

# FOSTERING ENHANCED LIBRARY ENGAGEMENT THROUGH INFORMATION LITERACY INSTRUCTION

## MICRO-LEARNING RESEARCH SKILLS TOOLKIT WORKSHOP SERIES

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The Micro-Learning: Research Skills Toolkit Workshop Series is an innovative approach developed by librarians at Stetson University's duPont-Ball Library. This program tackles information literacy in a way that is engaging and efficient.

### Background

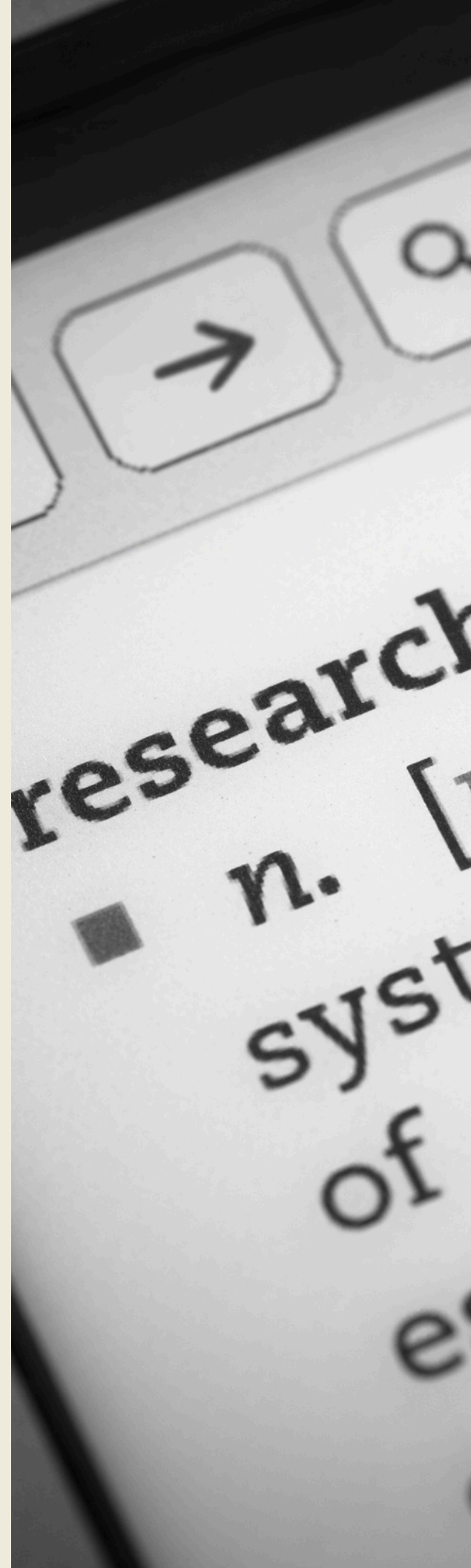
In Fall 2023, Jossie Amador-González embarked upon a new role as the *Research Librarian* at the duPont-Ball Library, a position funded by Stetson University's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). This QEP, "Bridging the Gap: Enhancing Information Literacy" builds on the university's mission and values with a focus on critical learning skills of information literacy [1]. To develop her skills as a new Academic Librarian, she began taking account of her professional learning goals and what experience she could draw on to achieve them. She welcomed the opportunity to learn from her colleagues including a mentoring relationship with her predecessor, Kellie Pait, who held this position two years prior and is currently Research and Learning Librarian, Assistant Professor.

While at her first library instruction team meeting, Jossie proposed to create a new approach to instruction that would facilitate the QEP and engage students beyond the classroom to meet their research needs. In collaboration with faculty librarians, including the QEP Library Liaison and Director of Library Public Services, Jennifer Corbin, the Micro-Learning: Research Skills Toolkit Workshop Series was developed.

### What is Micro-Learning and How Can it Help Students in the Library?

Micro-Learning takes complex topics and breaks down the information into short, focused learning modules. These modules are typically designed to be completed in 15-20 minutes, targeting a single learning objective or skill.

