



# Project SAILS

Your measure of success

## Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills

Sample Report  
Individual Scores Version 1 Report  
for  
Goldfinch University  
April 10, 2018




Assessment made simple

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 Carrick Enterprises is the leading provider of information literacy assessment tools to colleges and universities in the United States and Canada. For more than ten years we have worked with over 200 institutions of higher learning to help them accomplish their mission. We are committed to making information literacy assessment a powerful tool for assisting librarians and other educators in contributing to the success of their students.



## 1. About the Project SAILS Individual Scores Test

The Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS) is a test of information literacy knowledge and skills. Although information literacy is defined in varying ways by professional organizations (see Table 1 for examples), the elements the definitions have in common portray an information literate person as one who is comfortable and proficient in discovering, evaluating, and using information in ethical ways. Information literacy is widely considered an important component of a college education and a growing body of research points to specific benefits of information literacy instruction. Among the research findings: students who receive information literacy instruction profit academically during their first year; information literacy instruction benefits students in general education courses; and there is evidence of lasting improvement in academic performance for those students who receive information literacy instruction.<sup>1</sup>

The SAILS Individual Scores Test has 55 multiple-choice questions based on information literacy abilities that lead to success in college and that are common to many programs of information literacy instruction. Topics covered include research strategies, finding tools, searching, retrieving, evaluating, documenting sources, and understanding economic and legal issues around the creation and use of information.

The test content is inspired by two documents authored by the Association of College and Research Libraries: (1) Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education: Standards, Performance Indicators, and Outcomes and (2) Objectives for Information Literacy Instruction: A Model Statement for Academic Librarians. Test results are intended to support evidence-based decision-making and inform actions for strengthening student learning.

Table 1

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Information literacy is the 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.

*Association of College and Research Libraries, Information Literacy Framework for Higher Education, 2015*

Information literate people will demonstrate an awareness of how they gather, use, manage, synthesise and create information and data in an ethical manner and will have the information skills to do so effectively.

*The SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy: Core Model for Higher Education, 2011*

Information literate people recognise a need for information; determine the extent of information needed; access information efficiently; critically evaluate information and its sources; classify, store, manipulate and redraft information collected or generated; incorporate selected information into their knowledge base; use information effectively to learn, create new knowledge, solve problems and make decisions; understand economic, legal, social, political and cultural issues in the use of information; access and use information ethically and legally; use information and knowledge for participative citizenship and social responsibility; and experience information literacy as part of independent learning and lifelong learning.

*Bundy, Alan. "Australian and New Zealand information literacy framework." Principles, standards and practice 2, 2004*

Information literacy is a set of abilities requiring individuals to "recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information."

*American Library Association. Presidential Committee on Information Literacy. Final Report, 1989*

<sup>1</sup> Association of College and Research Libraries. *Academic Library Impact on Student Learning and Success: Findings from Assessment in Action Team Projects*. Prepared by Karen Brown with contributions by Kara J. Malenfant. Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries, 2017.

## 2. Results

This section provides an overview of how your students performed on the SAILS test as a whole by providing a single overall information literacy score for your entire testing sample and for your subgroups.

Figure 2.1 shows the distribution of scores. Each segment marked on the bottom of the graph represents a score range of 5% (for example, 0–5% correct, 6–10% correct, 11–15% correct). The blue bars represent the number of test-takers who fall within the corresponding score range.

Figure 2.2 gives the average score for your students and the averages for institutional groups in table form. Figure 2.3 is a ranked list of outcomes/objectives for each skill set, in order by your students' performance from the strongest to the weakest.

Additional analyses can be conducted using the accompanying data file of results. You may wish to collaborate with your institution's research office, which may be able to provide additional data about your test-takers. Consultants for data analysis and interpretation are also available through Carrick Enterprises.

