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Addressing Information Management Competency Attainment through Consultations: An Effective and Sustainable Strategy?

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Objectives: To study the application of local information management competencies in the context of a research methods class in the university's behavioral sciences program. We sought to measure competencies, address them through targeted individualized consultative instructional sessions, and evaluate improvement of skills as well as the sustainability of this level of concentrated individualized service.

Information Management Competencies (5/10/2011)

Health Sciences Library, New York Medical College
By graduation, all NYMC students, residents, and fellows should be able to find, evaluate, use and communicate information. Furthermore all should demonstrate understanding of information literacy as a set of skills that are transferable and fundamental to education, research, patient care and life-long learning.

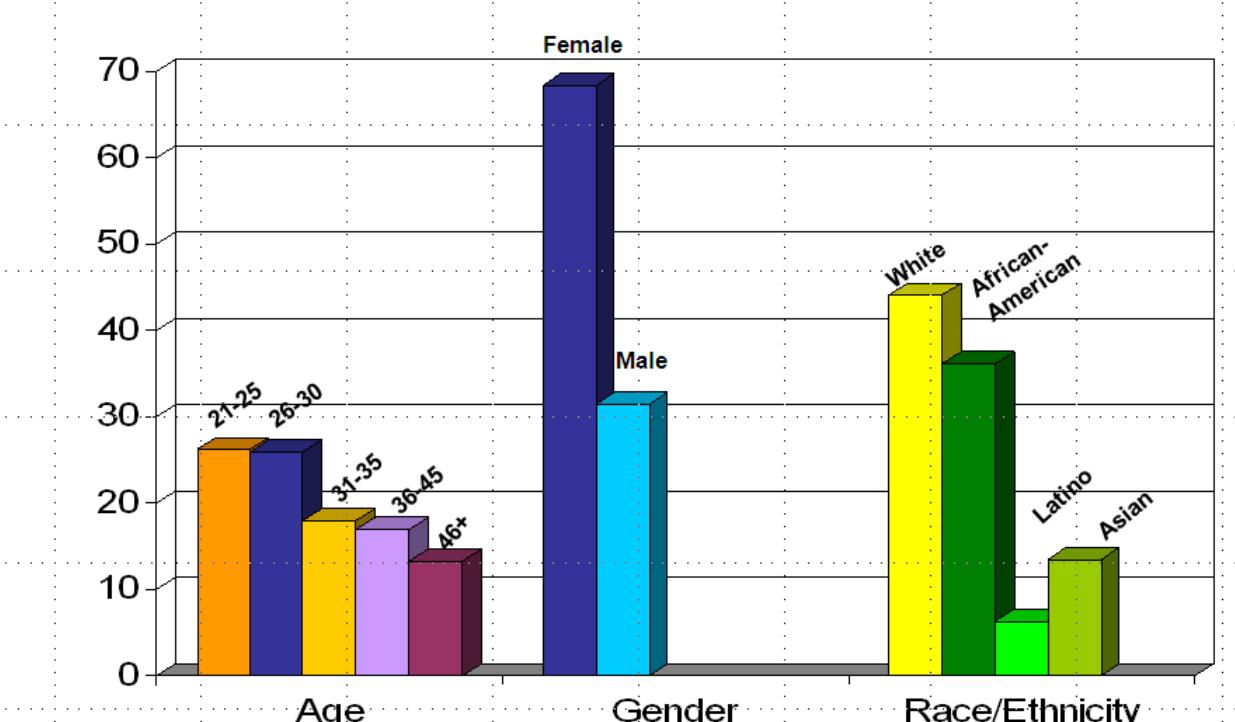
Specifically, graduates will be able to:

1. Define an information need in terms of developing a searchable question;
2. Select appropriate resources relative to an information need in order to find the best available information;
3. Demonstrate the use of search terms and database features to construct a logical search strategy;
4. Evaluate information resources and the quality of information retrieved including the source, currency, quality, reliability, and applicability to professional practice;
5. Synthesize and summarize information to produce original content appropriate for an intended purpose, to include a well formulated bibliography;
6. Demonstrate understanding of intellectual property and copyright laws, including plagiarism, the ethical use of information and fair use;

<http://library.nymc.edu/informatics/competencies.pdf>

Methods: This is a collaboration of a librarian seeking to address student information management competencies and an instructor teaching a graduate course in research methods. Study participants were twenty-five students taking the course during Fall 2011. Using competencies previously developed by the library, the authors developed a sixteen-item questionnaire inquiring about the students' prior experience, their self-ratings of eighteen skills, and a knowledge test. This was pretested with twenty first-year students and modified accordingly. Students were required to complete the questionnaire and have at least one librarian consultation. The student responses and identified needs were then used to guide the consultation. Information was collected about: consultation content, duration, and number per student. A similar questionnaire will be completed at the end of the course, along with student grades and demonstration of the competencies through coursework.

