

Demonstrating the Value of Critical Information Literacy: One Library's Critical Information Literacy Laboratory

Gina Schlesselman-Tarango, Instructional Services and Initiatives Librarian
California State University, San Bernardino

Presented at the California Academic & Research Libraries 2016 Conference
March 31 – April 2, 2016, Costa Mesa, California

This presentation demonstrates how librarians at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) have tapped into the digital environment to create an online teaching and learning space, the Critical Information Literacy (CIL) Lab. The CIL Lab serves as a teaching resource for graduate assistants, instructors, and faculty, allowing librarians to strategically share the gospel of CIL with a wide audience. In addition to a slate of tutorials and assessments that can be incorporated into a variety of classroom assignments, the CIL Lab houses discussion prompts, activities, and a variety of additional resources that accompany each of CSUSB Pfau Library's information literacy program-level student learning outcomes.

The presenter describes how creating an online laboratory of teaching and learning objects with a decidedly critical approach to information literacy has allowed for librarians to introduce and advocate for CIL on their campus. The CIL Lab, created in the midst of a rearticulation of campus General Education outcomes, has been a tangible example of what librarians mean when they talk about CIL (an approach that is sometimes difficult to verbalize to the unfamiliar). By directly connecting the CIL Lab to the campus's revised information literacy outcome, librarians have been able to demonstrate the value of a CIL approach. Additionally, by using the lab as a way to promote the many instructional services offered, this online space allows librarians to cultivate value for the library as a site of learning and librarians as knowledgeable campus resources and CIL disciplinary experts.

Demonstrating the Value of Critical Information Literacy

CSUSB's Online Critical Information Literacy
Laboratory for Faculty

Gina Schlesselman-Tarango
California State University, San Bernardino

CRITICAL INFORMATION LITERACY LABORATORY FOR FACULTY

An online toolkit for teaching and learning

[About CIL](#)

[Instructor's Corner](#)

[Video Tutorials](#)

[Library Instruction Options](#)

[CIL Grant for Faculty](#)

[Site Map](#)

Navigation

[CIL at the Pfau Library](#)

[Anticipated Questions](#)

[Feedback](#)



Dear Faculty:

Welcome to the Pfau Library's Critical Information Literacy Laboratory for Faculty. The instructional tools found in this lab are designed to facilitate the integration of critical information literacy concepts and skills into university curricula. Online tutorials have been created for three levels of instruction:

About the Critical Information Literacy Laboratory

About

The **Critical Information Literacy Laboratory for Faculty** replaces and extends the Pfau Library's skills-based online tutorials, reflecting the evolution of information literacy pedagogy to an approach that balances both concepts and skills. Anyone with a regular Internet connection can access the CIL Lab.

The **Instructor's Corner** contains teaching resources (discussion prompts, activities, etc.) for instructors. These resources are aligned with our student learning outcomes (see [CIL at the Pfau Library](#)) and are meant to assist you in helping your students think critically about how information works. These teaching tools can be tailored to your class assignments and student needs in a variety of ways. You will find that some of the higher-level prompts and activities are great ways to differentiate instruction in your classroom.

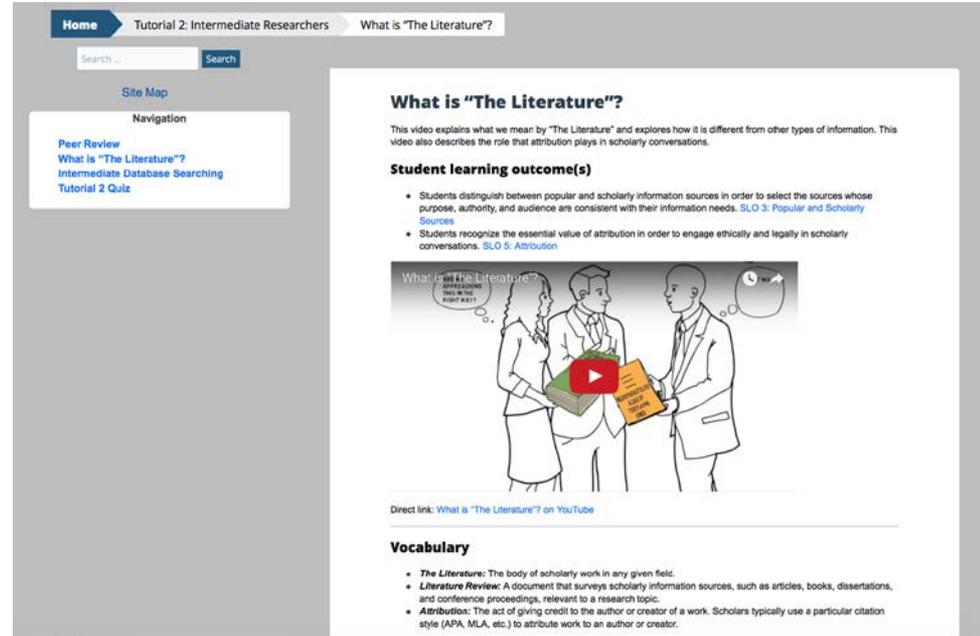
The **Video Tutorials** component for students is a series of YouTube videos, which include audio and closed captioning. Each tutorial concludes with an online assessment.

