# Student Perspectives on Information Literacy Course Titles

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**abstract:** This study was designed to inform the renaming of a credit-bearing information literacy course. Researchers surveyed librarians to gather existing information literacy course titles. They also surveyed and held focus groups with students to learn what students consider when choosing electives, to understand how well the researchers' current information literacy course title fits the course content, and to procure suggestions for a new title. Findings indicate that course titles are one of many elements that students look at when selecting courses. Some librarian and student participants indicated that the term *information literacy* may not be familiar to most students, but that wording is often used in information literacy course titles. Librarians can use the results of this study to create course titles that are descriptive of course content and that appeal to students.

## Introduction

Many academic librarians teach credit-bearing information literacy courses, offering anywhere from one to four units of credit. Some courses are stand-alone, and others are tied to English composition or rhetoric courses, capstone courses, learning communities, or other courses or programs. Research has shown that information literacy credit courses are most often worth one or two units, focus on undergraduate students, and are taught by librarians.[1]

Library faculty at California State University, East Bay (Cal State East Bay) have offered credit-bearing information literacy courses to undergraduates for over two decades (see Appendix A). In 1998, Cal State East Bay began requiring students to complete an information literacy class prior to graduation. The information literacy course was part of the first-year learning communities, in which students enrolled in different thematic clusters of General Education (GE) courses during their first year. The library

faculty designed a course to meet that requirement, initially titled Fundamentals of Information Literacy.[2] Starting in 2011, first-year students were automatically enrolled into the library faculty's two-unit information literacy course, then titled Introduction to Information Literacy. In 2018, Cal State East Bay transitioned from the quarter system to semesters. At that time, both the thematic clusters of GE courses and the information literacy graduation requirement were discontinued.

At the time of this study, the 2021–2022 academic year, the Cal State East Bay library faculty offered three credit-bearing information literacy courses, two lower division and one upper division. One lower division course was a one-unit introductory course titled INFO 210: Introduction to Information Literacy Skills. This course replaced the former two-unit required course. Students must have sophomore standing or above to enroll. The other lower division course was a three-unit course called INFO 200: Topics in Information Literacy, and its topic might change based on the librarian teaching it. Both courses met the requirement of lower division GE Area E: Lifelong Learning and Self Development. The upper division course was three units titled INFO 310: Information Literacy and Sustainability. It met the upper division GE requirement Area D: Social Sciences and also satisfied the sustainability graduation requirement. The department offered nine sections of the courses during the 2021–2022 academic year, taught by members of the 12-person faculty.

Because these information literacy credit courses are now electives—each is one of many courses fulfilling GE area requirements—the library faculty at Cal State East Bay have been considering how to encourage students to enroll. Some library faculty are concerned that the current course titles may not appeal to students. The phrase *information literacy*, used in all three titles, may be unfamiliar to many students, potentially discouraging enrollment. These librarians conducted this research project to inform course title changes. The research question that guided this study is: How can librarians title their information literacy courses to appeal to students and increase enrollment?

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## Literature Review

The following literature review provides a brief history of the term *information literacy*, including the transformation of information literacy standards to threshold concepts, and how that affected instruction. Additionally, the review summarizes the literature related to how students choose courses and specifically how course titles may influence that process.

The term *information literacy* has become ubiquitous in the academic library world to denote the subject matter that librarians teach. Paul Zurkowski is commonly credited with coining the phrase in 1974.[3] Over the next decades, it gained traction as a term to describe the competent use of information within academic, professional, and lifelong learning contexts. As Loanne Snavely and Natasha Cooper point out, the term has received pushback based on several criticisms:

- The term is confusing, even to librarians, but more importantly to students.
- The word *literacy* has a strong historical connection to reading and writing as opposed to research or information.
- *Literacy* implies *illiteracy*, which has a pejorative connotation.[4]

Snavely and Cooper suggested other phrases to use instead, such as *information competency* or *information inquiry*.[5] Herbert White was also dissatisfied with *information literacy* and advocated for *information empowerment* as an alternative.[6] Snavely and Cooper criticized the earlier related terms *bibliographic* or *library instruction* as pedantic and emphasizing teaching over learning. These alternative terms have gained little or no traction in the library world.[7]

Although the ubiquity of the term *information literacy* has changed little, what the term actually describes has, according to the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). ACRL, in its now-rescinded Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education (hereafter the Standards), had defined *information literacy* as the ability to "recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information."[8] At that time, information literacy was characterized as a discrete set of skills, including finding, evaluating, and using information appropriately and ethically in a variety of contexts. The Standards also noted that information literacy had become increasingly important in a time when the information landscape and information technologies were in constant flux. These ongoing changes eventually led ACRL to reconsider the nature of information literacy and to transform the Standards into the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education (hereafter the Framework).[9]

When ACRL adopted the Framework in 2016, it replaced the skill-based approach with a set of threshold concepts that function as big ideas within a discipline of knowledge.[10] These core ideas are

1. Authority Is Constructed and Contextual
2. Information Creation as a Process
3. Information Has Value
4. Research as Inquiry
5. Scholarship as Conversation
6. Searching as Strategic Exploration.

With the development of the threshold concepts, ACRL broadened its definition of *information literacy* to cover a "set of integrated abilities encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning."[11] This new definition reflects the changing world of information production and dissemination in academia and beyond, requiring a more flexible set of core ideas from which discipline-specific learning outcomes could be fashioned. These core ideas are meant to serve as a framework from which teaching librarians, in coordination with disciplinary faculty, could devise their information literacy programs and outcomes.

Angela Sample, in her study of how the definition of *information literacy* has changed over time, identified a major shift in the conceptualization of information literacy in the

academy.[12] Rather than viewing students as information seekers, educators began to see them as participants in disciplinary discourse. As Sample pointed out, once this view was adopted, the skills approach was replaced with one that saw information literacy as a "way of thinking" and a "social practice." Fluency was gained not by practicing discrete skills but by reflective thought and through problem-solving activities, leading to an increased level of sociocultural understanding of information creation, sharing, and consumption.[13]

## Information Literacy Instruction

Several studies map the threshold concepts to learning outcomes in either course-integrated or credit-bearing information literacy instruction,[14] but these studies do not look at course titles. Nonetheless, they show that different threshold concepts are used in various instructional settings and often employ different language to describe information literacy ideas. One study found students had trouble not just with the term *information literacy* but also with many other terms typically used within information literacy instruction, such as *primary sources*, *peer review,* and *abstract*.[15]

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Given the confusion around the definition of *information literacy* and the varied language with which information literacy concepts are taught, students may not understand the contents, purpose, expectations, and specific learning outcomes associated with a course labeled *information literacy*. Credit-bearing information literacy courses have been taught in a variety of contexts under a number of names in academia for many years, with the percentage of colleges and universities offering such courses varying from 19 percent to 42 percent at various times.[16] One study found that students who passed a credit-bearing course in information literacy were 18.5 percent more likely to graduate from college.[17] So, given the connection of credit-bearing courses to students' academic success, it becomes important to determine how students may choose to take such a course.