Figure 2.1 Graphs of Overall Score Distribution

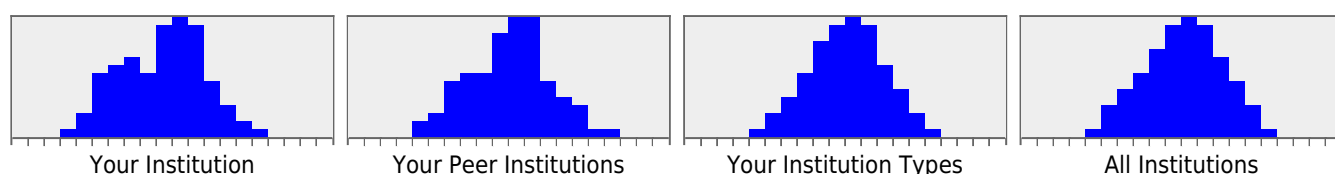


Figure 2.2 Table of Overall Results

	Your Institution n	Your Institution %	Your Peer Institutions %	Your Institution Types %	All Institutions %
Overall SAILS Score	130	48	52	52	53
CLASS STANDING					
Freshman	68	49	51	51	53
Sophomore	56	48	48	51	51
Junior	6	41	41	53	54
MAJORS					
Agriculture/Environmental Studies	6	38	43	57	61
Architecture	6	47	46	42	42
Business	25	44	47	51	52
Communications/Journalism	5	48	52	53	54
Engineering/Computer Science	33	54	54	56	55

	Your Institution n	Your Institution %	Your Peer Institutions %	Your Institution Types %	All Institutions %
Health Sciences	4	49	55	52	53
Humanities	5	35	49	58	58
Science/Math	18	49	53	57	57
Social Sciences/Psychology	14	48	54	53	54
Other	10	53	50	51	52

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF YOUR PARENTS/GUARDIANS?

Neither parent attended any college	24	46	
One or both attended some college	24	46	
One has a four-year degree	18	45	
Both have a four-year degree	36	50	
One has a graduate degree	13	48	
Both have a graduate degree	15	52	









WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH LIBRARY RESEARCH?

No experience	26	43	
Experience in high school	90	50	
Experience in high school AND college	7	37	
Experience only in college	7	48	

Figure 2.3 Outcomes/Objectives Ranked

This list of outcomes/objectives highlights areas of strength and areas that need improvement in students' knowledge of and ability to implement key information literacy outcomes and objectives. The list is ranked by your students' overall performance from strongest to weakest. The ranking is a relative ordering; it does not show how well your students performed on a particular outcome/objective. A blue bar indicates that your students' mean score is higher than or equal to the mean score of your peer institutions. A red bar indicates that your students' mean score is lower than the mean score of your peer institutions. Numbers in parentheses are test question numbers associated with each outcome/objective. See the included download file, Individual Scores Test Questions.

-  Acts appropriately to obtain information within the time frame required. (600)
-  Confers with instructors and participates in class discussions, peer workgroups and electronic discussions to identify a research topic, or other information need (642)
-  Describes how various fields of study define primary and secondary sources differently. (101,633)
-  Selects appropriate tools (e.g., indexes, online databases) for research on a particular topic. (584)
-  Uses effectively the organizational structure of a typical book (e.g., indexes, tables of contents, user's instructions, legends, cross-references) in order to locate pertinent information in it. (42,62)
-  Identifies characteristics of information that make an item a primary or secondary source in a given field. (147,148,451,452,641)
-  Describes how the terms of subscriptions or licenses may limit their use to a particular clientele or location. (638)
-  Demonstrates an understanding that some information and sources may be designed to trigger emotions, conjure stereotypes, or promote support for a particular viewpoint or group. (91,92)
-  Uses effectively the organizational structure and access points of print research sources (e.g., indexes, bibliographies) to retrieve pertinent information from those sources. (520)
-  Uses available services appropriately to obtain desired materials or alternative sources. (30)
-  Uses different research sources (e.g., catalogs and indexes) to find different types of information (e.g., books and periodical articles). (257)
-  Decides when a research topic has multiple facets or may need to be put into a broader context. (629)
-  Demonstrates an understanding of how the desired end product (i.e., the required depth of investigation and analysis) will play a role in determining the need for information. (529)
-  Investigates validity and accuracy by consulting sources identified through bibliographic references. (536)
-  Demonstrates an understanding that other sources may provide additional information to either confirm or question point of view or bias. (124,628)
-  Retrieves a document in print or electronic form. (194,229)
-  Identifies citation elements for information sources in different formats (e.g., book, article, television program, Web page, interview). (557,560,583)
-  Assesses the relevance of information found by examining elements of the citation such as title, abstract, subject headings, source, and date of publication. (90,635)
-  Identifies keywords that describe an information source (e.g., book, journal article, magazine article, Web site). (239,444,616)
-  Uses background information sources effectively to gain an initial understanding of the topic. (95)
-  Participates in electronic discussions following accepted practices (e.g. "Netiquette") (595)
-  Distinguishes among citations to identify various types of materials (e.g., books, periodical articles, essays in anthologies). (See also 2.3.1.) (44,49,60,636)
-  Describes search functionality common to most databases regardless of differences in the search interface (e.g., Boolean logic capability, field structure, keyword searching, relevancy ranking). (549,640)

