

The Learning Curve

Episode 7: Information Literacy with Becky Miller

Presented by the Academic Commons

[00;00;00;00 - 00;00;11;08] **Demi Harte**

Welcome to The Learning Curve, a podcast presented by the Academic Commons.

[00;00;11;10 - 00;00;17;22] **Demi Harte**

Your hosts for today's episode are Demi Harte and my co-host is.

[00;00;17;29 - 00;00;21;17] **Leah Miller**

Hi, I'm Leah Miller. Also an instructional designer.

[00;00;21;17 - 00;00;51;17] **Demi Harte**

And our mission is to illuminate higher education, teaching and learning through the power of shared experiences and research-informed practices through engaging discussions and expert insights, we aim to empower educators to transform their teaching practices, enrich student learning experiences, and contribute to a culture of evidence-based pedagogy in higher education. So, on this episode of The Learning Curve, we'll be discussing information literacy with Dixon Campus Librarian Becky Miller.

[00;00;51;20 - 00;01;24;23] **Demi Harte**

Rebecca Becky Miller, MSLS, is a senior librarian at Thomas Jefferson University, serving primarily as the Dixon Campus Librarian. Based in the Information Services Department, she supports students, staff, faculty, and clinicians at both the Dixon and Scott Memorial Libraries. Her responsibilities include providing reference and research consultations, assisting with systematic reviews, and teaching information literacy skills. Becky is currently exploring innovative methods to inspire nursing students to engage in research activities.

[00;01;24;25 - 00;01;29;09] **Demi Harte**

We're very happy to have you on The Learning Curve. Becky. Welcome.

[00;01;29;12 - 00;01;37;12] **Becky Miller**

Thank you for having me today. I think you covered everything as far as my background. I appreciate that the great introduction, of course.

[00;01;37;12 - 00;01;54;01] **Leah Miller**

So we're actually going to start with a little bit more, background on the topic for today. And if there's anything else you'd like to add. So anything else about you, your academic pursuits and kind of your role at Thomas Jefferson University that we haven't already covered?

[00;01;54;01 - 00;02;17;26] **Becky Miller**

So a little bit about myself, I as far as information literacy goes, I recently co taught a workshop at our faculty days on information literacy and thank you for the, I believe that we're able to attend. And thank you for those that reached out about, you know, learning a little bit more about the topic. It's definitely something we want to help integrate into the academic landscape here at Jefferson.

[00;02;17;28 - 00;02;43;20] **Becky Miller**

And my academic pursuits for myself, I'm always learning new things, and trying to challenge myself. Right now, I am part of a cohort for a data service with continuing education program. So that's my next, fun little thing that I'm doing. I don't know when, but kind of a intense time management situation, but it's definitely helpful in my education and being able to bring different skills to Jefferson.

[00;02;43;27 - 00;02;51;21] **Becky Miller**

But yeah, mostly my my day to day is helping students, faculty, staff and working with the library as an information services librarian.

[00;02;51;22 - 00;03;04;03] **Leah Miller**

And could you tell us kind of in general, what is information literacy? And what is its role in higher education.

[00;03;04;03 - 00;03;37;18] **Becky Miller**

Information Literacy. It's more or less a set of abilities or skills that require individuals to be able to recognize how information is needed, and then the ability to locate, evaluate and effectively use the information. And that's from the American Library Association or Ala. And really, the goal of having information literacy is to be information literate, that you can not only do research, but also have that extra critical thinking element added in to your capabilities.

[00;03;37;21 - 00;03;59;07] **Leah Miller**

And then how did obviously being a librarian and information literacy go hand in hand, but how did you kind of get involved with or what is your experience with information literacy and getting those skills to students, to faculty, to staff, things like that.

[00;03;59;09 - 00;04;26;01] **Becky Miller**

So while ago, I had someone come and talk to me about being a librarian, and they mentioned the fact that they don't read and I kind of laughed a little because really, you do read, and in fact, you probably read more than I did growing up at the same age, because we're surrounded by information and we're constantly on platforms that are, you know, full of different stories and, topics and all kinds of information coming at you all day.

