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# Review of the book Information literacy that works: A guide to teaching by discipline and student population, by P. Ragains

Jennifer Little Kegler

*The College at Brockport*, [jkegler@brockport.edu](mailto:jkegler@brockport.edu)

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## Review

### **Information Literacy Instruction that Works: A Guide to Teaching by Discipline and Student Population (2nd ed.)**

*Patrick Ragains, editor. Chicago: Neal-Schuman, 2013. 342 pp. ISBN: 978-1-55570-860-3. \$85.00*

Reviewed by Jennifer J. Little Kegler  
Associate Librarian/Library Instruction Coordinator  
The College at Brockport, SUNY  
Drake Memorial Library  
Brockport, NY

In the second edition of *Information Literacy Instruction that Works: A Guide to Teaching by Discipline and Student Population*, Patrick Ragains updates, expands, and adds to the material in the first edition. As technology changes rapidly and the college student diversity increases, librarians need new techniques and strategies to help students gain important information literacy skills useful for their current research projects as well as for their intended careers. The four sections in the book address planning for information literacy in college and universities, teaching specific student populations, teaching discipline-specific classes, and teaching special topics in information literacy. Ragains clearly expresses his hope for the book, stating that it will “help further our profession’s goal of making all of our students information literate – one unique learner at a time” (p. xv).

The first part of the book focuses on information literacy basics, including the current ACRL information literacy competency standards, instructional design and assessment,

and faculty-liaison collaborations. The second part addresses specific student audiences: first year students, community college students, students with disabilities, and online and distance education students. Knowledge about the intended audience helps any librarian tailor instruction for the remaining topics covered in the last two parts. Ragains adds three new chapters for anthropology, engineering, and music; replaces two related chapters with one chapter on business; and updates the remaining chapters in agricultural and natural resources, English literature, art and art history, film studies, history, psychology, and scientific literacy. The final part of the book is devoted to special topics in legal, government information, and patents research, which Ragains has rewritten himself.

Overall, I found this information literacy book more practical than others I have read on the topic. Each subject chapter can be used separately by any librarian preparing to teach a college-level class in that discipline. The online and print resources, along with the “webextras” available on the publisher’s website are plentiful; they can be photocopied or added to online library research guides, where appropriate (<http://www.alaeditions.org/web-extra-information-literacy-instruction-works>). The final three chapters are particularly useful to those whose specialties lie outside of legal, government or patent information. Their basic information and step-by-step procedures are straightforward and will provide a beginner with more confidence to teach in these areas or include them for an assignment from a specific subject class. Although the information literacy competency standards may be changed within the next year, the majority of the book will retain its usefulness for both seasoned and novice instruction librarians. Some lesson plans that list specific learning objectives may need to be tweaked, but an academic librarian will be able to discern and make the changes. This book will make an excellent addition to academic libraries and to special libraries, especially in the art, music, or business fields.

Jennifer J. Little Kegler is the Associate Librarian/Library Instruction Coordinator at the Drake Memorial Library, The College of Brockport, SUNY, Brockport, NY.

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