Through these sessions, students engage in research discussions relevant to their discipline and needs, equipping them with essential research skills critical to their information literacy. The series helps in preparing them to become life-long learners and library patrons, whether at their academic institution or at their community libraries.



## Fostering Enhanced Library Engagement through Information Literacy Instruction

### The duPont-Ball Library Model:

The Association of College & Research Libraries' (ACRL) Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, particularly the frame Research as Inquiry, was used to guide the development of the series. The framework emphasizes the iterative nature of research, highlighting the importance of asking increasingly complex questions to drive inquiry. Each session includes three 15-minute micro-learning topics focused on a research concept, skill, and tool. We found that it is best to staff each learning topic with an individual librarian, enabling students to cycle from topic to topic, rounding out their time with three librarians at 45 minutes. The learning topics for our inaugural series were:

- **Introductory Tools:** Designed to equip students with foundational skills like how to navigate the library's electronic catalog, efficiently search for information, and develop effective research strategies.
- **Advanced Techniques:** Students refine their skills by learning how to navigate various databases, locate relevant research materials and resources, and start to synthesize their findings.
- **Citation Management:** This session introduces essential tools for managing citations and covers various citation styles to ensure proper referencing and academic integrity.

*Stetson's QEP uses a train-the-trainer professional development model to support disciplinary faculty as they incorporate information literacy skills into lower division assignments and courses. Faculty participants asked the library for content to share with students about various information literacy skills like evaluating sources, searching library databases, citing sources, and so on. To address this need, Librarians gathered existing content focused on library research tips and information literacy skills to create the Research Skills Toolkit (see <https://guides.stetson.edu/toolkit>). The toolkit is now a separate section of the library website that provides a convenient, student-facing place to find videos, infographics, and other related content to support students who are learning about the research process.*

**JENNIFER CORBIN, QEP LIBRARY LIAISON AND DIRECTOR OF LIBRARY PUBLIC SERVICES**

### Micro-Learning at Your Library:

A strength of this series is that it is adaptable and scalable. This workshop series can be customized based on the needs of the learner, library, or larger institution. Take these steps to implement Micro-Learning in your library:

1. **Identify the Goal:** Clearly define the purpose of the sessions and series. What do you want participants to learn and what target areas will it address?
2. **Plan and Work Together:** As a team, define your learning objectives, design content if needed, promote the workshop, and keep an eye on logistics. Consider dates, time, and venue. Strategize to decide who might be best to deliver an individual micro-learning concept. Take librarian expertise and enthusiasm into mind.
3. **Leverage Existing Resources:** Each learning topic can work in tandem with a corresponding LibGuide or online tutorial. Does your library have a research skills toolkit or comprehensive research guide? Use that to steer the micro-learning agenda.
4. **Market Effectively:** Deploy a marketing campaign across various avenues in your community. Eye-catching graphics can promote the workshop series. Spread the word using social media, digital signage, and flyers.
5. **Evaluate and Reflect:** Work with your team to hash out what worked well and where there is room for improvement. In the next round, implement changes to reach your desired outcome.
6. **Have fun!:** These sessions are designed to be an engaging and collaborative experience. Take the opportunity to work with colleagues in a new and exciting way, while positively impacting learners on their research journey.

The Micro-Learning: Research Skills Toolkit Workshop Series combines the best of engagement, outreach, and instruction. The simplicity, efficiency, and adaptability of the series lends itself to any library looking to reach a broader student audience and cultivate lifelong learners. As the duPont-Ball Library continues to work on its series, ongoing research will determine the impact of the program.

#### References:

1. Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education. Association of College & Research Libraries, 2015; <http://www.ala.org/acrl/files/issues/infolit/framework.pdf>
2. Schlak, Tim. 2018. "Academic Libraries and Engagement: A Critical Contextualization of the Library Discourse on Engagement," *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 44, 44 (1): 133–39. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2017.09.005>.