[00;04;26;01 - 00;04;47;12] **Becky Miller**

So part of being a librarian, like you said, is to help advocate for information literacy. And really what we're trying to do is just build the scaffolding throughout the academic landscape, guiding students, faculty and staff and informing them on best practices to get that information. Literacy skillset locked down early on, and how that as a lifelong learner.

[00;04;47;14 - 00;04;57;28] **Demi Harte**

So diving a little deeper into information literacy, how have conceptions of information literacy shifted over time?

[00;04;58;00 - 00;05;21;23] **Becky Miller**

Information literacy used to consist of going to the library and looking up your topic and the card catalog, and finding some book or, journal articles on your topic. Now we're looking at, information literacy and expanding. Everyone filled that with being able to complete tasks like navigating databases, evaluating credibility of the website, understanding what a digital copyright is.

[00;05;21;25 - 00;05;32;03] **Becky Miller**

Another change in the shift is not only a need for library literacy skills, but also need for the digital literacy skills information coming out of multiple different avenue. That's important to be able to critically at that.

[00;05;32;09 - 00;05;41;13] **Demi Harte**

And now you bring up, digital literacy. In addition to information literacy. Can you explain how they're similar and how they're different?

[00;05;41;16 - 00;06;05;08] **Becky Miller**

So information literacy is applicable to all types of information. Print, electronic, digital digital literacy is limited to digital tools and resources in a digital format. They both require the critical thinking the looking to evaluate the credibility of the author. If it's in a journal or if it's a blog post, the credibility of that platform, the origin of the information.

[00;06;05;08 - 00;06;15;14] **Becky Miller**

Where did the person get their information? Did they conduct research? Is it the lived experience? Is it evidence based? So all those things come into play.

[00;06;15;16 - 00;06;22;09] **Demi Harte**

And you spoke a little bit about this, but how have some of the methods changed for determining repeatable sources.

[00;06;22;11 - 00;06;42;27] **Becky Miller**

Yeah. So information again surrounding us all day. We're always reading. In fact, I probably the read less real books now because I am surrounded by information all day, even when I go home it's constant. You

know, like the scrolling and all that. So it's giving people more access to provide information in a way that they couldn't provide before and reach a much larger audience.

[00;06;42;29 - 00;06;51;15] **Becky Miller**

But now we have to practically be forced to have these digital literacy skills if we want to keep up with the world around us.

[00;06;51;17 - 00;07;17;28] **Leah Miller**

I think that's really important to recognize and next, we're actually going to talk about a kind of tool or framework that, may help us with some of these information literacy skills. So we're going to move into a discussion about the framework for information literacy, for higher education, from the Association of College and Research Libraries, or the ACRL.

[00;07;17;28 - 00;07;27;17] **Leah Miller**

Could you just explain for a novice what the ACRL information literacy framework is and how it was developed?

[00;07;27;20 - 00;08;01;06] **Becky Miller**

Absolutely. So the Association of College and Research Library, or the ACRL created the Information Literacy Framework to help educators and students understand and develop their skills. And you should probably try to visualize or think of it more of as a roadmap to becoming an effective information user. The ACRL framework was developed through a collaborative process, and they use librarians, educators and students, and they work together to identify the essential skill for information literacy in the current state of information.

[00;08;01;06 - 00;08;06;19] **Becky Miller**

And the framework is designed to be flexible and adaptable to different learning environment that information needs.

[00;08;06;19 - 00;08;26;29] **Leah Miller**

So it sounds like a lot definitely went into this. And as I understand it, there are six frames. So what are the six frames and how can educators apply each of the six frames, to their learning environment, to their student environment?

[00;08;27;01 - 00;09;05;10] **Becky Miller**

So by incorporating these frames into their teaching, different types of educators can help students to develop their information literacy skills and help them to succeed in academic and professional setting. The first one we have is authority is constructed and contextual. So a way that you could add it into your curriculum, build in these skills would be, you know, talking to your students about how to analyze the credibility of a website where's the author on the website, who published the website, and what the publication date is it relevant to what we're talking about now, or is it all information that's been, you know, since proven to not work?