## Factors Students Consider when Selecting Courses

Students consider many factors when deciding which course electives to take. Several studies explore generally how course titles, descriptions, and GE credit affect student choice.[18] Joan Flaherty, Bruce McAdams, and Joshua LeBlanc analyzed how catchy versus conventional language in course titles affected student preferences.[19] They acknowledged that the word *catchy* lies outside standard academic language in its colloquialism but did not provide a precise definition for it. However, Merriam-Webster defines *catchy* as language that catches the audience's interest.[20] Additionally, the word *catchy* connotes the use of trendy if not ephemeral language whose popularity may wane over time.

Flaherty, McAdams, and LeBlanc provided some examples of catchy titles, such as "The Savvy Surfer," which describes a course on searching the Internet (also known as "Surfing the Web").[21] This title exemplifies how trendy terms can go out of style. The three authors found that some students preferred catchy titles and others favored conventional titles, and they hypothesized that the difference was related to student concerns about employers recognizing courses and skills they attained.[22]

Other researchers explored students' "paths to purchase" for selecting courses, meaning the process through which a person becomes aware of a need and decides to purchase a product or service to meet that need. In the context of course selections, this path may include how the course title and description influence course choice.[23] James Mourey, Melissa Markley, and Stephen Koernig found that the key drivers of student course selections were interest, workload, and learning outcomes.[24] Whether the course title was simple or complex had less influence than the course description did; however, a difficult-to-read title or description could reduce student interest. Another study looked more broadly at factors contributing to student choice including, but not limited to, the number of units, professor reputation, how hard the course seemed, the amount of work, and the course description.[25] This study noted that students choose courses in their major with career preparation in mind. However, they use different criteria when selecting GE courses. Most students were highly motivated to select GE courses with names that indicated the class would be fun. Another study that looked at undergraduates' reasons for choosing GE courses found that the top reason was "personal choice," followed closely by "what fits my schedule."[26] Other considerations included recommendations from academic advisers or professors, advice from family or friends, and "I check internet sites to find the best teachers."[27]

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Angela Towers and Neil Towers looked at course selection from a shopping perspective. They proposed that students selected courses much as they shopped for household goods, considering emotional and rational components, word of mouth, social media posts, and input from friends and family. Students made initial evaluations, weighed their selections, finalized their decisions, and then did a post-decision analysis.[28]

Matthew Lancellotti and Sunil Thomas looked at how students chose to enroll in marketing courses based on how course descriptions were written.[29] They categorized students as highly motivated or not and those who had confidence in the subject matter or not. Lancellotti and Thomas provided course descriptions that either described what skills would be learned or what topics would be covered. Students with different combinations of characteristics prioritized different criteria when selecting courses. In addition to the description, these criteria included instructor ratings, perceived course workload, and ease of grading. Thus, there may not be a perfect title and description for all types of students.

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More research is needed to clarify the reasons students choose courses, including the degree to which the course title figures into their decision-making process. The literature shows that students consider many factors when choosing courses, such as course title, course description, inclusion on a major or minor elective list, social media, peer and family influences, advisers, personal interest, enjoyment potential, level of difficulty, and advertising of the course by the university. This study focuses on how course titles, in this case for information literacy courses, influenced students' selection process.

## Methods

The researchers chose a mixed methods approach to gather information about information literacy course titles from both librarian and student perspectives. They surveyed academic librarians to discover characteristics of current information literacy courses at other higher education institutions. To gather the student perspective on course titles, the researchers surveyed current and former information literacy students at their institution about their decision-making process and their thoughts on titles. After the survey, the researchers held focus groups with students to learn in more detail the impact a course title has on the decision to enroll, as well as to get feedback on existing and potential titles for information literacy courses.

The researchers' institution is among the most ethnically and economically diverse universities in the United States, with 11,757 full-time equivalent (FTE) students as of fall 2021.[30] Cal State East Bay is one of 23 universities in the California State University system, the largest public university system in the United States with over 477,466 students.[31] Cal State East Bay is a Hispanic-Serving Institution as well as an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution, and it has a Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education of R2 (Doctoral Universities: High Research Activity).[32] This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board at Cal State East Bay.

## Survey of Academic Librarians

The researchers designed an online survey using Qualtrics to gather information from academic librarians whose institutions offer credit-bearing information literacy courses (see Appendix B). The survey asked librarians to list the titles of their information literacy courses. The researchers used enumerative content analysis to examine word and phrase frequency within the submitted titles.[33] They collaboratively identified titles they designated as catchy, based on Flaherty, McAdams, and LeBlanc and on the Merriam-Webster Dictionary definition.[34] The survey also asked if librarians wanted to change the title; what they would change it to; how many credits or units are offered; whether the course is targeted to lower division, upper division, or graduate students; whether it fills graduation or major requirements; if the course is tied to any other courses; how they market the courses; and finally, institutional demographic questions, such as type and size. The survey was sent to several academic and regional library email lists based in North America in mid-February 2022 and remained open for about one month. The researchers removed obvious duplicate responses during the data analysis process.

## Survey of Current and Former Students

The researchers designed an online survey using Qualtrics for current and former students in the information literacy credit courses at Cal State East Bay (see Appendix C). The aim of the survey was to understand what influenced the students to take the course; if students thought the title of the course reflected what the course was about; whether they thought college students know what the phrase *information literacy* means; and their definitions of *information literacy*. The survey also solicited suggestions for renaming the course and the participants' demographic information. For the definitions of *information literacy* that the students provided, the researchers sorted the terms into categories based on the frames in ACRL's Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education. The survey was distributed to students who enrolled in either INFO 200 or INFO 210 from fall 2019 through spring 2022. The survey went to 507 student email addresses in late February 2022 and was open for responses for two weeks.

## Focus Groups of Students

After the student survey closed, the researchers held four online focus groups with students via Zoom. Two focus groups (FG1 and FG2) included current and former students in Cal State East Bay information literacy credit courses, and two focus groups (FG3 and FG4) were made up of Cal State East Bay students who had not taken an information literacy credit course. Students opted to participate in the focus groups from a question on the student survey. For the focus groups with students who had not taken an information literacy credit course, the researchers recruited participants through a campus-wide student messaging system, an announcement on the library's news blog, and a post on the library's Instagram account. One researcher facilitated all four focus groups, and the other researchers alternated as observers and notetakers. Each focus group was recorded, and the transcript was automatically generated and saved via Zoom. At the start of each group, the facilitator asked participants to fill out their demographic information in a Google Form.

