

# Student Perceptions of Information Literacy Skills (PILS) Using The ACRL's *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*

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In information literacy (IL) instruction for graduate students, librarians often encounter conflicting understandings of IL from faculty and students. Anecdotally, faculty expect incoming graduate students to be familiar with the process of defining the scope of a research topic; finding, accessing, and evaluating information related to this topic; and synthesizing existing literature into a literature review. Graduate students report to librarians that they feel unprepared and anxious when assigned these tasks. This gap in faculty and student understanding of graduate IL skills creates difficulty for librarians when designing graduate student IL instruction. To more precisely define this gap, *Student Perceptions of Information Literacy Skills* (PILS) was developed to measure student self-perceptions of information literacy skills. PILS is aligned to the six frames of the *Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education*. Each section assesses student perceptions of skills, concept knowledge, and affect. The instrument can be adapted to measure faculty perceptions of students skills as well. For further information about validity please contact the authors.



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## Information Use Scale

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On the following page are six ways of thinking about information, or information "frames." Please rate your experience and your perception of your skills, understanding, and feelings about these information "frames" using the scale and definitions below. If you would like to refer to the definitions while completing the survey, you may open these definitions in another window using this link: <https://goo.gl/AFYIFv>

**(1) Novice:** A novice information user is:

- Beginning to understand search
- Relying on general search tools (such as Google)
- Somewhat comfortable with basic search techniques (keyword searching)
- Unsure how to expand or refine results
- A passive member of their discipline
- Unfamiliar with the citation style of the discipline
- Unsure how to use existing information to create new information

**(2) Advanced Novice**

**(3) Emerging:** An emerging information user is:

- Beginning to understand the power of information as a tool and a commodity
- Using the basic functions of discipline-specific information retrieval tools, without or only a little understanding of the concepts that these tools are built on
- A passive member of the scholarly conversation of their field, but are interested in become an active member
- Using information legally and ethically, but occasionally plagiarizes unintentionally because of poor citation or paraphrasing skills
- Experiencing some anxiety around citations and using the ideas of others to build their own argument
- Using information without context and considering overall value-added

**(4) Advanced Emerging**

**(5) Developing:** A developing information user is:

- Using information skills comfortably and with frequency
- Using a range of tools to search out information, though they may be less likely to seek out new tools
- Expanding and narrowing their search results using an understanding of search tool concepts An active creator of information and contributor to their field, but may feel some anxiety or discomfort as they grow in this role
- Able to use information ethically and legally
- Developing the ability to synthesize multiple sources and perspectives into a new information product

**(6) Advanced Developing**

**(7) Expert:** An expert information user is:

- An experienced and confident researcher
- Using the advanced functions of discipline-specific, multidisciplinary, and interdisciplinary tools to find information
- Using a strong understanding of the concepts that search tools are built on
- A contributor to the scholarly conversation of their field
- An ethical and legal information user
- Managing their rights as information creators
- Evaluating information within its context and in its relationship with other information resources

## Authority Is Constructed and Contextual

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Please rate your experience and your perception of your skills, understanding, and feelings about the following:

	(1) Novice	(2) Advanced Novice	(3) Emerging	(4) Advanced Emerging	(5) Developed	(6) Advanced Developed	(7) Expert
I understand how to select and evaluate authoritative sources to develop credibility for their arguments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I evaluate research ideas and practices to identify potential biases.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel comfortable with conflicting opinions in research and evaluating the evidence that supports differing perspectives.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I recognize that there are many ways to define authority on a topic or in a discipline.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel comfortable calling myself a researcher, and am confident as an authority on my topic.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I value diversity of worldviews and opinions within my discipline.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Information Creation as a Process

Please rate your experience and your perception of your skills, understanding, and feelings about the following:

	(1) Novice	(2) Advanced Novice	(3) Emerging	(4) Advanced Emerging	(5) Developed	(6) Advanced Developed	(7) Expert
I understand how to choose an appropriate format (like a graph, image, text, or video) for communicating information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know how to use different types of information formats to communicate the same message in different ways.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand that different information tools (like a research paper, a poster, or a presentation) have their own benefits and limitations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand that different types of information have different values or uses, depending on the situation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy discovering and using new tools for communicating and creating information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Information has Value

Please rate your experience and your perception of your skills, understanding, and feelings about the following:

	(1) Novice	(2) Advanced Novice	(3) Emergin g	(4) Advanced Emerging	(5) Developed	(6) Advanced Developed	(7) Expert
I know how to use the work of others to support my ideas by using proper citation techniques.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can define and know how to use intellectual property laws and copyright.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can define and know how to use fair use and open access resources.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand that my personal information has value online, and make informed choices to manage my preferences for how this information is used.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I value the information of others and respect the time and energy it takes to create it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel comfortable as an active creator in the information economy, rather than as a passive consumer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Research as Inquiry

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Please rate your experience and your perception of your skills, understanding, and feelings about the following:

	(1) Novice	(2) Advanced Novice	(3) Emerging	(4) Advanced Emerging	(5) Developed	(6) Advanced Developed	(7) Expert
I can determine the appropriate extent of assigned research projects.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can organize and combine the information I locate into a coherent conclusion.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can develop simple research questions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can develop critical research questions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am persistent when seeking information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am open-minded when seeking information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am curious when seeking information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Scholarship as Conversation

Please rate your experience and your perception of your skills, understanding, and feelings about the following:

	(1) Novice	(2) Advanced Novice	(3) Emerging	(4) Advanced Emerging	(5) Developed	(6) Advanced Developed	(7) Expert
I understand why I am responsible for citing information I use.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand when to cite information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand how to cite information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I seek out multiple perspectives when developing an understanding of a topic.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I critically evaluate the perspectives that I use to develop an understanding of my topic.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I recognize my work is a contribution to the body of research surrounding my topic.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I present my work as a contribution to the body of research around my topic.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



## Searching as Strategic Exploration

Please rate your experience and your perception of your skills, understanding, and feelings about the following:

	(1) Novice	(2) Advanced Novice	(3) Emerging	(4) Advanced Emerging	(5) Developed	(6) Advanced Developed	(7) Expert
I can define the scope of an assignment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can create search strategies to locate and collect the information I need.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can identify potential kinds of sources (newspaper, article, laws, policies, statistical data) when searching for information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can identify the appropriate search tool (search engine, library catalog, database) to use when searching for information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I recognize the ways in which search tools organize information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can refine the results of a search by using different search terms.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand that the first search may not always produce the desired result.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I recognize that not all information sources are going to be relevant.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand that at times I may need to seek assistance when searching for information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I remain persistent when faced with a challenging search.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I keep an open mind when searching for resources.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>