or solutions.
3. Student effectively interacts and publishes with peers, experts or others in order to collaboratively produce knowledge for various audiences and in various media.
4. Student uses appropriate tools, technologies, and strategies in order to organize, integrate and present information effectively.
5. Student demonstrates understanding of copyright and citation conventions in order to meet the ethical and legal responsibilities required when creating intellectual property.