The focus groups enabled the researchers to follow up on the survey questions (see Appendix E for focus group prompts). The participants discussed why they enrolled in the information literacy course; whether the course description matched what the course turned out to be; and whether the title of the course was a good fit for the content. The facilitator created a Padlet (https://padlet.com/) for the participants to add their course title suggestions and to react to suggestions gleaned from both the librarian and student surveys. Padlet is an online tool that allows for collaboration, similar to a digital bulletin board where participants can add notes, comment on or "like" each other's notes, or vote notes up or down. The researchers used the free version of Padlet. Focus group participants were instructed to add their course title suggestions to the Padlet. The observer or notetaker then added some title suggestions from the librarian and student surveys to the Padlet and asked the students to "like" the titles they preferred and add comments explaining why they liked them. The students were asked to discuss why they liked some titles better than others.

The focus group participants who had not taken an information literacy course discussed the extent to which a course name and description influence their decisions to enroll. The facilitator asked what factors generally go into students' deciding to take a course (see Appendix D). The facilitator provided the participants with the INFO 210 course description and learning outcomes and facilitated a discussion on what the course was about. Following this, the facilitator provided the participants with a link to a Padlet with several potential course titles, including the actual title of the course. The participants were asked to give a thumbs up or thumbs down to the options, add comments to the Padlet, and discuss their reasons for an up or down vote.

## Findings

The responses to the surveys and comments shared in the focus groups provided information regarding how librarians can title information literacy credit courses to appeal to students.

### Survey of Academic Librarians

*Respondent Demographics*

The researchers collected 98 survey responses from academic librarians whose institutions offer credit courses in information literacy. The largest number of responses came from librarians at doctoral degree granting institutions (38 percent), followed by associate's degree granting (20 percent), baccalaureate degree granting (20 percent), and master's degree granting (19 percent). Of the respondents, 66 percent were at public, not-for-profit institutions, 32 percent at private, not-for-profit institutions, and 3 percent at private, for-profit institutions. The greatest number of respondents were from smaller institutions: 38 percent from institutions with 1 to 5,000 students, 22 percent from institutions with 5,001 to 10,000 students, 15 percent from institutions with 10,001 to 15,000 students, and 24 percent from institutions with more than 15,000 students.

*Information Literacy Course Characteristics*

Many of the librarian survey respondents indicated that their institutions had offered credit courses in information literacy for a long time: 44 percent said that they had offered for 11 or more years. An additional 22.5 percent of respondents reported that their institution offered information literacy courses for the last 6 to 10 years, and another 22.5 percent said their institution had offered such courses for 5 years or less. Eleven percent of survey respondents indicated that they did not know how long their institution had offered courses. Librarians were most commonly the instructors for the information literacy courses (91 percent), but some were taught by GE faculty (3 percent) or other disciplinary faculty (3 percent).

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Most survey respondents indicated their institution offered information literacy courses worth one credit hour or unit (51 percent), but some granted two credits (20 percent) or three credits (28 percent). Only 1 percent of institutions provided courses worth four or more credit hours or units. A large share of respondents were from institutions that offered only a few sections each academic year (69 percent with 1 to 5 sections), while others indicated their institutions gave 6 to 10 sections (13 percent), 11 to 15 sections (6 percent), or more than 16 sections per year (13 percent).

The information literacy credit courses were most commonly taught at the lower division level (73 percent), with 23 percent of respondents indicating their institution offered upper division courses. Only a small percentage (4 percent) taught courses at the graduate level (excluding courses from an MLIS or equivalent program). The information literacy courses often satisfied a GE requirement (59 percent), with some courses fulfilling major requirements (14 percent), minor requirements (5 percent), or other graduation requirements (11 percent). The majority of the respondents' information literacy credit courses were not linked to another course (73 percent), but some were linked to English courses (5 percent), first-year seminar or first-year experience courses (4 percent), learning community courses (2 percent), capstone courses (2 percent), or disciplinary research methods courses (1 percent).

*Information Literacy Course Titles*

The librarian survey respondents shared 115 unique combinations of course prefix, course number, or course title for the information literacy courses offered at their institutions (see Appendix F for the complete list of course titles). The most popular word included in the course titles was *information*, used in 69 titles. The word *research* appeared in 50 titles, and 17 titles had the word *library*. Often the word *information* was included as part of a phrase, such as *information literacy* (31 titles), *information fluency* (3 titles), *information studies* (3 titles), or *information science* (3 titles). The phrase *information literac*y by itself was the complete title for seven courses. See Table 1.

> **The most popular word included in the course titles was information, used in 69 titles.**

Another common component of the course titles included words that described information format. The word *digital* (nine titles) was the most common, followed by *internet* (four titles), *online* (two titles), and *electronic* (two titles). Seven courses had either the phrase *digital age* or *information age*, in such titles as Information Literacy for the Digital Age and Research in the Information Age. See Table 2.

Words describing what would be learned also appeared in course titles. The term *strategies* (15 titles) was the most popular, followed by *skills* (8 titles), *resources* (5 titles), *methods* (4 titles), and *inquiry* (2 titles). These courses had titles such as Information Research Strategies, Library Research Methods, and Resources for Research. See Table 3.

A little less than a fifth of course titles (18 percent or 21 titles) indicated the level of the course. Of the terms used, *introduction* was the most common (15 titles), followed by *fundamentals* (3 titles). One title each included the terms *advanced*, *basic*, or *senior*. See Table 4.

# Table 1.

Top word frequencies in course titles, including phrases using most frequent words

| Term | Frequency |
|------|-----------|
| Information | 69 (60%) |
| Research | 50 (43%) |
| Library | 17 (15%) |
| Information literacy | 31 (27%) |
| Information fluency | 3 (3%) |
| Information studies | 3 (3%) |
| Information science | 3 (3%) |

# Table 2.

Most common information format-related words and phrases in course titles

| Term | Frequency |
|------|-----------|
| Digital | 9 (8%) |
| Internet | 4 (3%) |
| Online | 2 (2%) |
| Electronic | 2 (2%) |
| Digital age | 4 (3%) |
| Information age | 3 (3%) |

# Table 3.

Words used in course titles to convey what would be learned

| Term | Frequency |
|------|-----------|
| Strategies | 15 (13%) |
| Skills | 8 (7%) |
| Resources | 5 (4%) |
| Methods | 5 (4%) |
| Inquiry | 2 (2%) |

# Table 4.

Terms used in course titles to describe course level

| Term | Frequency |
| --- | --- |
| Introduction | 15 (13%) |
| Fundamentals | 3 (3%) |
| Advanced | 1 (1%) |
| Basic | 1 (1%) |
| Senior | 1 (1%) |

Terms addressing the audience or context for the course also appeared. The words *college* or *university* were found in five course titles, *academic* in four titles, and *scholar* in two titles. See Table 5.

# Table 5.

Terms used in course titles to address audience

| Term | Frequency |
| --- | --- |
| College or university | 5 (4%) |
| Academic | 4 (3%) |
| Scholar | 2 (2%) |

Seven course titles communicated that the course was for a specific population. These course titles referenced *art history*, *e-learners*, *health*, *honors students*, *medical information*, *practitioners*, and *professionals*.

The adjective *critical* showed up in four course titles. In three, it was the descriptor of the course content, including Critical Information Literacy, Critical Perspectives in Information, and Critical Research Skills. In the fourth course title, it described the student—Information, the Internet, and You: Becoming a Critical Consumer and Creator.

