

4-13-2022

## Transitioning from Academia to the Workplace: Information Literacy Experiences of Business Students

Heather A. Howard  
*Purdue University*, [howar198@purdue.edu](mailto:howar198@purdue.edu)

Margaret L. Phillips  
*Purdue University*, [phill201@purdue.edu](mailto:phill201@purdue.edu)

Garrett R. Brewster  
*Purdue University*, [gbrewst@pnw.edu](mailto:gbrewst@pnw.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/lib\\_fspres](https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/lib_fspres)



Part of the [Information Literacy Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Howard, Heather A.; Phillips, Margaret L.; and Brewster, Garrett R., "Transitioning from Academia to the Workplace: Information Literacy Experiences of Business Students" (2022). *Libraries Faculty and Staff Presentations*. Paper 180.  
[https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/lib\\_fspres/180](https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/lib_fspres/180)

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries.  
Please contact [epubs@purdue.edu](mailto:epubs@purdue.edu) for additional information.

# Transitioning from Academia to the Workplace: Information Literacy Experiences of Business Students

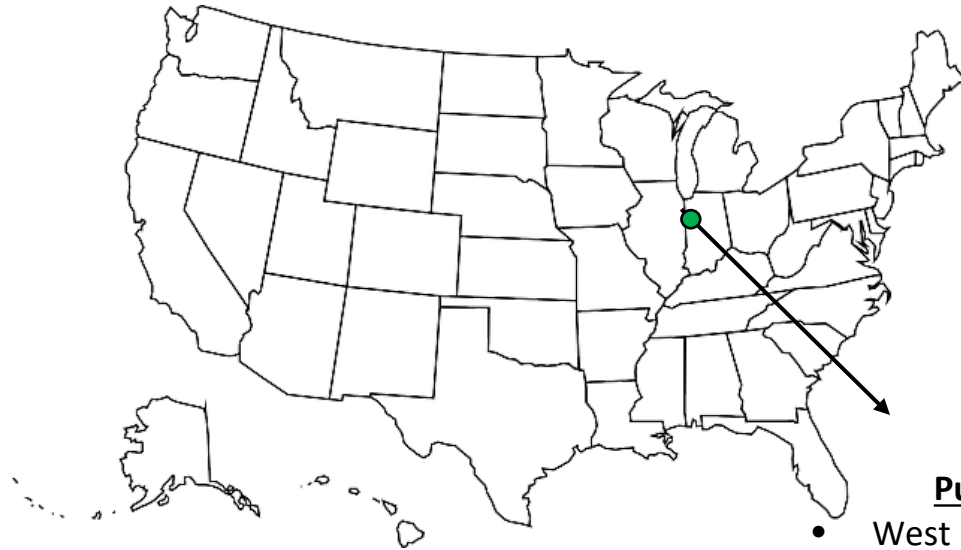
Heather Howard, Associate Professor & Business Information Specialist  
Margaret Phillips, Associate Professor & Engineering Information Specialist  
Garrett Brewster, Undergraduate Business Student & Office of Undergraduate  
Research (OUR) Scholar

LILAC April 11-12, 2022 Manchester, UK



# About Purdue

## 27 Astronauts



### Purdue University

- West Lafayette, IN
- Public research university, founded 1869
- ~50,000 students
- ~200 undergraduate programs; >80 graduate programs

# Krannert School of Management

Enrollment: 4,040 (2,809 undergraduate, 1,231 graduate)

#30 US News & World Report Overall Best Undergraduate Program 2021

7 undergraduate programs

9 specialized master's programs

5 MBA program options

3 Ph.D. Programs (Economics, Management, & Organizational Behavior - with multiple options to specialize)



# Research Team



**Margaret Phillips**  
Associate Professor  
Engineering Librarian



**Heather Howard**  
Associate Professor  
Business Librarian



**Garrett Brewster**  
Undergraduate Business Student  
OUR Scholar

# Scope of Research

- ◎ Investigate past and present Krannert School of Management students' experiences with information in the workplace
- ◎ Acquire insight into their information experiences during internships & co-ops
- ◎ Designed after similar research conducted with engineering co-op students at University of Minnesota in 2010 (Jeffryes & Lafferty, 2012)

Jeffryes, J. & Lafferty, M. 2012. Gauging Workplace Readiness: Assessing the Information Needs of Engineering Co-op Students. *Issues in Science & Technology Librarianship*.

# Theoretical Framing



Lloyd, A. (2010). Framing information literacy as information practice: Site ontology and practice theory. *Journal of Documentation*, 66(2), 245–258. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00220411011023643>

Sandstrom, P. E. (1994). An optimal foraging approach to information seeking and use. *Library Quarterly*, 64(4), 414–449.