[00;09;05;10 - 00;09;33;16] **Becky Miller**

And they can do that the role of peer review by ensuring the quality of their research. They can talk about, student personal experiences or current events and really talk to students about how and encourage the students rather, how to question the authority behind information and consider alternative perspective. So really you're looking at like I talked about a little bit earlier lived experiences that, qualitative research.

[00;09;33;16 - 00;09;56;09] **Becky Miller**

And we're really finding that lived experience that can be very helpful in looking at a comparison to evidence based practice and seeing, again, access to information from individuals we may not have had before, just looking at peer reviewed journals that had certain criteria, and only certain people could have access to them behind a paywall. So we're really expanding the horizon of research here with all these activities.

[00;09;56;09 - 00;10;19;28] **Becky Miller**

Information creation as a process is the second one, and that you can do things like guide the students through the actual research process, like from the very beginning of identifying a topic to creating your final paper. And you can have an office hour workshop, maybe even to talk about citation styles or plagiarism, or integrate it right into your course.

[00;10;20;00 - 00;10;59;10] **Becky Miller**

You can have students work together, create and share information. And that, again, is part of the storytelling of research and qualitative research, teaching them how to use digital tools effectively for the research and communication. You have a lot of digital tools here at Jefferson, so definitely something to think about. The third one is information has value and that is where you're looking at real world examples of how information is used and misuse and misuse is a really key word there, because a lot of people take what they're reading off of their phone or off of their social media as the gold standard.

[00;10;59;10 - 00;11;30;02] **Becky Miller**

And unfortunately, there are many individuals out there that create this information and misleading information. So it's really important to have these skills. And something you can do is kind of asses the benefit and downfalls for different types of information, explore ethical issues related to information use with copyright privacy. The ability to have access as a student here at Jefferson to these resources and maybe how when you're not necessarily at a university or in a position where you don't have access to these resources, where you can find them.

[00;11;30;02 - 00;11;55;29] **Becky Miller**

And these are all things, obviously, that as a librarian, I can help out with two and you can also teach students how to organize and store their information effectively in a management plan, just creating general format that are standardized to keep track of all your information. So you're one protecting the information if it's sensitive and to being very careful to give credit where credit is due.

[00;11;56;01 - 00;12;24;25] **Becky Miller**

The fourth one is research and inquiry. So this is where you're going to and very relatable to like lab sciences encourage students that question. But you can obviously throw it into, you know, fashion or psychology and investigate their topic of interest. So they're going to develop their research question. And then from there, that's how you're going to look to design your experiment and your study.

[00;12;25;01 - 00;12;51;28] **Becky Miller**

Again, not something you can just integrate right into your coursework. You can also talk about problem solving. So part of designing a question for research is definitely looking at issues that many people face and populations and things we can do to help fix those problems. So that helps to foster the critical thinking skills the students have and evaluate some of the evidence that may already exist and draw some conclusions.

[00;12;52;01 - 00;13;18;10] **Becky Miller**

The fifth one is fellowship as conversation, and so that is having the students analyze different articles together, talk about their different points of view, and coming into, you know, what is this topic and this article on? And maybe someone here, the experienced, the specific illness or the specific problem and they're able to speak to it a little bit.

[00;13;18;10 - 00;13;37;29] **Becky Miller**

It might also be helpful to bring in expert on the topic outside of yourself, you know, being a faculty or staff member, and have them interact with the students so they can talk to someone that's in their future field of study and they can have a honest and kind of active conversation on the topic with, yet another viewpoint brought in.

[00;13;38;04 - 00;14;05;10] **Becky Miller**

You can also teach students how to cite their resources correctly. A big thing for librarians and most all faculty and staff would agree with that as well. And we have, you know, guides at the library that can help with that too. And of course, librarians. And we have Student Center, the Student Writing Center and that's at both East Falls and Center City campus and then Dixon campus also has resources for writing help.

[00;14;05;10 - 00;14;32;02] **Becky Miller**

And you can explore the differences and connection through, different disciplines. So that is huge right now. Research, interdisciplinary research is being done all over the place. And it's really, creating a different environment where you may not have thought that someone from another department would be a great contributor to the research you're doing, but in fact, you're collaborating together and creating something really innovative.

