Information Literacy Course – The Perception of Students and Professors: University of Zadar Case

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ECIL 2013, Istanbul, 22-25 October

Is there anything new in...

1. ...information literacy (IL) as elective standalone course at the university?

2. ...librarians teaching IL skills?

3. ...the need for collaboration between professors and librarians?

IL education
at the University of Zadar

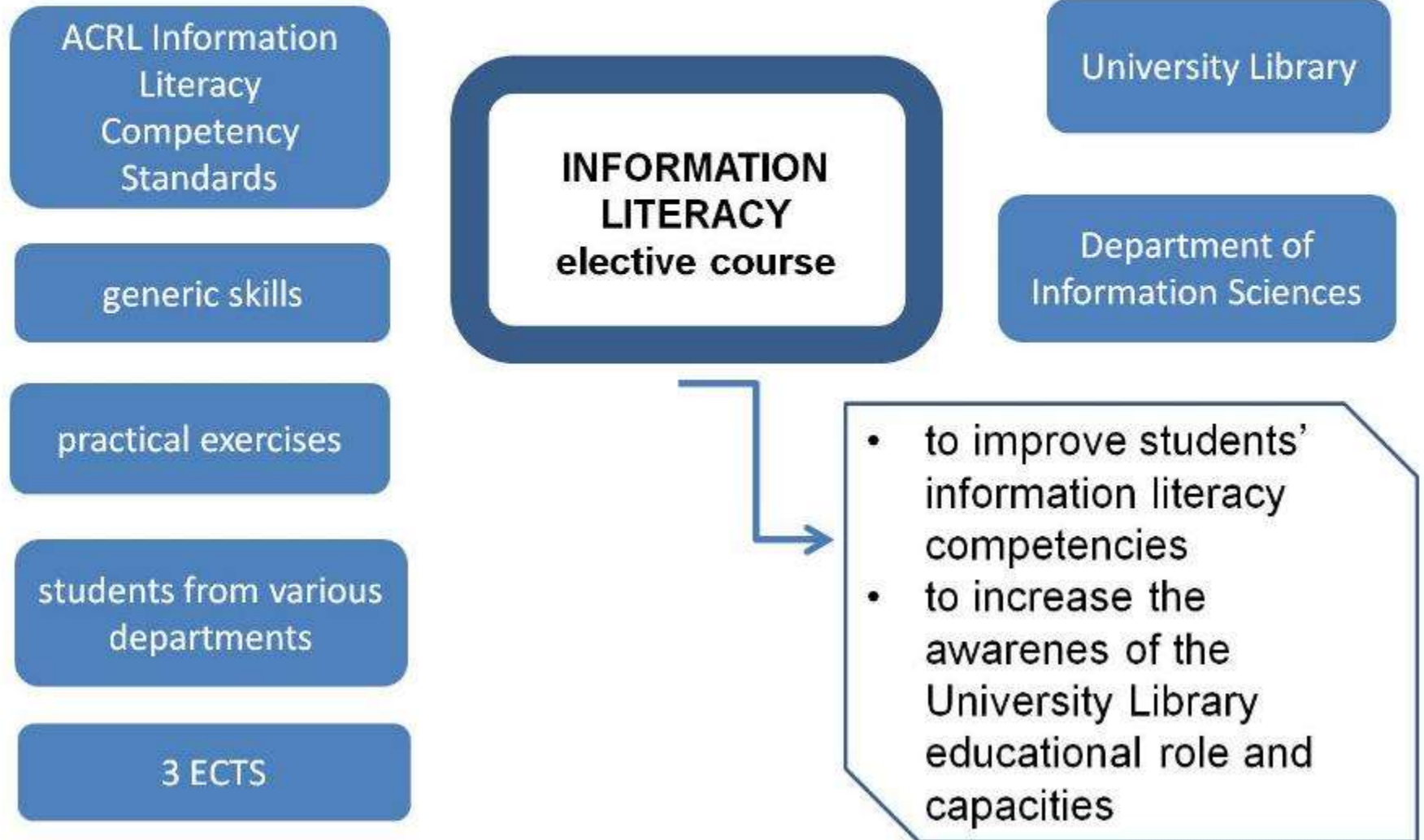| librarians' individual work with students | **INFORMATION LITERACY** **elective course** | some IL skills covered by the research methodology courses |

Since 2011/12 - elective course Information Literacy
librarians from the University Library
+
professors from the Department of Information Sciences

Information literacy - elective course

ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards

generic skills

practical exercises

students from various departments

3 ECTS

INFORMATION LITERACY elective course

University Library

Department of Information Sciences

- to improve students' information literacy competencies
- to increase the awarenes of the University Library educational role and capacities

Why this research?