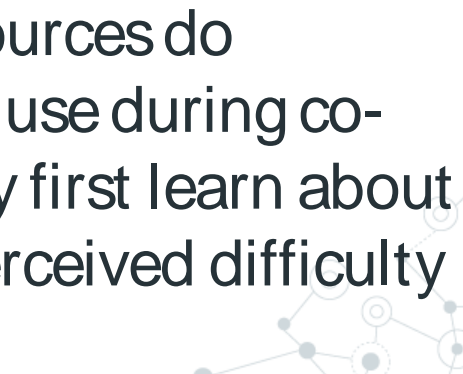
Pirolli, P., & Card, S. (1999). Information foraging. *Psychological Review*, 106(4), 643–675. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X106.4.643>



# Research Questions

RQ1: What types of information tasks do undergraduate business students complete during co-ops and internships?

RQ2: What types of information sources do undergraduate business students use during co-ops and internships? How did they first learn about these sources and what is their perceived difficulty in finding these sources?





# Methods

Survey Krannert undergraduate and graduate students that have completed a/an internship(s) and/or co-op(s) via several mediums

- ◎ Targeted emails
- ◎ In-person recruiting in the business library
- ◎ LinkedIn

Survey included questions regarding:

- ◎ Types of business information searched
- ◎ Types of information tasks
- ◎ Where students learned search methods

Purdue IRB #2021-1361

# Preliminary Results

Current Classification	# of Students	%
First Year	0	0%
Sophomore	4	10%
Junior	8	21%
Senior	22	56%
Graduate Student	3	8%
Alumni	2	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100%</b>

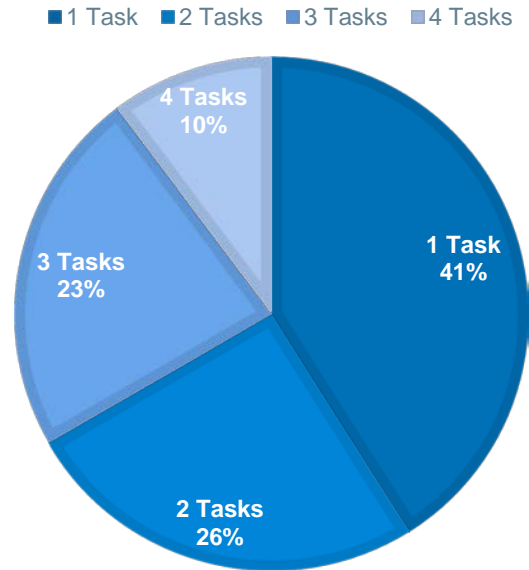
Undergraduate Major	# of Students *	%
Accounting	10	20%
Economics	2	4%
Finance	8	16%
IB and Engineering	5	10%
Management	5	10%
Marketing	6	12%
Supply Chain	9	18%
Other	5	10%

\*n > 39 due to students with multiple majors

# Preliminary Results

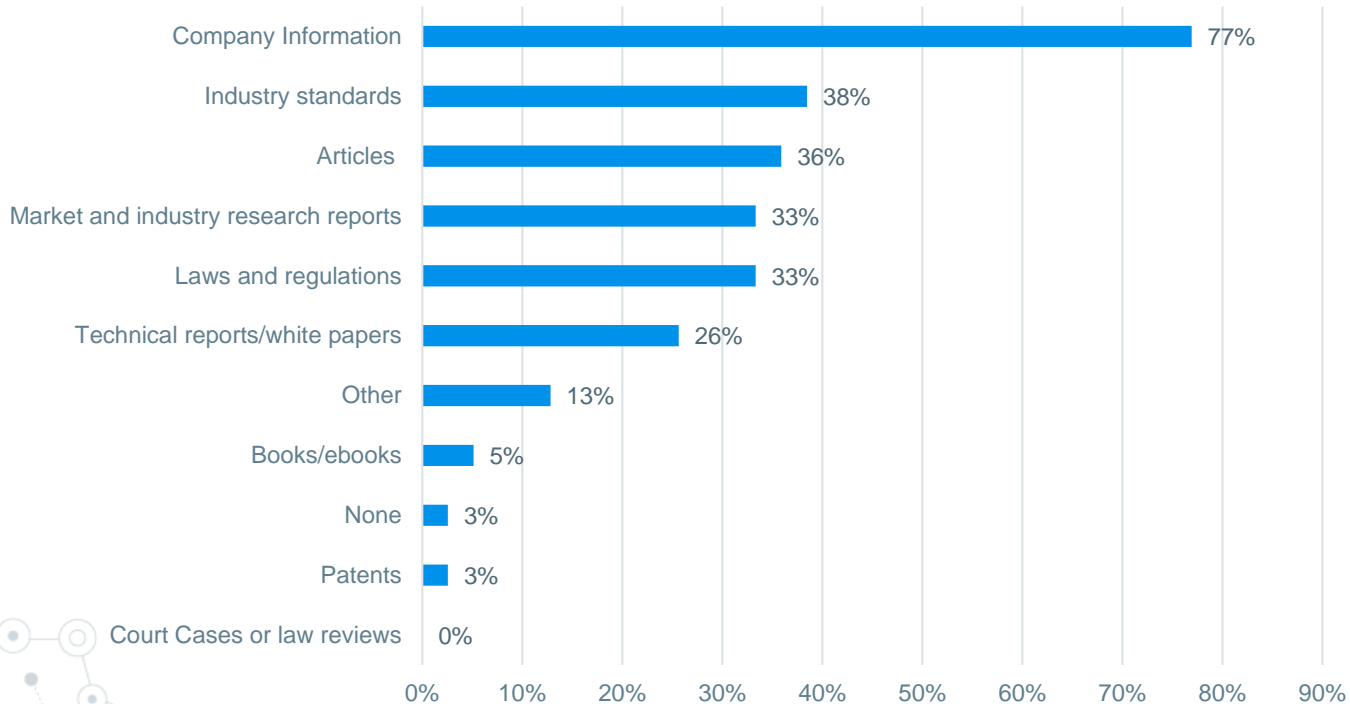
100% of respondents reported having to complete at least one information task in their internship/co-op.