[00;14;32;04 - 00;15;00;10] **Becky Miller**

So definitely teaching students that about interdisciplinary connections and the importance of that networking skill. The sixth and final one is searching as strategic exploration. So that is right down into

the meat of library science. They're, you know, searching the databases, searching different, search engines and finding the relevant information to answer your question. And so you're teaching students effective keyword searching techniques.

[00;15;00;12 - 00;15;34;25] **Becky Miller**

You're helping them to evaluate the quality of the research results that they're returning from their searches. And again, discuss those ethical implications of online searching and information sharing. So yes, we at Jefferson have access to all these beautiful amounts of databases, article, books, everything. And that's amazing. But also, it's important to keep the to stress the importance rather of the fact that when we're getting these subscriptions, they are because, you know, you're here at Jefferson and we've paid for those subscriptions.

[00;15;34;27 - 00;15;45;17] **Becky Miller**

So it's important to keep those authors information and they're research within the publisher and not be sending it out to other platforms or sharing it illegally against copyright.

[00;15;45;19 - 00;16;11;05] **Leah Miller**

Thank you for that overview of all the frames. So just kind of in summary and correct me if I'm wrong, it sounds like a lot of these things are skills that our instructors and researchers maybe already have. And it's just a matter of strategically incorporating them into your classroom practice to make sure the students are also gaining those skills.

[00;16;11;07 - 00;16;45;22] **Becky Miller**

Yeah, so that is 100% correct. A lot of students in the K through 12 have a different environment, and they're coming from all different backgrounds. So you're looking at really pushing the the integration and scaffolding throughout your course, because you want to make sure that students from a background that haven't had exposure to how research is done and how they should be walking through, and critically assessing information that they have that background and they're able to do those things and be at the same level as their peers who may have already been exposed to those different skills.

[00;16;45;22 - 00;17;11;19] **Demi Harte**

So we're now going to move to predictions for the future of information literacy. So keeping the framework and information literacy skills in mind, the information landscape has been changing rapidly, with digital content and even AI coming into it. So what are some of your predictions for the future of information literacy?

[00;17;11;22 - 00;17;37;17] **Becky Miller**

Well, that's a big question. So technology is evolving how we view information. We, begun to digitize, all information when we're able to. And it allows more access for more people to that information. We also have more options, how we view information, how we visualize data. It's given a worldwide voice to someone who may not previously had one.

[00;17;37;17 - 00;17;59;29] **Becky Miller**

Even in in their small community, there are also some challenges. So information overload is a huge thing. And they're actually finding that students in college level programs are reading less actual books because it could be due to, you know, just overload. Like I said, I myself don't read a lot of books as much as I used do. And I think that's because all I'm doing all day is reading.

[00;17;59;29 - 00;18;26;18] **Becky Miller**

It's all coming at me. Same with everybody else, you know, it's overload. So we also have disinformation and misinformation. And of course there's the digital divide, which is again the access to resources that not everybody has. So in digitizing all these things and making everything online, there's still paywall. There's still blocking of information that not everybody is going to access or be able to access everything.

[00;18;26;18 - 00;18;56;14] **Becky Miller**

And it's definitely brought a new, skill that everyone needs to now kind of learn how to organize their information within these digital platforms. You need to be more proficient in digital tools and the actual platforms themselves. Then you need to have the ability to critically evaluate a resource that isn't necessarily peer reviewed or evidence based. All these things are going to definitely come into play as we continue to evolve, and the skill level and different types of skills are going to continue and evolve.

[00;18;56;16 - 00;19;15;25] **Demi Harte**

Yeah, definitely. And I'm curious with bringing back, AI because it's such a big thing in every facet of our lives right now. Do you find that it could hinder or help with research and what your thoughts are on that?

[00;19;15;27 - 00;19;39;21] **Becky Miller**

So AI is getting better. It's not great, but it's getting better. And I do have some recommendations for faculty and students to use AI in different ways to help with their research. So generally AI can help with brainstorming for your search term. So if you tell AI, depending on what, you know, chat bot, typically I can give you an exact, feedback on what they're going to give you.