1. development of IL course based on research results

2. development of more advanced forms of IL education at the University

Research: goals

to investigate:

students

1) expectations from the IL course

2) self-evaluation of IL competencies

professors

1) importance of IL competences within their curricula

2) assesment of students' IL competencies

3) possible collaboration with librarians

Research: methods

survey

2 generations of IL
course attendees
(N=53)

students

survey
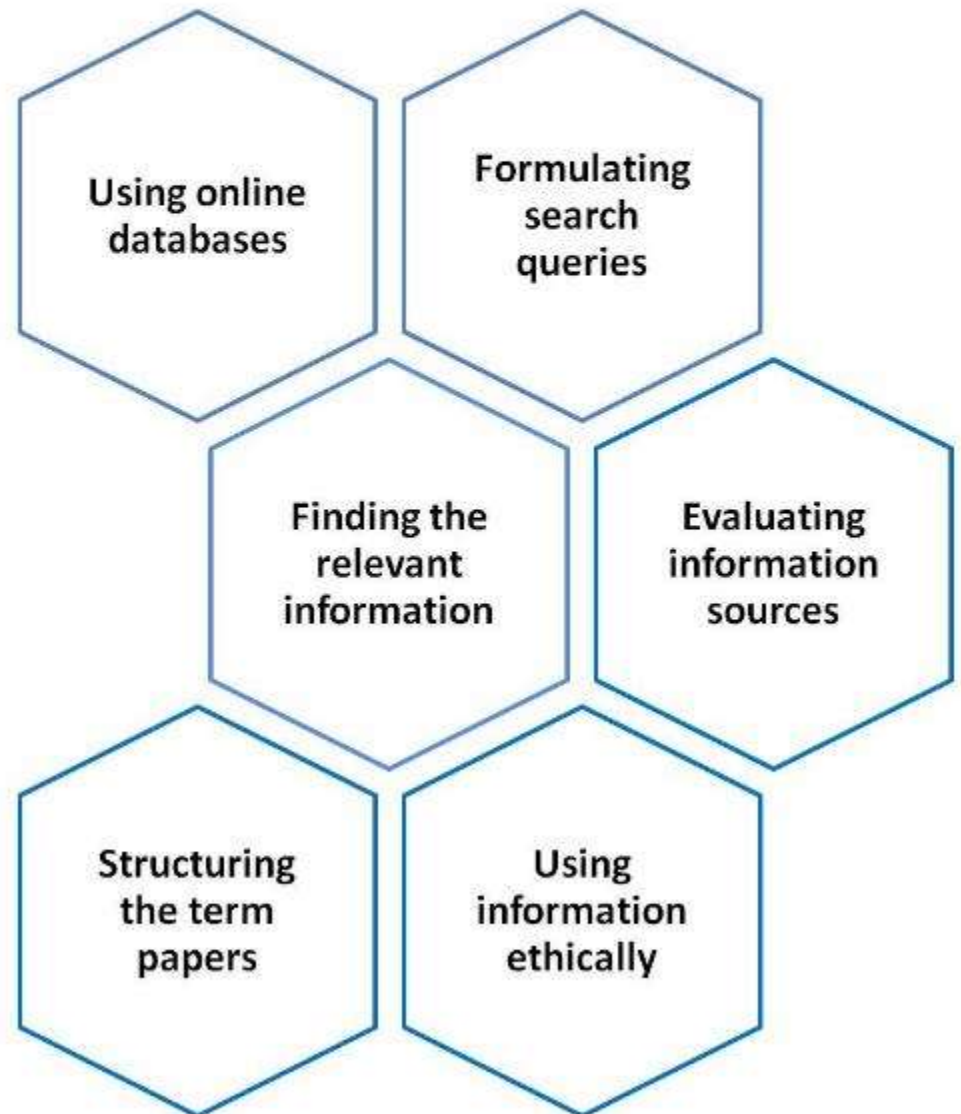(N=20)

+ interview
(N=10 out of 20)