For assistance with integrating CIL into your courses, see [Library Instruction Options](#).

<http://library.csusb.edu/cillab>

The Value of the Lab for Us

- Define & advocate for CIL
- Allows us to connect our SLOs to General Education outcome
- Position ourselves within the academy: assert our values and librarian expertise
- Librarian: student ratio doesn't allow for us see every student
- Librarians use lab for instruction



The screenshot shows a web page with a navigation menu at the top: Home, Tutorial 2: Intermediate Researchers, and What is "The Literature?". Below the menu is a search bar and a "Search" button. A "Site Map" section contains a "Navigation" box with links for "Peer Review", "What is 'The Literature'?", "Intermediate Database Searching", and "Tutorial 2 Quiz". The main content area is titled "What is 'The Literature'?" and includes a paragraph explaining the concept, a section for "Student learning outcome(s)" with two bullet points, an illustration of three people discussing a book, a "Direct link" to a YouTube video, and a "Vocabulary" section with three definitions.

Home Tutorial 2: Intermediate Researchers What is "The Literature?"

Search ... Search

Site Map

Navigation

- Peer Review
- What is "The Literature"?
- Intermediate Database Searching
- Tutorial 2 Quiz

What is "The Literature"?

This video explains what we mean by "The Literature" and explores how it is different from other types of information. This video also describes the role that attribution plays in scholarly conversations.

Student learning outcome(s)

- Students distinguish between popular and scholarly information sources in order to select the sources whose purpose, authority, and audience are consistent with their information needs. [SLO 3: Popular and Scholarly Sources](#)
- Students recognize the essential value of attribution in order to engage ethically and legally in scholarly conversations. [SLO 5: Attribution](#)



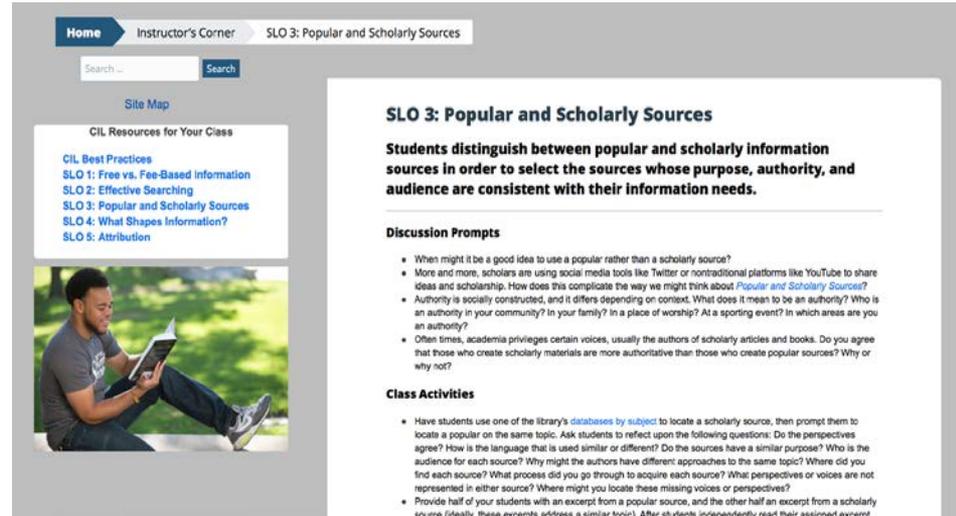
Direct link: [What is "The Literature"?](#) on YouTube

Vocabulary

- **The Literature:** The body of scholarly work in any given field.
- **Literature Review:** A document that surveys scholarly information sources, such as articles, books, dissertations, and conference proceedings, relevant to a research topic.
- **Attribution:** The act of giving credit to the author or creator of a work. Scholars typically use a particular citation style (APA, MLA, etc.) to attribute work to an author or creator.