Demographic Characteristics for all Public Health Students in School of Health Sciences & Practice



PRE-TEST / EVALUATION

Self-assessment of competencies:

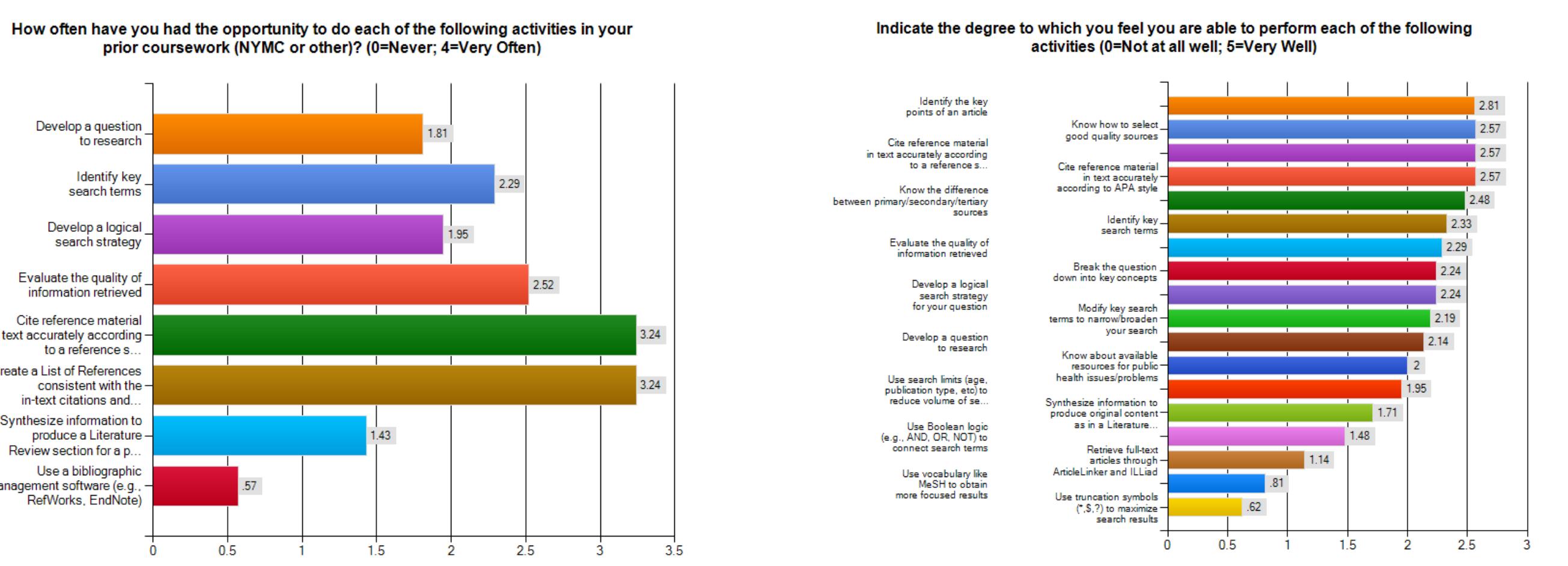
*1. How often have you had the opportunity to do each of the following activities in your prior coursework (NYMC or other)?				
Very Often	Fairly Often	Somewhat Often	Not That Often	Never
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a question to research	Identify key search terms	Evaluate the quality of information retrieved	Cite reference material in text accurately according to a reference style (e.g., APA, AMA, MLA, etc.)	Create a List of References consistent with the text and formatted appropriately according to a reference style (e.g., APA, AMA, MLA, etc.)
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use a bibliographic management software (e.g., RefWorks, EndNote)	Synthesize information to produce a Literature review for a paper	Use a bibliographic management software (e.g., RefWorks, EndNote)	Evaluate the quality of information retrieved	Synthesize information to
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Knowledge assessment:

*2. Indicate the degree to which you feel you are able to perform each of the following activities:				
Very Well	Well	Okay	Not too Well	Not at All Well
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a question to research	Break the question down into key concepts	Identify key search terms	Modify key search terms to narrow/broaden your search	Know about available resources for public health issues/problems
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use vocabulary like MeSH to obtain more focused results	Use Boolean logic (e.g., AND, OR, NOT) to connect search terms	Use search limits (age, publication type, etc) to reduce volume of search results	Use truncation symbols (*, ?) to maximize search results	Use citation symbols (#, ?) to maximize search results
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use a list of Healthy People 2010 objectives	A study on the effects of music on hypertension patients	The population of California by zip code	Develop a logical search strategy for your question	Use vocabulary like MeSH to obtain more focused results
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
+ Add Question + Split Page Here				
Q4 Edit Question Add Question Logic More Copy Delete				
+ Add Question + Split Page Here				
Q5 Edit Question Add Question Logic More Copy Delete				
+ Add Question + Split Page Here				
*5. A public health student needs information on effective osteoporosis prevention. He should first consult:				
<input type="radio"/> Drug monographs				
<input type="radio"/> RefWorks				
<input type="radio"/> An evidence-based clinical information database, such as Dynamed				

Full survey instrument available upon request.

PRE-TEST RESULTS



The knowledge questions that students did the poorest on on the pre-test were regarding selection of resources and about the functionality of databases such as truncation and the use of subject headings.

CONSULTATIONS

Consultation Request Form

The librarians at the Health Sciences Library offer consultations to assist with searching and using information technologies in the classroom and clinical settings. Please use this form to request a consultation with a Reference Librarian, or email libinfo@nycmed.edu.

* Required field

Your Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Your email address: _____

Your NYMC academic department or program: _____

Your NYMC status: _____

I would like to do the consultation in person at the library, in your office, or via GoToMeeting online? In the library Your office

All students were required to schedule at least one consultation with the librarian. Consultations were requested using the library's standard Google Docs Consultation Request Form. Students could request that their consultation be in person, by phone, by email, or via GoToMeeting.

A total of 27 consultations:

- In person: 17
- GoToMeeting: 3
- Email: 5
- Phone: 2
- Average time 1.25 hours each