The researchers identified eight course titles that they categorized as catchy:

- Digital Citizenship and Information as Power: Fake News
- Digital Citizenship and Information as Power: True Crime
- Information Ecosystem: Becoming a Savvy User
- Information, the Internet, and You: Becoming a Critical Consumer and Creator
- Interrogating Information: Research and Writing for a Digital Public

- Investigations: Memes, Media, and Society
- Investigations: Navigating the Information Ecosystem
- Question Everything: Research as Inquiry.

*Interest in Changing Course Titles*

Asked whether they would like to change their course title or titles, the librarian survey respondents were fairly evenly split. Twenty respondents (53 percent) said they wanted to keep their current title, while 18 respondents (47 percent) said they would prefer to change it. Of those who wanted to keep their title, five respondents said they had recently changed the title and were not currently interested in changing it again. Others said they did not want to change it, with some describing their course titles as "fine," "okay," or "serviceable."

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For those respondents who wished to change their course titles, most (78 percent) shared their specific new title suggestions. Two respondents commented that they wanted to change to a catchier title, sharing they would like "something more descriptive and/or catchy" and "something more interesting? It's hard to say what would be appropriate" but did not include specific title alternatives.

The new course titles proposed by survey respondents include many of the same common words as the original titles. The most frequently used word in the suggested new titles was *research*, which appeared in 12 of the 16 proposed titles (75 percent), followed by *information* (5 titles, 31 percent), *literacy* (4 titles, 25 percent), and *introduction* (4 titles, 25 percent). The suggestions were

- Academic Research and Information Literacy
- Academic Research and Knowledge Justice
- Academic Research Skills
- Examination of Scientific Communication
- Information Literacy
- Introduction to College Research
- Introduction to Research and Critical Thinking Skills
- Introduction to Research and Information Literacy
- Library Research Methods (two occurrences)
- Library Science 101: Introduction to College Research
- Navigating the World of Information
- Research Literacy
- Research Skills
- Research Support.

The phrase *information literacy* appeared less frequently in the revised course titles, occurring in 19 percent or 3 of the 16 revised titles, compared to 27 percent or 31 of the original 115 titles. Two survey respondents indicated they were not sure if students were familiar or understood the meaning of the phrase *information literacy*. One commented

that *information literacy* as a phrase is important to librarians, but may not be for students: "I would love if our [course title] reflected Information Literacy in the name, but that is definitely me sitting here with my librarian hat on. Information Literacy isn't a term I think our students are all that familiar with (despite our very focused instruction in it at the credit-bearing and one-shot level)." Another survey respondent was unsure if either the phrase *critical thinking* or *information literacy* would

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resonate with students: "I would definitely take out 'critical thinking,' because I don't think it means much in this context. But I'm not sure that 'information literacy' would mean more."

### Survey of Current and Former Students

*Respondent Demographics*

The researchers collected 44 responses to their survey of students who were either currently taking or had previously taken an information literacy credit course at Cal State East Bay. The majority (75 percent) had taken the one-credit course, INFO 210: Introduction to Information Literacy Skills. The others (25 percent) were enrolled in the three-credit course, INFO 200: Topics in Information Literacy. Most respondents were either juniors (28 percent) or seniors (36 percent). There were no first-year student participants, and 25 percent were sophomores. Another 11 percent were graduate students. More than 92 percent of respondents were traditional college age (18–24 years).

The student survey respondents primarily identified as Latinx (35 percent), Asian (32 percent), and white (24 percent). Smaller numbers of respondents identified as Black (3 percent), Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (3 percent), or other (3 percent). There was an overrepresentation of Asian and white students and an underrepresentation of Black students compared to the campus student body in fall 2021.[35]

Fewer student survey participants identified as first-generation college students compared to the general student population. Thirty-nine percent of respondents said they were the first in their family to attend college. This is similar to the demographics of students who enroll in the information literacy credit courses, where 37 percent of students identified as first-generation college students in fall 2021.[36] In contrast to the general student population at Cal State East Bay, approximately 58 percent of students identified as first-generation college students in fall 2021.[37]

Students whose majors were in the College of Science were overrepresented in the sample (52 percent of respondents versus 37 percent of the general student population).[38] The information literacy courses are included on several major road maps in the College of Science. The next largest group (24 percent) was from the College of Letters, Arts and

Social Sciences. Others were from the College of Business and Economics (14 percent) and the College of Education and Allied Studies (10 percent).

*Motivation to Enroll*

Many student survey respondents said they enrolled in the information literacy course because it provided the right number of units (34 percent) or it fit their schedule (21 percent). Others enrolled because the course was part of their major road map (11 percent), and others took the course because it met a GE requirement (3 percent). The course meeting a GE requirement was not listed as an option on the student survey, but some respondents wrote it in, and it became a prevalent theme in the focus groups.

> Many student survey respondents said they enrolled in the information literacy course because it provided the right number of units (34 percent) or it fit their schedule (21 percent).

Some students indicated the course was recommended to them or that they had personal interest in the topic. The course may have been suggested by an academic adviser (5 percent), a professor (5 percent), or a friend or family member (1 percent). Some students indicated that they were interested in the title of the course (10 percent) or that they had a personal interest in the course topic (7 percent). Those respondents who included an explanation mentioned a desire to develop their research skills, to learn to collect information from websites, or to ensure that they learned how to properly cite sources.

*Course Titles and Student Information Literacy Knowledge*

The survey asked current and former information literacy credit course students to reflect on the course title and to consider their fellow students' knowledge of the term *information literacy*. Nearly all current and former students (91 percent) said the title of their information literacy credit course was a good fit for the content. When asked whether other students would know what the term *information literacy* meant, however, 61 percent of respondents said "No," they did not think other students would know what the term meant. Less than a quarter of respondents (24 percent) said "Yes," they thought other students would be able to define the term. Fifteen percent said "I don't know." See Table 6.

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When asked to define *information literacy* themselves, students who had taken an information literacy credit course focused primarily on language related to searching for and evaluating information. The words that students used in their definitions could be mapped to each frame in the ACRL Framework. For example, the frame Searching as Strategic Exploration was reflected in the words *find*, *navigate*, *locate*, *search*, *look for*, *research*, *select*, and *obtain*.

# Table 6.
## Student understanding of the phrase *information literacy*

**Student survey question:** "Do you think that most CSUEB [California State University, East Bay] students know what 'information literacy' means?"

| Response | Response number and frequency |
|---|---|
| No | 20 (61%) |
| Yes | 8 (24%) |
| I don't know | 5 (15%) |

Providing alternative titles that were a better fit for course content and more relevant to students seemed challenging. Less than half of survey respondents (15) shared ideas for renaming the information literacy course they took. Four students replied to that question with an "n/a" or "not sure." In alphabetical order, the course title suggestions the student respondents shared were

- Evaluating Sources and Writing
- Guide through Literacy
- Information Research. Knowledge of Research. Knowledge of Information Attaining and Retaining Information
- Information Skills
- Information Uses for Conducting Research
- Introduction to Library Research Skills.
- Introduction to Research
- Navigating the Information Superhighway
- Online Information Literacy
- Research and Development
- Research Paper Guide
- Research Skills
- Resource-Based Learning
- Understanding Literacy.