The Value of the Lab for Others

- Adjunctification is real on our campus
- CIL Lab is OA
- Provides guidance but isn't prescriptive
 - Allows for easy modification for various courses and teaching styles, differentiated instruction



The screenshot displays a website interface for the CIL Lab. At the top, there are navigation tabs for 'Home', 'Instructor's Corner', and 'SLO 3: Popular and Scholarly Sources'. Below the navigation is a search bar with a 'Search' button and a 'Site Map' link. A section titled 'CIL Resources for Your Class' lists several best practices: 'CIL Best Practices', 'SLO 1: Free vs. Fee-Based Information', 'SLO 2: Effective Searching', 'SLO 3: Popular and Scholarly Sources', 'SLO 4: What Shapes Information?', and 'SLO 5: Attribution'. Below this list is a photograph of a student sitting on the ground reading a book. To the right, a white box contains the title 'SLO 3: Popular and Scholarly Sources' followed by the text: 'Students distinguish between popular and scholarly information sources in order to select the sources whose purpose, authority, and audience are consistent with their information needs.' Below this is a 'Discussion Prompts' section with three bullet points, and a 'Class Activities' section with two bullet points.

SLO 3: Popular and Scholarly Sources

Students distinguish between popular and scholarly information sources in order to select the sources whose purpose, authority, and audience are consistent with their information needs.

Discussion Prompts

- When might it be a good idea to use a popular rather than a scholarly source?
- More and more, scholars are using social media tools like Twitter or nontraditional platforms like YouTube to share ideas and scholarship. How does this complicate the way we might think about *Popular and Scholarly Sources*?
- Authority is socially constructed, and it differs depending on context. What does it mean to be an authority? Who is an authority in your community? In your family? In a place of worship? At a sporting event? In which areas are you an authority?
- Often times, academia privileges certain voices, usually the authors of scholarly articles and books. Do you agree that those who create scholarly materials are more authoritative than those who create popular sources? Why or why not?

Class Activities

- Have students use one of the library's [databases by subject](#) to locate a scholarly source, then prompt them to locate a popular on the same topic. Ask students to reflect upon the following questions: Do the perspectives agree? How is the language that is used similar or different? Do the sources have a similar purpose? Who is the audience for each source? Why might the authors have different approaches to the same topic? Where did you find each source? What process did you go through to acquire each source? What perspectives or voices are not represented in either source? Where might you locate these missing voices or perspectives?
- Provide half of your students with an excerpt from a popular source, and the other half an excerpt from a scholarly source (ideally, these excerpts address a similar topic). After students independently read their assigned excerpt,

How We're Promoting It

- Professional development for faculty, graduate teaching assistants, instructors
- Front and center on our website
- Strategic linking
- CIL Grant for Faculty

CIL Grant for Faculty

Purpose of the Grant

The purpose of the Pfau Library Critical Information Literacy Grant is to support faculty in integrating critical information literacy (CIL) into their courses. Support will include a \$300 stipend to faculty who develop and implement a CIL assignment and its assessment in their Spring 2016 course.

Eligibility

All full-time, tenured or tenure-track CSUSB faculty are eligible for project support.

Congratulations to the 2016 Grant Participants



Carolyn McAllister

Social Work



Michael Chao

Biology



Arianna Huhn

Anthropology

Literatures



Terri Nelson

World Language &



The A Word

- Heavy use by first year seminar instructors
 - Look at artifacts that meet CIL learning outcome for this course
 - Compare those that used tutorials/quizzes to those that did not
- Informally
 - Constantly adding content & revising based on feedback
 - Students and faculty are using CIL language on campus

Challenges

- Tutorials haven't (and likely won't) become a mandatory component of any course
- # of site visits doesn't tell us much
- Narrow representation of CIL because organized around our SLOs
- Concepts get simplified (e.g. OA)
- Institutionalization of critical librarianship (Seale, 2016)

References

Seale, Maura. "Institutionalizing Critical Librarianship." Critical Librarianship and Pedagogy Symposium. Tucson, AZ, February 2016.