

# Journal of Information Literacy

ISSN 1750-5968

Volume 12 Issue 2

December 2018

## Book review

Bougatzeli, E. 2018. Book review of Veach, G. (ed.) 2018. *Teaching information literacy and writing studies: Volume 1, first-year composition courses*. West Lafayette: Purdue University Press. *Journal of Information Literacy*, 12(2), pp.148–149.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.11645/12.2.2557>

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/).

Copyright for the article content resides with the authors, and copyright for the publication layout resides with the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, Information Literacy Group. These Copyright holders have agreed that this article should be available on Open Access and licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution ShareAlike licence.

"By 'open access' to this literature, we mean its free availability on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. The only constraint on reproduction and distribution, and the only role for copyright in this domain, should be to give authors control over the integrity of their work and the right to be properly acknowledged and cited."

Chan, L. et al. 2002. Budapest Open Access Initiative. New York: Open Society Institute. Available at: <http://www.soros.org/openaccess/read.shtml> [Accessed: 18 November 2015].

**Veach, G. (ed.) (2018). *Teaching information literacy and writing studies: Volume 1, first-year composition courses*. West Lafayette: Purdue University Press. 354pp. 978-1557538284, \$39.95. Pbk.**

**Evangelia Bougatzeli. Information Literacy Instructor, School of Education, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. Email: [bougatzeli@eled.auth.gr](mailto:bougatzeli@eled.auth.gr)**

This title is particularly valuable to a variety of people and stakeholders with teaching information literacy (IL) responsibilities. More specifically, the title is very helpful not only for library and information literacy instructors and teachers of writing, but also for writing centres; student support services; centres for teaching and learning; general education and curriculum committees; and writing programme administrators. It is also of great interest for anyone interested in understanding some of the IL instruction directions in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The volume is part of [Purdue Information Literacy Handbooks](#), a series that fosters ‘evidence-based practice in teaching information literacy competencies through the lens of the different academic disciplines’. Specifically, this title envisages IL as the prominent intersection of two disciplines – library science and writing studies – by exploring innovative approaches to integrate IL more efficiently throughout writing studies curricula, notably into first-year writing courses of various American universities and colleges. As editor Grace Veach points out in her introduction, it is with the publication of cornerstone documents such as the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education (ACRL, 2015), and the Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing (CWPA, 2011), that ‘the disciplines, which had been approaching each other in the intervening years, began to have full-fledged conversations’. This seems to be an opportune moment to start reflecting on and actually redesign the IL instruction related to first year writing classes, and this resource contributes valuable insights to such disciplinary conversations and collaborations.

Regardless of its US focus, the volume provides much that can be applied to higher education contexts internationally, since one of its main strengths is its concern to bring IL instruction into the foreground for diverse student populations in miscellaneous academic settings and in conjunction with multiple literacies. Overall this book depicts both theoretical discussions and operating implications of close collaboration between librarians and academic staff, which draw connections to applications in first-year classrooms of higher education institutions worldwide. Indeed, most of its chapters are co-written by practitioners of both disciplines working together in order to better equip first-year students with IL abilities and dispositions they will need to succeed not only in academia, but also in today’s demanding world of information.

The book is organised into five sections, with 22 chapters in total, thus compiling an outstanding panorama of both theoretical perspectives and practical approaches to collaboratively teaching IL in first-year writing courses:

**Part I**, ‘Lenses, Thresholds, and Frameworks’, argues for and provides evidence of how the current fundamental documents of IL and writing studies serve as a catalyst for fruitful collaboration between professionals of both fields in order to revise and redesign the first-year writing and IL programmes, so that their threshold concepts might become powerful learning tools for students not only for academic, but also for lifelong pursuits.

**Part II**, ‘Collaboration and Conversation’, reports mainly on collaborative efforts of library and teachers of composition that successfully challenge the “one-stop shop” model of information literacy instruction and go beyond the traditional research paper to engage students with sustained academic research and writing.

**Part III**, 'Pedagogies and Practices', outlines challenging IL case studies, which provide evidence about rewarding improvements of first-year IL instruction, grounded in various pedagogical approaches such as self-regulating learning through appreciative inquiry, reflective writing and critical thinking learning, and object-based learning.

**Part IV**, 'Classroom-Centered Approaches to Information Literacy', describes innovative methodological approaches to teaching IL beyond the "one-shot" library session, such as linking discourse community analysis with IL, exploiting the BEAM schema and the Umbrella metaphor into IL practices, breaking down the dichotomy between academic and personal writing, inserting multimodal instruction into IL, engaging students into project-based learning in real-life situations, and scaffolding IL fundamental concepts throughout the first-year writing course for the benefit of all students.

**Part V**, 'Making a Difference', reports on appropriate efforts to develop a culture of IL instruction assessment and transfer, such as applying dynamic criteria mapping, and conducting an empirical study of multilingual students' information-seeking behavior grounded on specific IL threshold concepts. In addition, two chapters focus on ongoing attempts to utilise and assess an embedded librarian model for teaching IL in first-year composition curricula. The focal point of another chapter is the non-expert writing instructor's training to conceptualise and teach writing and research threshold concepts effectively.

In conclusion, this book is an important contribution to literature for two main reasons. First, by providing a thoughtful exploration of various IL teaching approaches embedded with first-year writing curricula, reminds all of us, the IL scholars and practitioners, that such IL teaching is both feasible and fruitful. Second, exactly this richness of examples drawing upon diverse theories and models and grounding on effective collaboration between librarians and teachers of writing, appears to be pointing us in promising directions to refresh IL teaching for the benefit of our students. This resource acts not only as "food for thought", as one of its chapters is entitled, but also as threshold for inspiration for practice. Ultimately, this book's great value is exactly this: inspiration to reflect on our own IL dispositions and practices, to initiate complex conversations about the importance of learning process in IL sessions and to collaborate deeply with writing instructors in order to build customised IL experiences that promote our students' competencies to exploit information in research processes.