In addition to the specific course names, two students shared more general comments on how to rename the courses. One student said the title should be "something along the lines of 'Research Skills' or something like that. Make it more simple and readable for students." Another student stated, "I think the current title is quite apt. But, if you wanted a larger audience, I would recommend something along the lines of 'Basic Information Citationing' or something like that. I would not use that one, but something that references the fact that the main part of the class is citing sources."

**Student Focus Groups**

*Demographics*

The researchers held four focus groups with 15 Cal State East Bay student participants. One-third of participants had taken an information literacy credit course, and the other two-thirds had not. The majority of the participants (71 percent) were either juniors or seniors. Most students' majors were in either the College of Letters, Arts and Social Sciences (40 percent, six participants) or the College of Science (40 percent, six participants), with another two participants (13 percent) from the College of Education and Allied Studies and the final participant from the College of Business and Economics (7 percent). The majority of participants identified as either Asian (35 percent) or Latinx (29 percent), with Black- and white-identified students both at 14 percent. Many of the participants in the focus groups, similar to those in the surveys, were not first-generation college students (57 percent). This does not mirror the general student population at Cal State East Bay, where 58 percent identified as a first-generation college student in fall 2021.[39]

*Motivation to Enroll in Courses*

During the focus group discussions, the student participants agreed that their motivation to enroll in specific courses was most often tied to how the course contributed to their path to graduation. Students discussed using their major's checklist or road map to choose courses. Students also mentioned the importance of courses fulfilling GE requirements and described referencing their Degree Audit Report to ensure they selected courses that would satisfy their outstanding GE requirements for graduation.

> **During the focus group discussions, the student participants agreed that their motivation to enroll in specific courses was most often tied to how the course contributed to their path to graduation.**

Students also discussed the importance of choosing classes that fit their schedule for the upcoming term. They considered the modality of the course (online or in person) and the days and times the course was offered. The online campus course schedule was useful to them, as they could filter it by courses meeting a specific GE requirement as well as by day of week and time to find courses that would fit their schedule.

Word of mouth also impacted course choices. Students indicated that they heavily used websites like Rate My Professors (https://www.ratemyprofessors.com/) to choose their courses, consulting the website to determine how an instructor approaches teaching a specific course and to read feedback from students who had previously taken that course. They also mentioned having conversations with other students through chat apps or group text messages to share information about courses that other students liked and recommended. While peer guidance from direct

> **Students indicated that they heavily used websites like Rate My Professors (https://www. ratemyprofessors.com/) to choose their courses . . .**

conversations or Rate My Professor appeared to be the primary source of information on courses, students also received course recommendations from their academic advisers and to a lesser extent from their professors, or saw a flier about the course.

*Importance of Course Titles and Descriptions*

Students shared that both course titles and course descriptions were important to help them identify courses that would be useful in their academic career and help them develop as students. They indicated they relied more heavily on the full description of the course, rather than just the course title, to learn what the course was about. The students said they would like to see course descriptions include information about the instructor's teaching methods. They preferred hands-on experiential learning, rather than lecture- and reading-heavy approaches to teaching. The students admitted that they avoided courses whose descriptions emphasized reading a lot of material.

> **Students shared that both course titles and course descriptions were important to help them identify courses that would be useful in their academic career and help them develop as students.**

For courses on topics that were new to them, students preferred to see the word *introduction* in the title. The inclusion of that term indicated to them that they would be learning the basics in the new subject area and would not need extensive previous knowledge on that subject. They did not like catchy titles, because they felt that straightforward, descriptive titles were most helpful. One student indicated a preference for academic-sounding or professional titles over catchy ones. Another student commented that having a "trendy" title could quickly become dated, though that student also acknowledged that a trendy title could indicate currency if it was still actually current.

*Information Literacy Course Titles*

When asked about specific titles for courses with information literacy content, the student participants did not prefer titles that included the terms *information literacy* or *library*. The focus group participants understood *information literacy* to mean searching for and citing credible sources of information. They agreed that all college students need those skills, but they were not confident that other students would know what the term *information literacy* meant.

In particular, the term *literacy* in a course title was distracting for some students across all four focus groups. Two student participants associated the word *literacy* with English courses. The first student stated, "When you think about literacy you don't think research, you think, like, oh yeah, books like English literature" (FG1). A second student shared, "Many people know what [information literacy] is but maybe don't know that term for it, and I would say more commonly among, like, English majors maybe they would be more familiar with a specific term

> **. . . the term *literacy* in a course title was distracting for some students across all four focus groups.**

like information literacy" (FG2). A third student felt that the inclusion of the word *literacy* indicated a course that would require a lot of reading, stating, "It just makes me think we're going to be doing a lot of reading when I see the word literacy I just automatically think is so much reading" (FG3). A fourth student equated the use of the word *literacy* with language learning, stating: "When I read the word this and I don't even know if this is what you're asking for, but basic information literacy . . . I just think of, like, ESL [English as a second language] or, like, basic literacy skills" (FG4).

When asked about the use of the word *library* in a course title, students indicated that the word made them think of books or studying in the library. One student said, "A lot of people like to go to libraries for reading books, but aside from that, I think that's what a majority of people pretty much know about a library" (FG4). The same student said that for some students the library is intimidating, and for those students, having *library* in the name might be off-putting: "But to put library, I think there's definitely good and bad . . . someone who doesn't really know much about libraries aside from, like, reading books, it may be just a little bit intimidating" (FG4). Another student in this focus group agreed, saying: "The term library—what really comes to mind is books" (FG4).

Three potential course titles rose to the top as being most appealing in the focus groups:

- Academic Research and Critical Thinking
- Information Research Strategies for College Students
- Introduction to Information Research.

One student said that the title Academic Research and Critical Thinking "describes the course perfectly" (FG1). Another said, "I really like the Academic Research and Critical Thinking title . . . just because it's, like, it's also kind of straightforward" (FG3). Regarding Information Research Strategies for College Students, one student said, "That sounds pretty appealing to me" (FG2). Another student also liked this potential title but suggested to add "Introduction to" at the beginning: "For me, I put a thumbs up on Information Research Strategies for College Students, I think when it's, like, college students, because it is a college course it kind of seems more fitting . . . but I also think that it would be great to add intro . . . kind of letting students know that it's not . . . very difficult if it were to be an introductory class, I think it would be good to put introduction to information research strategies for all" (FG4). Lastly, another student stated that "Introduction to Information Research also is a good one" (FG1).