professors

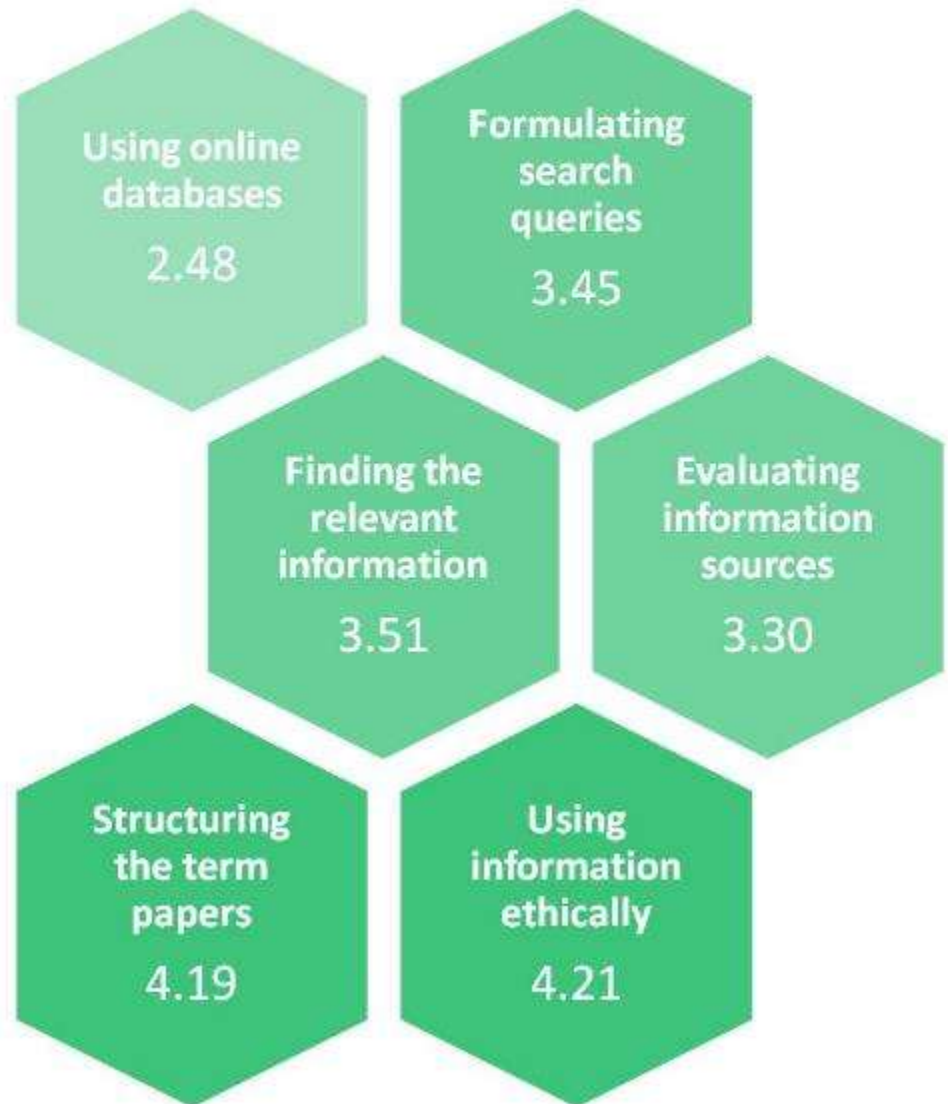Focus in the research was on the competencies represented in the IL course

