

Pre- and Post-Tests to Assess the Instruction Program at Jafet Library

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Abstract

The Research and Instruction Services Department at Jafet Library implemented pre and post-tests to assess its information literacy (IL) program, in particular with English 102, 203 and 204 classes, in coordination with the Communication Skills program at the American University of Beirut. The project started in the Spring semester of the Academic year 2015-2016, and is still ongoing in both, spring and fall semesters. Students take the tests immediately prior to and right after the session. The results of the assessment for each semester are used, not only to update the tests, but also to amend the IL learning objectives of each class.

Introduction

The Research and Instruction Services Department at Jafet Library has initiated pre and post-tests for English 102 (English Enrichment), 203 (Academic English), and 204 (Advanced Academic English) information literacy sessions to assess its instruction program.

In coordination with the Communication Skills program, Research and Instruction Services librarians give at least one shot session for the English classes every semester.

The pre and post-tests were implemented during the spring of 2016 as a pilot project with the ENGL 203 classes only, then with the 102 and 204 classes also in the following semesters.

Methods and Materials

The questions of the tests were created based on the learning outcomes of the ENG 203 classes agreed upon between the library and the communication skills program at AUB.

Pilot part (Spring 2016):

Class: ENGL 203

Number of Questions: 10

Two approaches were used:

Approach 1(Not efficient)

Sending the links of the tests by email to the instructors to share with their students prior to coming to the IL session and after it.

Approach 2 (adopted throughout all semesters):

Students were asked to take the tests right before the beginning of the IL session and immediately after it, to insure the majority of the students had taken both tests, and that we have enough data for this study.

All semesters:

Classes: ENGL 102, 203 & 204

Number of Questions: 5

Results

The results of the tests for all classes show a remarkable assimilation of the majority of the learning objectives (LO).

The LO in red are the ones that needs reconsideration/removal:

- The use of Boolean operators is not required for the research done in ENGL 203 classes.
- Interpreting references cannot be explained to all classes as some of them attend the IL session prior to being introduced to citations in class.

The observations during the sessions showed as well the need for more than one IL session, to give librarians enough time to properly cover all major LO and allow some time for the students to practice their IL skills newly acquired.

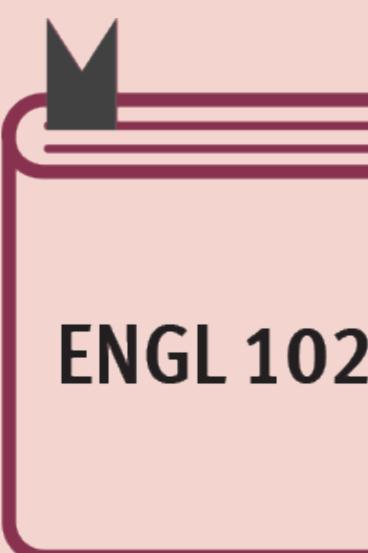
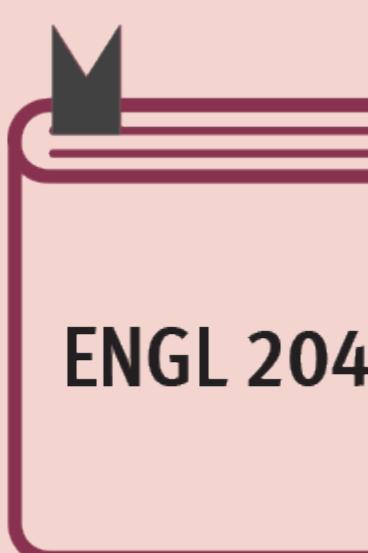
	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2017	
			Learning Objectives			
ENGL 102	# Students	% Correct Answers	# Students	% Correct Answers	# Students	% Correct Answers
	230	Pre 18–82	Post 79–99	35	Pre 25–69	Post 74–94
			Learning about library services such as borrowing/returning/renewing items			
			Finding for items at the library			
			Getting familiar with the library website			
			Searching for background information online			
			Learning Objectives			
ENGL 203	# Students	% Correct Answers	# Students	% Correct Answers	# Students	% Correct Answers
	330	Pre 21–70	Post 82–92	196	Pre 12–71	Post 34–87
			Know how to interpret references			
			Search Catalog & Multidisciplinary databases			
			Use Boolean operators			
			Analyze and evaluate information reliability			
			Differentiate between popular and scholarly sources			
			Learning Objectives			
ENGL 204	# Students	% Correct Answers	# Students	% Correct Answers	# Students	% Correct Answers
	206	Pre 15–75	Post 18–85	26	Pre 30–92	Post 50–92
			Refine your search by narrowing the subject			
			Apply advanced search techniques: Boolean operators, phrase search, etc...			
			Know how to interpret references			
			Cite your sources			
			Know the difference between popular, scholarly and peer-reviewed sources			

Table 1. Results of the test for all classes.

Conclusion

This assessment shed the light on the need to reassess many LO, as well as to have some qualitative data to support it. It shows a big room for improvement in our instruction program to better meet the requirement of these classes.

The tests will continue in the coming semesters while applying the changes gradually in the LO, in coordination with the Communication Skills program at AUB.