Focus group participants found some words and phrases confusing or misleading in the course titles presented to them for feedback (see Appendices D and E). Several participants were critical of the phrase *Information Superhighway*. One student said, "The superhighway could throw people off" (FG2). Another phrase that students did not respond favorably to was *Information Ecosystem*. One student said, "That one is confusing to me. I think it isn't really clear what it is, and I think ecosystem I just think science . . . but information ecosystem—information could be almost anything and so, um, I just feel like that I don't know what that course would be about" (FG3). Another student echoed this sentiment saying, "It's kind of a tongue twister, and then second, when I hear ecosystem, I think of science, and it just, it doesn't really seem to fit what's happening

> **Several participants were critical of the phrase Information Superhighway.**

in the class" (FG4). One student reflecting broadly on the course names said, "I'm not a big fan of, like, cutesy words in my titles" (FG4). That student explained that such titles can become outdated quickly.

## Discussion

The student survey and student focus groups provided several insights into the factors that students consider when selecting an elective course. Students do consider course titles when selecting elective courses, therefore the words used in course titles are important. However, course titles are just one of many factors that they take into account.

Some students who participated in this study felt that other students would not know what the term *information literacy* meant, confirming the concerns of the current study's researchers. Some focus group participants felt that the word *literacy* meant reading literacy or English proficiency and thought the course would be reading-heavy, which was not appealing. However, no clear replacement term or terms stood out in suggestions from students in the survey or focus groups. The survey of librarians showed that most of the submitted information literacy courses include the word *information* in the title, with just over a quarter using the phrase *information literacy*. Similar to findings in the literature, some librarian survey respondents expressed concern that students may not understand or readily recognize the term *information literacy*.[40] In addition, because the literature uncovered that students have difficulty understanding and little familiarity with many highly used terms related to information literacy, care should be taken when developing the title or description for any information literacy course.[41]

> **Students do consider course titles when selecting elective courses, therefore the words used in course titles are important. However, course titles are just one of many factors that they take into account.**

Students in the current study seemed to have difficulty thinking up alternate course titles. Only a small number of students suggested new titles, and two students expressed difficulty in the comments on this survey question. This finding may indicate the complexity of the various aspects that information literacy covers and the confusion that students still have about information literacy even after having taken an information literacy course. Those students who did provide potential course titles did not use the phrase *information literacy*. Many of the student suggestions included the word *research*, which 43 percent of librarians surveyed already use in their course titles. The three most appealing new course titles to emerge from the focus groups were Introduction to Academic Research and Critical Thinking, Information Research Strategies for College Students, and Introduction to Information Research. One apprehension of the researchers about using the word *research* in an information literacy course title is the possibility of confusion with courses focused on research methods or conducting primary or field research. However, because

> **Many of the student suggestions included the word research, which 43 percent of librarians surveyed already use in their course titles.**

focus group participants also indicated that course descriptions were important factors in choosing a course, similar to what Mourey, Markley, and Koernig found,[42] the use of *research* in this context can be explained more clearly in the course description.

Focus group participants did not recommend putting the word *library* in course titles. They thought the word was off-putting because it reminds students of simply books or a place to study. The word *library* was used in 15 percent of current titles and 19 percent of the potential title revisions from the librarian survey.

> **Focus group participants did not recommend putting the word *library* in course titles. They thought the word was off-putting because it reminds students of simply books or a place to study.**

Focus group participants indicated that they prefer straightforward, descriptive titles rather than catchy or trendy ones. They expressed concern that catchy titles could become dated, and some preferred titles that sound more intellectual or professional. The researchers categorized 6.9 percent of course titles reported in the librarian survey as catchy. Perhaps descriptive titles could be made interesting in some way to attract students without being overly trendy and potentially dated.

Focus group participants strongly recommended including *introduction* in course titles where no prior experience is needed to succeed in the course. They explained that they consider how hard and time-consuming a course seems, and they assumed that a course starting with *introduction* would not be too difficult. Similarly, participants in an earlier study indicated that they chose electives because they thought the course would be stress free.[43] One participant in that study stated they chose the course because they would not have "any grades anxiety."[44] Only 13 percent of course titles mentioned on the librarian survey included the word *introduction*. While the researchers did not distinguish between lower and upper division courses when analyzing the course titles, 73 percent of respondents to the librarian survey indicated their information literacy courses were lower division courses, so adding *introduction* to the course titles may be appropriate.

> **Focus group participants strongly recommended including introduction in course titles where no prior experience is needed to succeed in the course.**

Aside from course titles, student survey respondents and focus group participants indicated that practical factors were some of the most important to consider when deciding to take electives. A major factor that came out in the student survey and all four focus groups was whether a course fulfills a graduation or major requirement. Most information literacy courses reported on the librarian survey did fulfill a requirement (59 percent GE, 14 percent major, 5 percent minor, 11 percent other graduation requirement). This is similar to the findings in the literature that reported some students chose a particular course because it fulfilled a graduation requirement.[45] Another practical factor that emerged from the student survey and focus groups was that students specifically looked for courses that met the number of units they needed in a particular term, as well

as those that fit into their schedule. The magic number of units or the best date and time of a course is difficult for librarian instructors to predict, but offering a mix of online asynchronous and online, hybrid, or in person synchronous courses may address this.

The last determinant that focus group participants considered related to whether a course sounded interesting or could further their educational goals. They based these assessments on the course title and description. Focus group participants stated that course descriptions are important in helping them decide whether to take a course. They wanted to learn not only what the content of the course would be but also the instructor's teaching style. These findings are consistent with previous studies.[46] Other studies also found students choose electives they thought would further their educational or professional goals.[47] These studies also reported that students often based their choices of electives on recommendations from friends who had already taken the course.[48]

As a result of this study, the researchers proposed changing the title of their one-unit information literacy course from Introduction to Information Literacy Skills to Introduction to Searching for and Evaluating Information. The proposed title keeps *introduction* to convey that no expertise or prior knowledge is necessary to take the course, as focus group participants advised. Further, the title now clearly states the focus of the learning outcomes for the course, the ability to effectively search for and evaluate information.

## Limitations

The librarian survey used a convenience sample of respondents who subscribed to one or more of the professional librarian lists where the survey was disseminated. Respondents, then, opted in to take the survey. Although the survey captured a wide range of responses, it was not a random sample and therefore is not generalizable. Responses were not limited to one from each institution, so there could be duplicate responses. Obvious duplicates were removed during the data analysis process, but some may have been missed. Similarly, the student survey also used convenience sampling at a single university and thus could have limitations for being representative of the university's students as well as students at different universities.

## Future Research

Future research could examine how students view the new course title at the study university. Other researchers may wish to investigate more deeply the effectiveness of marketing efforts on student enrollment in information literacy courses. A follow-up study could also explore the connection between course titles, descriptions, and evaluations. Course evaluations could be analyzed to get a broader perspective on how students view the course, particularly in relation to content and expectations inspired by the course title.