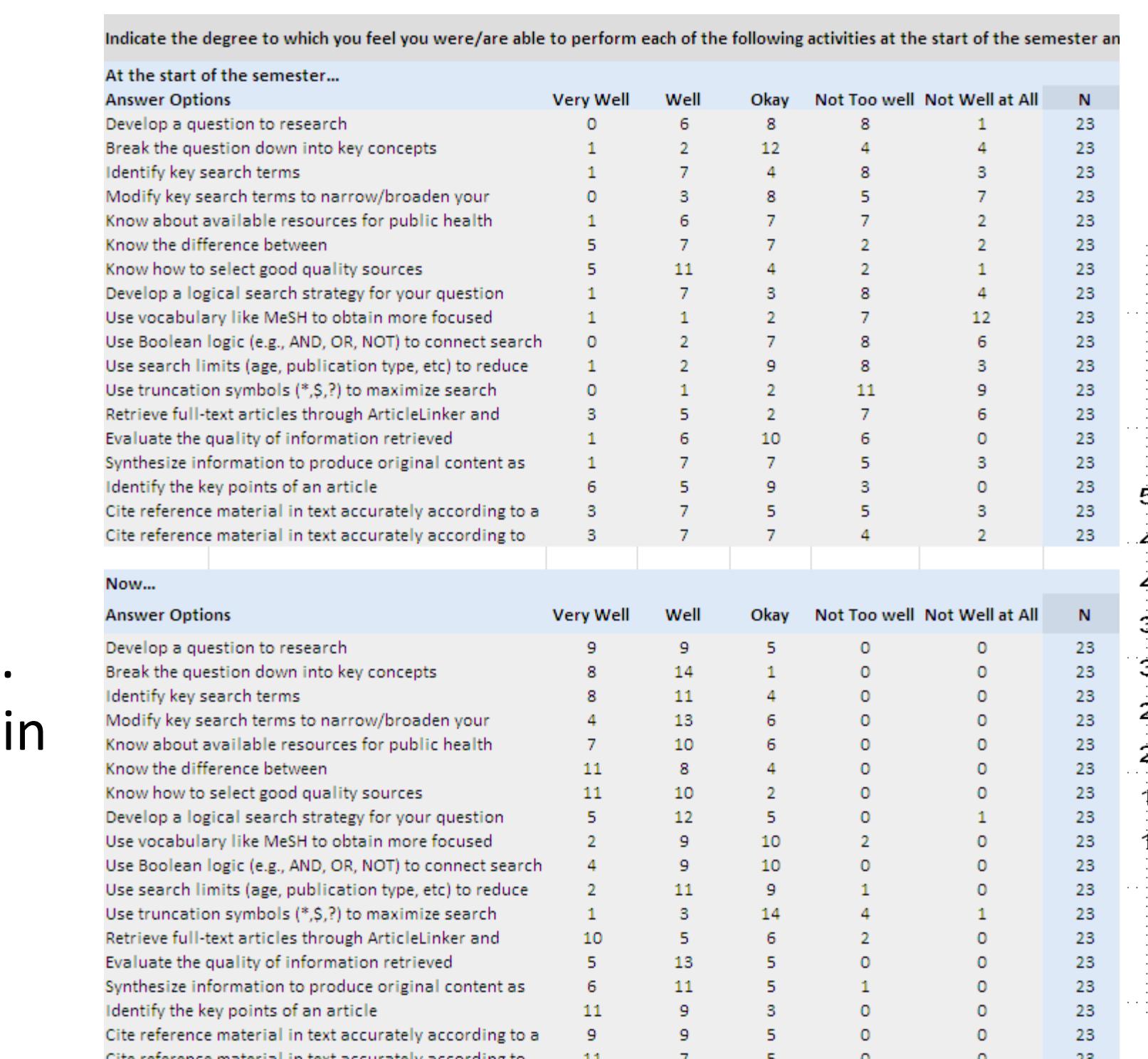
POST-TEST / EVALUATION

Used a post-test/retrospective pre-test method:

1. Indicate the degree to which you feel you were able to perform each of the following activities at the start of the semester and now:				
At the start of the semester... Now...				
Develop a question to research	Break the question down into key concepts	Identify key search terms	Modify key search terms to narrow/broaden your search	Know about available resources for public health issues/problems
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identify key search terms	Break the question down into key concepts	Develop a logical search strategy for your question	Use vocabulary like MeSH to obtain more focused results	Use Boolean logic (e.g., AND, OR, NOT) to connect search terms
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Evaluate the quality of information retrieved	Use search limits (age, publication type, etc) to reduce volume of search results	Use truncation symbols (*, ?) to maximize search results	Use citation symbols (#, ?) to maximize search results	Use a list of Healthy People 2010 objectives
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cite reference material in text accurately according to a reference style (e.g., APA, AMA, MLA, etc.)	Use vocabulary like MeSH to obtain more focused results	Develop a logical search strategy for your question	Use Boolean logic (e.g., AND, OR, NOT) to connect search terms	Use search limits (age, publication type, etc) to reduce volume of search results
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Create a List of References consistent with the text and formatted appropriately according to a reference style (e.g., APA, AMA, MLA, etc.)	Use truncation symbols (*, ?) to maximize search results	Use citation symbols (#, ?) to maximize search results	Use Boolean logic (e.g., AND, OR, NOT) to connect search terms	Use a list of Healthy People 2010 objectives
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Synthesize information to produce original content as appropriate	Use Boolean logic (e.g., AND, OR, NOT) to connect search terms	Use vocabulary like MeSH to obtain more focused results	Use truncation symbols (*, ?) to maximize search results	Use citation symbols (#, ?) to maximize search results
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Review section for p.e.r.s.e.t. (Peer Reviewed Electronic Search Evaluation Test)	Use Boolean logic (e.g., AND, OR, NOT) to connect search terms	Use vocabulary like MeSH to obtain more focused results	Use truncation symbols (*, ?) to maximize search results	Use citation symbols (#, ?) to maximize search results
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Evaluate the quality of information retrieved	Use Boolean logic (e.g., AND, OR, NOT) to connect search terms	Use vocabulary like MeSH to obtain more focused results	Use truncation symbols (*, ?) to maximize search results	Use citation symbols (#, ?) to maximize search results
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Synthesize information to	Use Boolean logic (e.g., AND, OR, NOT) to connect search terms	Use vocabulary like MeSH to obtain more focused results	Use truncation symbols (*, ?) to maximize search results	Use citation symbols (#, ?) to maximize search results
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