NUMBER OF INFORMATION TASKS COMPLETED



# Preliminary Results

Types of Information Sources Required to Find

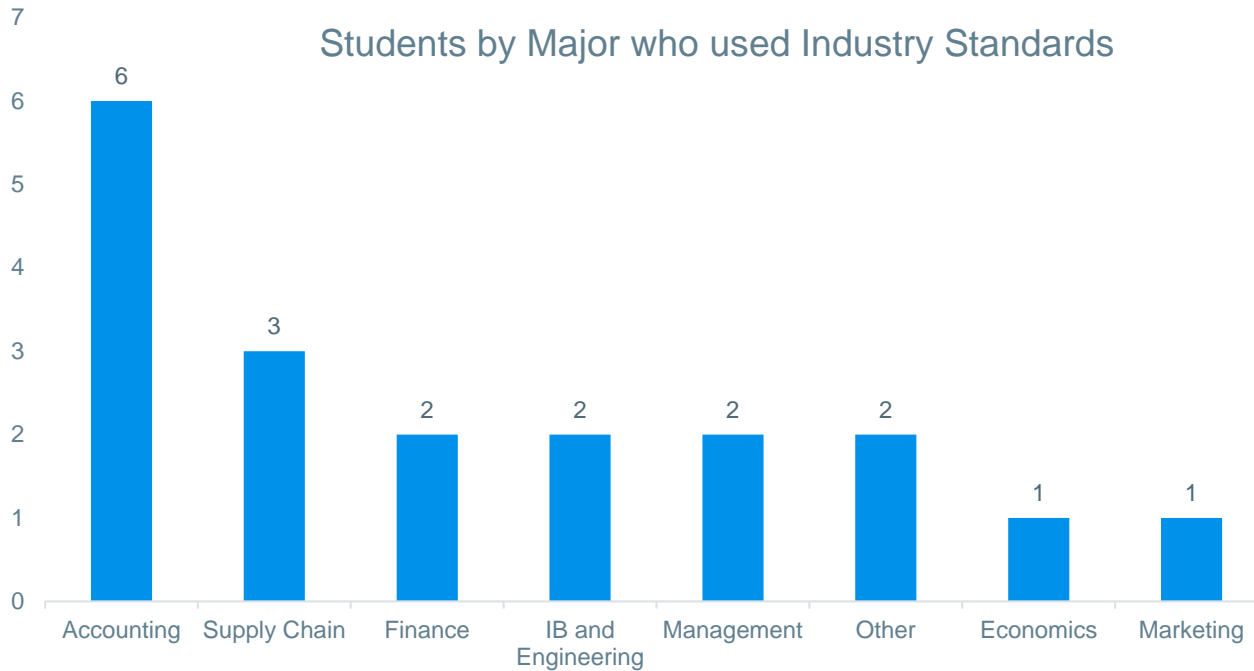


# Preliminary Results

Types of Information Tasks Completed  
n = 39



# Preliminary Results



Prior Related Work: Phillips, M., Howard, H., Vaaler, A., & Hubbard, D. E. (2019). Mapping industry standards and integration opportunities in business management curricula. *Journal of Business & Finance Librarianship*, 24(1-2), 17-29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08963568.2019.1638662>

# Limitations

- Pilot study
- One institution
- Small sample, not generalizable

# Initial Insights

- Implications for librarians and IL practice
  - High use of company information & industry standards
  - Developed and integrated an industry standards module into *MGMT 110*- a first year IL related management course taught by the Libraries
- More research needed on student employment information experiences & learning and business employer expectations



# Next Steps

- Complete full analysis and publish results in a journal article
- 2022-23 OUR Project: Using Head's (2012) IL workplace protocol as a guide, interview employers of business students in internships/co-ops or new graduates

Head, A. (2012). Learning curve: How college graduates solve information problems once they join the workplace (SSRN Scholarly Paper ID 2165031). Social Science Research Network. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2165031>



**Heather Howard**  
Associate Professor  
Business Librarian  
Purdue University

**Email:** [howar198@purdue.edu](mailto:howar198@purdue.edu)  
**Twitter:** [@hidingheather](https://twitter.com/hidingheather)



**Margaret Phillips**  
Associate Professor  
Engineering Librarian  
Purdue University

**Email:** [phill201@purdue.edu](mailto:phill201@purdue.edu)

