

CAMPAIGN FOR 21ST CENTURY LITERACIES

WHAT ARE 21ST CENTURY LITERACIES?

Information literacy is the ability to find, evaluate, organize, and use information to inform and solve problems. For example, a student with strong information literacy skills can write a convincing research paper that incorporates a number of critically reviewed information sources.

Media literacy is the ability to question, analyze, interpret, evaluate, and create media messages. For example, a student with strong media literacy skills can make and interpret a video and comprehend specific details found within it.

Visual literacy is the ability to understand and produce visual messages. For example, a student with strong visual literacy skills can take a photograph and describe how its imagery drives a narrative.

Digital literacy is the ability to use digital technology, communications tools or networks to locate, evaluate, use, and create information. For example, a student with strong digital literacy is able to complete online training or coursework efficiently.

Statistical literacy is the ability to analyze and understand data to produce meaningful information. For example, a student with strong statistical literacy can create, interpret, and evaluate statistical information found in charts, graphs, or text.

Spatial literacy is the ability to analyze spatial relationships and the representation of geographic space. For example, a student with strong spatial literacy can access a Geographic Information System (GIS) to find specific data about a community or region of the world.

WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

University of Minnesota

- Attention to developing 21st century literacies on campus directly supports the University's Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).
- Mastering 21st century literacies contributes to the open exchange of ideas between all who contribute to the University community.

Faculty

- Faculty can expand their academic dialogue by using a variety of sources and methods for research.
- Faculty can understand and leverage the 21st century media environment and connect with students in ways they have already come to expect.

Students

- Undergraduate students with 21st century literacies are better prepared for next steps including graduate programs and employment.
- Mastering 21st century literacies on campus helps students better interact with society and facilitates lifelong learning.

Employers

- Employers need workers who are versatile and have a variety of skills. For example, employers in the technology field rate written and oral communication skills very highly.

PEL TEAM CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The application of 21st century literacies varies significantly between disciplines. Instruction in 21st century literacies should be shaped by this context.

A successful campaign will require campus-wide marketing that focuses on delivering specific information relevant to appropriate user groups.

Modular instructional materials delivered online provide the most efficient, scalable, and effective means of meeting the needs of targeted audiences. Such offerings provide customizable, self-directed resources on demand.

When developing, revising, and expanding service offerings, the Libraries should actively engage end-users in each stage of the design process. User needs must drive design.

Physical assets and resources that facilitate teaching and learning 21st century literacies (e.g., cameras for loan) should be readily available and easy to find in a user-friendly, central location.

Faculty may require instruction in 21st century literacies and access to supporting resources. The Libraries must consider these training and resource needs to be as critical as, but not necessarily the same as, those offered students.

The Libraries should collaborate with partners including:

Digital Media Center

The Digital Media Center can foster the development of media and digital literacies in students and faculty, and provide access to technology resources.

Center for Writing

The Center for Writing can work directly with students, instructors, and departments to integrate 21st century information literacy skills into curricula and classrooms.

Center for Teaching and Learning

The Center for Teaching and Learning can work directly with faculty to bring 21st century literacies into the classroom by providing training and assistance with curriculum development.

PROJECT SPONSORS

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