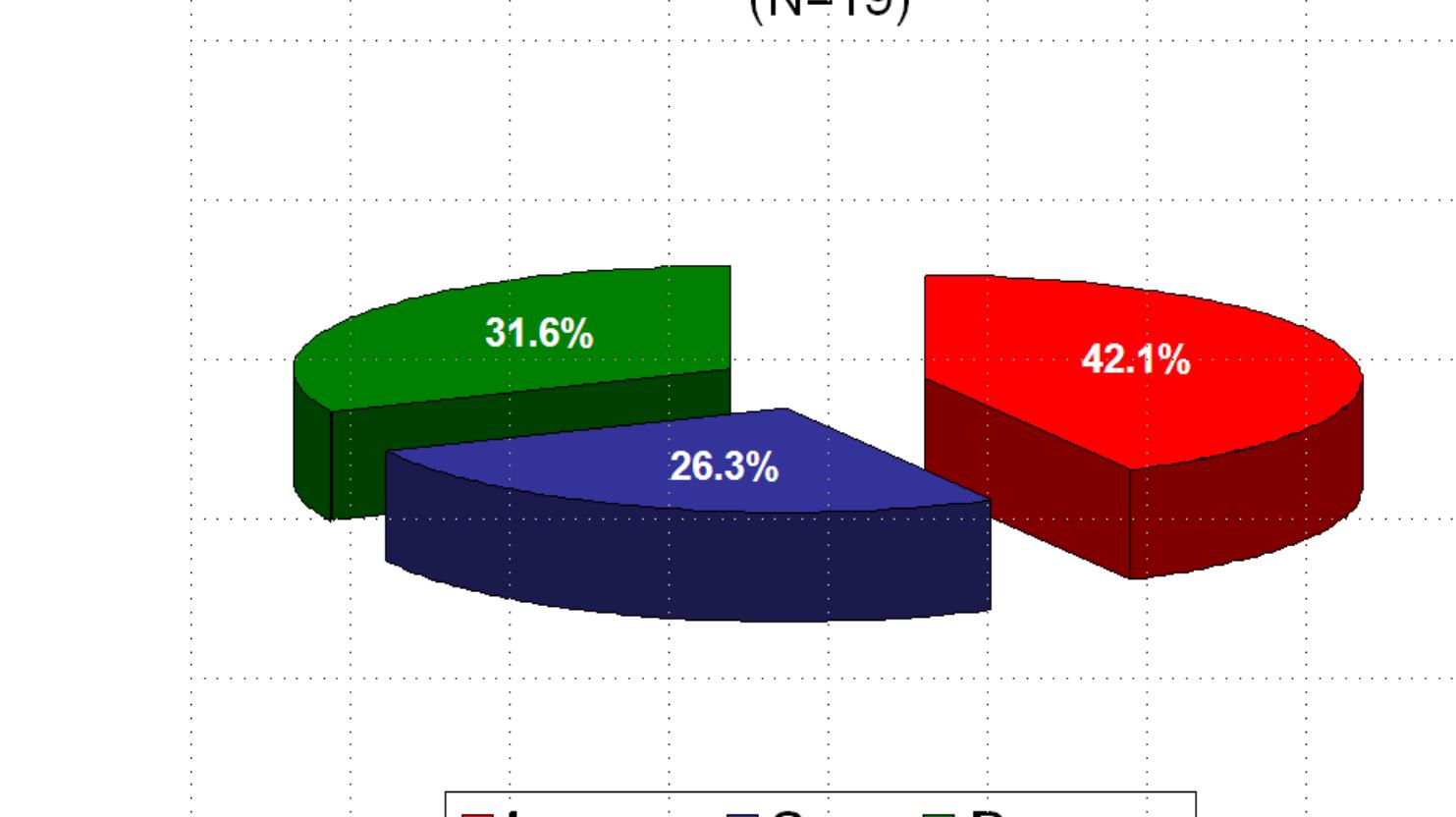
Plus reassessment using knowledge questions, and measure of helpfulness of the sessions.