-  Identifies alternate terminology, including synonyms, broader or narrower words and phrases that describe a topic. (543)
-  Demonstrates an understanding of intellectual property, copyright, and fair use of copyrighted material (117,132,271,516,554)
-  Demonstrates an understanding that some information and information sources may present a one-sided view and may express opinions rather than facts. (87,563,631)
-  Determines when a single search strategy may not fit a topic precisely enough to retrieve sufficient relevant information. (28)
-  Finds sources that provide relevant subject field- and discipline-related terminology. (73)
-  Names the three major disciplines of knowledge (humanities, social sciences, sciences) and some subject fields that comprise each discipline. (569,570,571,572)
-  Demonstrates an understanding that different disciplines may use different citation styles. (199)
-  Identifies research sources, regardless of format, that are appropriate to a particular discipline or research need. (523)
-  Demonstrates an understanding of the concept of Boolean logic and constructs a search statement using Boolean operators. (39,247,541,587)
-  Determines when some topics may be too recent to be covered by some standard tools (e.g., a periodicals index) and when information on the topic retrieved by less authoritative tools (e.g., a Web search engine) may not be reliable. (623)
-  Identifies different types of information sources cited in a research tool. (622,625)
-  Identifies and discusses issues related to censorship and freedom of speech (122,597,599)
-  Describes when the format of the source cited may dictate a certain citation style. (512)
-  Recognizes that consistency of citation format is important, especially if a course instructor has not required a particular style. (634)
-  Identifies when and where controlled vocabulary is used in a bibliographic record, and then successfully searches for additional information using that vocabulary. (577,582)
-  Identifies various formats in which information is available. (568)
-  Identifies the source of help within a given information retrieval system and uses it effectively. (525)
-  Seeks expert opinion through a variety of mechanisms (e.g., interviews, email, listservs) (602,645)
-  Identifies the differences between freely available Internet search tools and subscription or fee-based databases. (139,140,141,142)
-  Explains what controlled vocabulary is and why it is used. (14)
-  Identifies the appropriate service point or resource for the particular information need. (548)
-  Describes some materials that are not available online or in digitized formats and must be accessed in print or other formats (e.g., microform, video, audio). (29)
-  Selects among various technologies the most appropriate one for the task of extracting the needed information (e.g., copy/paste software functions, photocopier, scanner, audio/visual equipment, or exploratory instruments) (593,647)
-  Demonstrates when it is appropriate to use a general and subject-specific information source (e.g., to provide an overview, to give ideas on terminology). (64)
-  Legally obtains, stores, and disseminates text, data, images, or sounds (112,118,553,644)
-  Initiates an interlibrary loan request by filling out and submitting a form either online or in person. (214)
-  Recognizes the format of an information source (e.g., book, chapter in a book, periodical article) from its citation. (See also 2.3.2.) (589)
-  Distinguishes characteristics of information provided for different audiences. (27,624,632)



## Appendix A. Student Profile

Figure A.1 is a demographic profile of students who took the SAILS test at your institution as well as cross-institution profiles for your selected peer institutions, for institutions of your selected types, and for all institutions combined. The table reports the available demographic data; not all elements of demographic data were reported for all students. Therefore, percentages for cross-institution characteristics will not always total 100%.

Figure A.1 Student Profile

	Your Institution		Your Peer Institutions		Your Institution Types		All Institutions	
	n=130		n=354		n=7,651		n=14,403	
Characteristic	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>CLASS STANDING</b>								
Freshman	68	52	191	54	2,823	37	5,984	42
Sophomore	56	43	56	16	1,056	14	1,814	13
Junior	6	5	6	2	964	13	1,673	12
Senior	0	0	100	28	1,955	26	3,034	21
Other	0	0	0	0	206	3	328	2
<b>MAJORS</b>								
Agriculture/Environmental Studies	6	5	8	2	43	1	80	1
Architecture	6	5	8	2	16	0	16	0
Business	25	19	54	15	1,324	17	2,462	17
Communications/Journalism	5	4	17	5	117	2	325	2
Education	2	2	10	3	317	4	610	4
Engineering/Computer Science	33	25	40	11	453	6	771	5
General Studies	0	0	11	3	126	2	317	2
Health Sciences	4	3	58	16	2,113	28	2,639	18
History	0	0	4	1	49	1	129	1