[00;19;39;21 - 00;20;06;05] **Becky Miller**

But a couple I recommend, trying. I personally like ChatGPT, Perplexity. We here at Jefferson use Copilot definitely any of them would be great at helping you to brainstorm your search term. So you to say like,

hey, I this is my research topic and I would like to build a search in a database. Can you help me find some search term on this topic as if you were an expert?

[00;20;06;07 - 00;20;34;04] **Becky Miller**

And it can definitely give you a more broad search by bringing in terms that you may not have thought of on your own. It also can be helpful if you're looking to find great literature and like blog posts or podcast or all kinds of different things like that, I can give you a variety of information that way. It's coming along with the ability to summarize large volumes of text and making suggestions, on how to improve your grammar, spelling, and structure.

[00;20;34;06 - 00;21;01;12] **Becky Miller**

Now is all the amazing yeah. Is there problem? Absolutely. So I still hallucinate. It will make things up and it will give you information that is 1,000% inaccurate. It will even go as far as making up citations of fake articles. It will even tell you if you ask it, is this real or did you make this up? It will say yes, I made it up.

[00;21;01;15 - 00;21;23;21] **Becky Miller**

So you really have to use a critical lens anytime you're using any kind of AI and say you know, like they gave me a citation. Let me follow up on that. Let me look at did the citation really does this journal really that even and is this person an author. Are they a real person? Things like that. Are you citing that AI created it?

[00;21;23;21 - 00;21;37;12] **Becky Miller**

That's a huge thing with different journals that they want to make sure that if you are using AI and they permit you to use the AI that you are citing, that it's from AI and what AI source, you used.

[00;21;37;15 - 00;21;45;01] **Becky Miller**

Demi Harte

Thank you. Yeah, that just shows that information literacy will continue to be very important when looking into anything.

[00;21;45;01 - 00;22;12;10] **Leah Miller**

And this has been such an enlightening conversation. But before we close out, we would love for you to tell us how can learners faculty staff benefit from your expertise as a librarian when it comes to information literacy? And that can include what you can help with or colleagues can help with, or even resources. Here at Jefferson External to Jefferson.

[00;22;12;12 - 00;22;31;09] **Becky Miller**

So there are a number of ways that I can help a librarian. I could do a consultation for research guidance with individuals or groups. I can come into your classroom. I can do one shot instruction session. I can come into your classroom and do more than one session. Integrate into your courses. I can create modules in your courses.

[00;22;31;11 - 00;22;57;10] **Becky Miller**

about information literacy. We can, walk through the Academic Commons that I am a larger part of, also has these wonderful people called the Instructional Design Team. They can help to integrate assess and walk you through the process of looking at your current course and see where you can implement these types of information literacy skills. The American Library Association page has information on the ACL framework as well.

[00;22;57;12 - 00;23;20;05] **Becky Miller**

And we have tools here at Jefferson for citation management, open education. Yeah, for workshops. And if your department says, hey, like we want all of our faculty and staff to have a workshop on information literacy, the library is more than happy to provide that. We have articles and books in the library on this topic and many, many research guides on different aspects of it.

[00;23;20;05 - 00;23;35;12] **Becky Miller**

Overall, I think anything in the Academic commons you're going to get a little bit of information literacy no matter who you go to. And I know it's a little bit of a shout out, but I definitely think that we're here as a resource you should definitely reach out to us and use us because that's what we're here to do.

[00;23;35;12 - 00;23;37;13] **Becky Miller**

We're here to help.

[00;23;37;16 - 00;23;51;18] **Leah Miller**

Absolutely. Thank you for that. So that brings us to the end of our interview for the day. Becky, thank you so much for taking the time out of your day to be here with us, sharing your knowledge and expertise. We really appreciate it.

[00;23;51;20 - 00;23;57;01] **Becky Miller**

Thank you so much for having me.

[00;23;57;04 - 00;24;22;16] **Jacob Santos**

Thank you for joining us this month on The Learning Curve. You can find more information and resources related to this episode at academiccommons.jefferson.edu/thelearningcurve, and we hope to see you at some upcoming Academic Commons workshops. If you would like to be featured on a future episode of The Learning Curve, please contact us using the button on our show page. Thanks for tuning in!