Results: Students in the research methods class were required to submit a pre- and post-survey. The post-survey utilized a post-test retrospective pre-test methodology that asked them to self-assess their current competencies and where they believe they were at the beginning of the semester. Using this methodology, students indicated an improvement across every competency indicator. In addition, the students were asked to indicate how helpful it was to have the availability of the librarian and the information management consultation, and in every area, the students indicated that it was "very helpful" to at least "a little helpful" to have the librarian involved in the curriculum of this course.

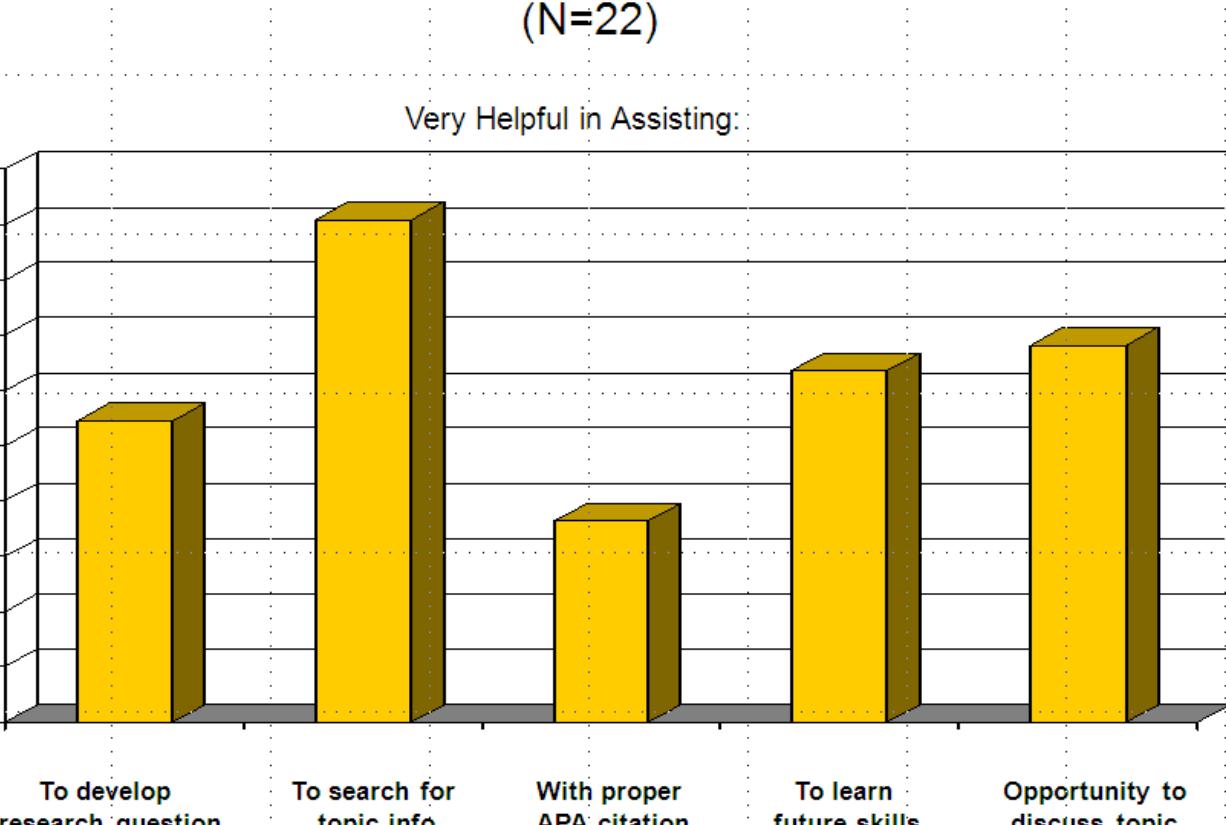


Assessment of Any Skill Change from Pre to Post Intervention (N=22)

Change in Knowledge Score from Pre to Post Intervention (N=19)



Assessment of Information Management Consultation (N=22)



Conclusions: The librarian will continue to provide individual information management consultations with students in the research methods class. While it takes a considerable amount of time and scheduling can be difficult, this type of activity with the students is directly in line with the library's strategic initiative to improve information management competencies in the populations we serve.

The knowledge assessment tool and questions needs further refinement and coordination with the consultation sessions.

Correlation between consultations and the quality of the end-product is difficult to determine.