

## Information Literacy at Kelvin Smith Library 2006-2007

"In a complex and rapidly changing environment, higher education must help students to become information literate. Information literacy enables students to recognize the value of information and use it to make informed choices in their personal, professional and academic lives. An information literate student effectively accesses, evaluates, organizes, synthesizes and applies information from a variety of sources and formats in a variety of contexts. Information literacy requires an ongoing involvement in learning and in evaluating information so that life long learning is possible." *WAAL Information Literacy Committee, Fall 1998*

The finest collection of resources loses much of its value if users cannot effectively use those resources. Kelvin Smith Library (KSL) subscribes to over 300 research databases across a wide spectrum of disciplines and to 9,000+ electronic journals. KSL also has 1.6 million volumes of print material. In addition, thousands of quality web sites offer valuable information, statistics, reports and more. More confusing is the fact that there are equally many web sites that offer unreliable, incorrect information.

Our goal is to create an information literate group of users on the campus of Case Western Reserve University, users who are aware not only of the resources available to them, but know which are appropriate for their particular information needs. As shown in the following table, teaching these critical skills to the campus community is a thriving service provided by the library. By offering instruction to students and faculty, librarians at the Kelvin Smith Library are helping them to not only recognize the value of information and learn where to find it, but also how to evaluate, manipulate, and synthesize the information into a format suitable for presentation or publication.

In particular, library instruction has become an excellent companion to the [SAGES](#)\* program. As students participate in each stage of the general education program, they learn the skills required for each class- from their first experience with academic research at the university level in the First Seminar (SAGES FS in the graph) through more involved critical thinking and searching skills with the University and Departmental Seminars and their senior Capstone experiences (SAGES US in the graph).

The need for research support is not limited to SAGES. Other groups of students, staff and faculty also benefit from assistance and instruction. Librarians teaching information literacy skills to the campus community continues through other undergraduate and graduate courses as well. This teaching role is becoming more and more central to the curriculum, as shown by the increasing number of courses and students taught. Instructional sessions taught by KSL librarians increased by 57% from the fall semester of 2005 to the fall semester of 2006.

\*SAGES: Seminar Approach to General Education and Scholarship, Students are instructed in series of small seminars.

## Library Instruction Sessions at KSL September 2005-July 2007

Course	Fall 2005	Spring 2006	Fall 2006	Spring 2007
SAGES FS	18	2	25	1
SAGES US	2	6	6	22
Other UG	7	2	10	8
Other GR	1	0	9	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>33</b>
# of Students	476	170	1089	583