## Conclusion

Course titles are one of many elements that students consider when selecting courses. Other considerations include whether a course fulfills a major or graduation requirement, how many units it offers, whether it fits their schedule, how difficult a course ap-

pears, and the reputation of the instructor. Students prefer course titles that accurately describe the course content over catchy titles. They also favor having *introduction* in the title, because it makes a course seem manageable with no prior knowledge needed. Both librarian and student participants indicated that the term *information literacy* may not be familiar to most students. Nonetheless, many credit-bearing information literacy courses use the term. Librarians can use the findings to create information literacy course titles that are descriptive of course content and that appeal to students.

> **Students prefer course titles that accurately describe the course content over catchy titles.**

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## Appendix A

### History of Information Literacy Course Titles at Cal State East Bay

| Course title | Years in course catalog |
| --- | --- |
| Introduction to Library Research Skills in Business and Economics | 1996–2000 |
| Introduction to Library and Information Resources | 1996–1998 |
| Information Skills in the Electronic Age | 1998–2018 |
| Interdisciplinary Applications of Geographic Information Systems | 1998–2004 |
| Fundamentals of Information Literacy | 1999–2008 |
| Discipline Based Information Research | 2000–2008 |
| Introduction to Information Literacy | 2005–2018 |
| Topics in Information Literacy | 2018–2023 |
| Introduction to Information Literacy Skills | 2018–2023 |
| Information Literacy Skills | 2018–2023 |
| Sustainability and Information Literacy | 2020–2023 |

# Appendix B

## Librarian Survey

1. Are you a librarian working in higher education (in the US or Canada) who is 18 years or older?
    a. Yes
    b. No (survey ends)

2. Does your current institution offer a credit course(s) focused on information literacy (IL)?
    a. Yes
    b. No (survey ends)

3. How long has your institution offered IL credit courses?
    a. 0–5 years
    b. 6–10 years
    c. 11+ years
    d. I don't know

4. How many credit hours are the IL courses your institution offers? [Check all that apply]
    a 1 unit
    b. 2 units
    c. 3 units
    d. 4+ units

5. Are the IL credit courses offered at the lower division, upper division, and/or graduate level? [Check all that apply]
    a. Lower division undergraduate level
    b. Upper division undergraduate level
    c. Graduate level (excluding courses in an MLIS program)

6. If the IL credit courses satisfy a general education, minor, major, and/or other graduation requirement, please check all that apply below.
    a. General education requirement
    b. Minor requirement
    c. Major requirement
    d. Graduation requirement
    e. Not applicable
    f. Other requirement

7. Are the IL credit courses linked to other courses at your institution? [Check all that apply]

    a. Yes, English courses (rhetoric, composition, etc.)

    b. Yes, Communication courses (public speaking, etc.)

    c. Yes, Learning Community courses

    d. Yes, First Year Seminar / First Year Experience courses

    e. Yes, Capstone courses in other disciplines

    f. Yes, Research Methods courses in other disciplines

    g. Yes, other

    h. No

8. How many sections of all IL credit courses are taught at your institution each academic year?

    a. 1–5 course sections

    b. 6–10 course sections

    c 11–15 course sections

    d. 16+ course sections

9. Who teaches the IL credit courses at your institution? [Check all that apply]

    a. Librarians

    b. General education faculty

    c. Other disciplinary faculty

    d. Other

10. What are the current course names, course prefixes and course numbers of the IL credit courses offered at your institution? *[Course prefixes indicate the department or program offering the course in the course catalog/course schedule]*

    [Table with cells to capture course prefix, course number, course name]

11. If you could change the name of the IL course(s) to anything you wanted, what would you call it?

    [free text response]

12. Does your institution market or advertise IL courses to students, beyond course listings in the institution's course catalog and course schedule?

    a. Yes

    b. No [skip next question]

13. [If Yes] What strategies does your institution use to market/advertise IL credit courses to students? [Check all that apply]

    a. Social media (Instagram, Facebook, etc.)

    b. Library website

    c. Campus email listservs

    d. Campus website

    e. Digital displays on campus

f.  Physical flyers, posters, or banners on campus
g.  Promotion by disciplinary faculty
h.  Promotion by academic advisers
i.  Other [free text response]

14. Is there any additional information about your institution's IL credit courses that you'd like to share?

[free text response]

Final page of questions (institutional demographics):

1. Which option below best describes your institution?
a.  Associate's degree granting
b.  Baccalaureate degree granting
c.  Master's degree granting
d.  Doctoral degree granting
e.  Other, please specify

2. Is your institution a public or private institution? Please select the best option below:
a.  Public, not-for-profit institution
b.  Private, not-for-profit institution
c.  Private, for-profit institution

3. What is the student enrollment (FTE) at your institution?
a.  1–5,000 students
b.  5,001–10,000 students
c.  10,001–15,000 students
d.  15,001+ students

# Appendix C

## Student Survey

Which INFO course did you take? If you took both courses, pick the one below that you prefer answering questions about.
o  INFO 210: Introduction to Information Literacy Skills [Skip to…]
o  INFO 200: Topics in Information Literacy [Skip to…]

What motivated you to enroll in "INFO 210: Introduction to Information Literacy Skills"? Please select all that apply:
o  Personal interest in the course topic [Skip to…]
o  The title of the course sounded interesting
o  The course fit with my schedule

- o The course provided the course units I needed
- o The instructor's reviews on instructor rating websites
- o A recommendation from an academic adviser
- o A recommendation from a professor
- o A recommendation from friends or family
- o The inclusion of the course in my major roadmap
- o I do not remember why I chose to enroll in the course
- o Other: _____

[From Skip] Please share why you were interested in the course topic for INFO 210.
   [free text response]

The course name for INFO 210 is "Introduction to Information Literacy Skills." Do you feel that the course name is a good fit for the course's content?
- o Yes
- o No
- o Don't know

Do you think that most CSUEB students know what "information literacy" means?
- o Yes
- o No

How do you define "information literacy"?
   [free text]

Can you think of other course names that would be more appropriate for the course content and/or more relevant to students?
   [free text]

What is your major?
   [Drop down menu]

What is your academic level?
- o Frosh/First year
- o Sophomore
- o Junior
- o Senior
- o Graduate student

What is your age?
- o 18–24
- o 25–34
- o 35+

What is your race/ethnicity? [Please check all that apply]
- o Asian
- o Black
- o Hawaiian / Pacific Islander
- o Latinx
- o Native American
- o White
- o Other

Are you a first-generation college student (the first in your family to attend college)?
- o Yes
- o No
- o Not sure

Do you want to be entered into a raffle to win a CSUEB-branded aluminum water bottle and snack bag? Three winners will be chosen from all survey participants.
- o Yes
- o No

Would you be interested in participating in an online focus group with other students who have taken INFO courses at a future date? All focus group recipients will receive a CSUEB-branded aluminum water bottle and snack bag.
- o Yes
- o No

# Appendix D

## Focus Group Prompts for Former INFO Credit Course Students

1. Why did you enroll in INFO 210/200?

2. Did you look at the course catalog description before enrolling?

3. If so, did the description help you understand what the course would be?

4. Did you know what information literacy meant before taking the course? Did your understanding of the term information literacy change after taking the course?