	Your Institution		Your Peer Institutions		Your Institution Types		All Institutions	
	n=130		n=354		n=7,651		n=14,403	
Characteristic	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Humanities	5	4	11	3	126	2	317	2
Law	0	0	2	1	180	2	246	2
Military/Naval Science	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
Performing & Fine Arts	0	0	1	0	224	3	626	4
Science/Math	18	14	53	15	339	4	765	5
Social Sciences/Psychology	14	11	29	8	708	9	1,335	9
Other	10	8	43	12	898	12	1,624	11
Undecided	2	2	15	4	307	4	603	4
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF YOUR PARENTS/GUARDIANS?								
Neither parent attended any college	24	18						
One or both attended some college	24	18						
One has a four-year degree	18	14						
Both have a four-year degree	36	28						
One has a graduate degree	13	10						
Both have a graduate degree	15	12						
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH LIBRARY RESEARCH?								
No experience	26	20						
Experience in high school	90	69						
Experience in high school AND college	7	5						
Experience only in college	7	5						

## Appendix B. Cross-Institution Lists

Figure B.1 Selected Peer List

Institution Name	Country	Institution Type(s)
Lynchburg College	US	Doctorate
Texas A&M University	US	Doctorate

Figure B.2 Selected Institution Types List

Institution Name	Country	Institution Type(s)
Florida Institute of Technology	US	Doctorate
George Fox University	US	Doctorate
Indiana University Bloomington	US	Doctorate
Lynchburg College	US	Doctorate
Misericordia University	US	Doctorate
Northcentral University	US	Doctorate
Pepperdine University Library	US	Doctorate
South University	US	Doctorate
Southwestern Assemblies of God University	US	Doctorate
Texas A&M University	US	Doctorate
University of Idaho	US	Doctorate
University of Phoenix	US	Doctorate
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh	US	Doctorate

Figure B.3 All List

Institution Name	Country	Institution Type(s)
Ameritech College	US	Baccalaureate - General
Bowie State University	US	Baccalaureate - General
Brigham Young University Hawaii	US	Baccalaureate - General
California Maritime Academy	US	Masters
California State University, Dominguez Hills	US	Masters
Central Christian College of KS	US	Baccalaureate - Liberal Arts
Chapman University	US	Masters
Coastal Carolina University	US	Baccalaureate - Liberal Arts
College of New Rochelle	US	Masters
Covenant College	US	Baccalaureate - Liberal Arts
Curry College	US	Baccalaureate - Liberal Arts
Emporia State University	US	Masters
Erie Community College	US	Associates
Florida Institute of Technology	US	Doctorate
George Fox University	US	Doctorate
God's Bible School and College	US	Baccalaureate - General
Harrisburg University of Science and Technology	US	Masters
Herzing University	US	Baccalaureate - General
Indiana University Bloomington	US	Doctorate
Kenyon College	US	Baccalaureate - Liberal Arts
Lancaster Bible College	US	Baccalaureate - General
Lynchburg College	US	Doctorate
Mid-Atlantic Christian University	US	Baccalaureate - Liberal Arts

<b>Institution Name</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Institution Type(s)</b>
Misericordia University	US	Doctorate
Mount Washington College	US	Baccalaureate - General
Northcentral University	US	Doctorate
Ottawa University	US	Baccalaureate - General Baccalaureate - Liberal Arts Masters
Palm Beach State College	US	Associates
Patrick Henry College	US	Baccalaureate - Liberal Arts
Pepperdine University Library	US	Doctorate
queensborough community college	US	Associates
Salisbury University	US	Baccalaureate - General
Seward County Community College and Area Technical School	US	Associates
South University	US	Doctorate
Southern Wesleyan University	US	Masters
Southwestern Assemblies of God University	US	Doctorate
Sullivan County Community College (SUNY)	US	Associates
Texas A&M University	US	Doctorate
Thomas College	US	Masters
Universidad Juarez del Estado de Durango (UJED)	US	Baccalaureate - General
University of Alaska Fairbanks	US	Baccalaureate - General
University of Denver	US	Masters
University of Idaho	US	Doctorate
University of Maine at Farmington	US	Baccalaureate - Liberal Arts
University of Phoenix	US	Doctorate
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh	US	Doctorate
Valparaiso University	US	Masters
Washburn University	US	Baccalaureate - General