5. Do you think other students know what information literacy means?

6. How well did the course name and/or description match your experience in the course?

7. If you were to rename the course, what would you call it? I've created a Padlet, where you can type your ideas and like others' ideas. I'll put the link to the Padlet in the chat. Or, you are welcome to say suggestions, if that's easier.

8. We will also add some suggestions we got from the survey into the Padlet that you can respond to.
- o a. Academic Research and Critical Thinking
- o b. Navigating the information superhighway
- o c. Information Ecosystem: Becoming a savvy user
- o d. Information, the Internet, and You: Becoming a Critical Consumer and Creator
- o e. Introduction to Library Research Skills
- o f. Introduction to Information Research
- o g. Information Research Strategies for College Students
- o h. Question Everything: Research as Inquiry

9. Do any of these names seem appropriate for the course?

10. Would any of these names tempt you to enroll in the course?

11. Which would you eliminate?

12. How did you hear about courses?

# Appendix E

## Focus Group Prompts for Students Who Have Not Taken INFO Credit Courses

1. What information do you use when choosing your courses?

2. How much do course names factor into your decision making?

3. How much do course descriptions factor?

4. Have you been disappointed when a course wasn't what you expected, based on its course name and/or course description? Please explain . . .

5. Have you been pleasantly surprised when a course wasn't what you expected, based on its course name and/or course description? Please explain . . .

6. I will provide you with the INFO 210 course description and learning outcomes

7. Do you understand what this course is about? Do you have questions about what this course is about?

8. I will provide you with a list of potential course names in a Padlet that you can comment on.

9. Which course name best reflects the description and outcomes we provided?
    a.  Intro to Information Literacy Skills
    b.  Academic Research and Critical Thinking
    c.  Navigating the information superhighway
    d.  Information Ecosystem: Becoming a savvy user
    e.  Information, the Internet, and You: Becoming a Critical Consumer and Creator
    f.  Introduction to Library Research Skills
    g.  Introduction to Information Research
    h.  Information Research Strategies for College Students
    i.  Question Everything: Research as Inquiry

10. Feel free to add suggestions of your own! Just click the "plus" on the bottom right.

11. Which three course names would be most enticing for you to take?

12. Which three course names would turn you off from taking the course?

13. Would any of these names tempt you to enroll in the course?

14. Which would you eliminate?

15. How did you hear about courses?

# Appendix E

### Focus Group Prompts for Students Who Have Not Taken INFO Credit Courses

1. What information do you use when choosing your courses?

2. How much do course names factor into your decision making?

3. How much do course descriptions factor?

4. Have you been disappointed when a course wasn't what you expected, based on its course name and/or course description? Please explain . . .

5. Have you been pleasantly surprised when a course wasn't what you expected, based on its course name and/or course description? Please explain . . .

6. I will provide you with the INFO 210 course description and learning outcomes

7. Do you understand what this course is about? Do you have questions about what this course is about?

8. I will provide you with a list of potential course names in a Padlet that you can comment on.

9. Which course name best reflects the description and outcomes we provided?
    a. Intro to Information Literacy Skills
    b. Academic Research and Critical Thinking
    c. Navigating the information superhighway
    d. Information Ecosystem: Becoming a savvy user
    e. Information, the Internet, and You: Becoming a Critical Consumer and Creator
    f. Introduction to Library Research Skills
    g. Introduction to Information Research
    h. Information Research Strategies for College Students
    i. Question Everything: Research as Inquiry

10. Feel free to add suggestions of your own! Just click the "plus" on the bottom right.

11. Which three course names would be most enticing for you to take?

12. Which three course names would turn you off from taking the course?

13. Would any of these names tempt you to enroll in the course?

14. Which would you eliminate?

15. How did you hear about courses?

# Appendix F

## Alphabetical List of Course Titles from the Librarian Survey

Academic Research & Critical Thinking
Acquisition of Knowledge
Advanced Information Gathering: Resources and Strategies
Advanced Research Strategies
Art History Research Methods
Basic Library Skills
Children's and Young Adult Literature and Storytelling
College Research
College Research Skills

Computer Concepts / Applications
Critical Information Literacy
Critical Perspectives in Information
Critical Research Skills
Current Issues of the Information Age
Data Visualization
Digital Citizenship & Information as Power: Fake News
Digital Citizenship & Information as Power: True Crime
Digital Research
Directed Study
Electronic Research
Examination of Scientific Communication
Fake. News, Lies, and Propaganda
First Year Experience
Fundamentals of Information Literacy (2 occurrences)
Google & Beyond
History of Libraries and the Written Word
Independent Study
Information and Research Skills
Information Competency
Information Ecosystem: Becoming a Savvy User
Information Fluency
Information Fluency in the Digital Age
Information Fluency in the Digital World
Information Literacy (8 occurrences)
Information Literacy and Research Strategies
Information Literacy for Scholars
Information Literacy for the Digital Age
Information Literacy for the Health Professional
Information Now
Information Organization and Access
Information Research (2 occurrences)
Information Research across Disciplines
Information Research Strategies
Information, Culture, and People
Information, the Internet, and You: Becoming a Critical Consumer and Creator
Intellectual Property in the Information Age
Internet Research Strategies
Interrogating Information: Research & Writing for a Digital Public
Intro to Academic Research and Critical Thinking
Intro to College Research
Intro to Information Literacy
Intro to Information Studies
Intro to Lib Res
Intro to Research and Information Literacy

Introduction to Academic Library Research

Introduction to Information Literacy (2 occurrences)

Introduction to Information Research

Introduction to Information Resources

Introduction to Information Studies

Introduction to Library & Information Research

Introduction to Library Research

Introduction to Online Research

Introduction to Research

Investigations

Investigations: Memes, Media, & Society

Investigations: Navigating the Information Ecosystem

Library Information Literacy for E-Learners

Library Research

Library Research Fundamentals

Library Research Methods

Library Research Strategies

Library Resources and Information Literacy

Library Skills

Managing Information for Professionals

Medical Information for Practitioners and Consumers

Online Library Resources

Propaganda, Censorship, and Privacy

Question Everything: Research as Inquiry

Research and Information Skills for Honors Students

Research in the Digital Age

Research in the Information Age

Research Methods

Research Skills & Information Intelligence

Research Skills and Strategies: Library & Internet

Research Strategies (2 occurrences)

Research Strategies for College Students

Research, Media, Culture

Researching in the Digital Age

Resources for Research

Scholarly Inquiry and Research Methods

Search Strategies for the Information Age

Senior Thesis Lab

Senior Thesis Research Lab

Special Topics (Course name provided by librarian on course proposal which is reviewed by an internal committee)

Special Topics in Library and Information Science (3 occurrences)

Strategies for Academic Research

Strategies for Business Research

Strategies for Science Research

Topical Seminar in Information Studies

University Strategies

## Notes

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