Using online databases

Formulating search queries

Finding the relevant information

Evaluating information sources

Structuring the term papers

Using information ethically

Students' self-assessment of IL competencies prior to the IL course

Likert-type scale

1 = poor
5 = excellent

Using online databases
2.48

Formulating search queries
3.45

Finding the relevant information
3.51

Evaluating information sources
3.30

Structuring the term papers
4.19

Using information ethically
4.21

Professors' assessment of students' IL competencies shown in their courses

Using online databases
2.45

Formulating search queries
2.85

Finding the relevant information
3.05

Evaluating information sources
2.84

Structuring the term papers
3.58

Using information ethically
2.75

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5
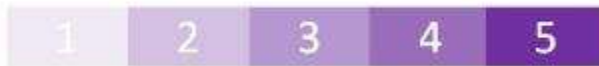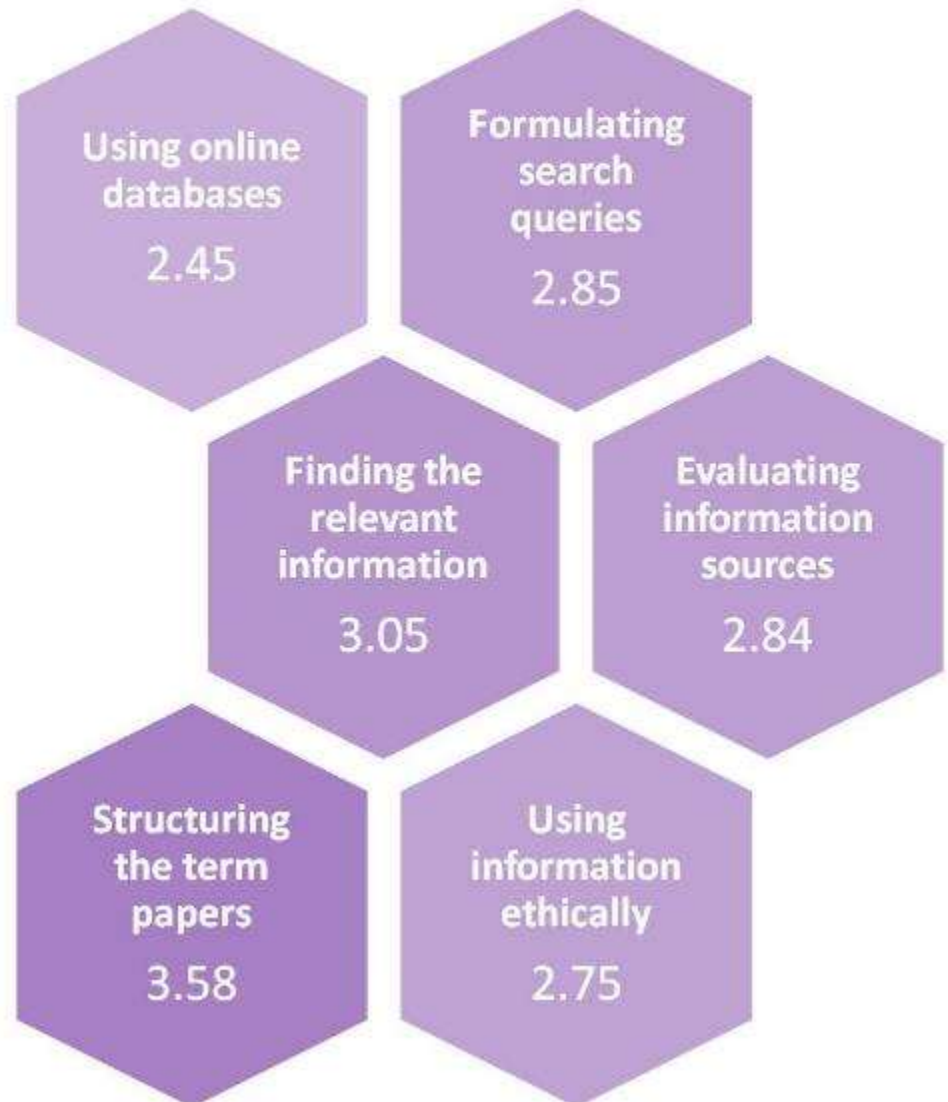
Likert-type scale

1 = poor
5 = excellent

Professors' assessment of the competences' importance

Using online databases
3.55

Formulating search queries
4.45

Finding the relevant information
4.60

Evaluating information sources
4.55

Structuring the term papers
4.50

Using information ethically
4.50
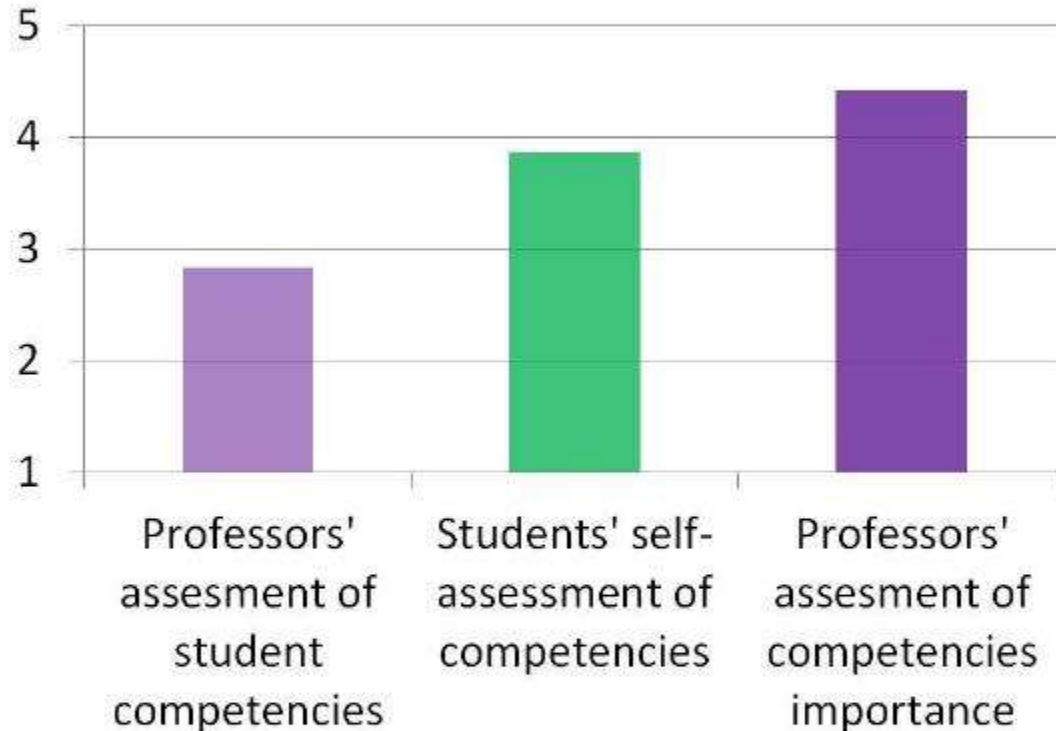
1	2	3	4	5
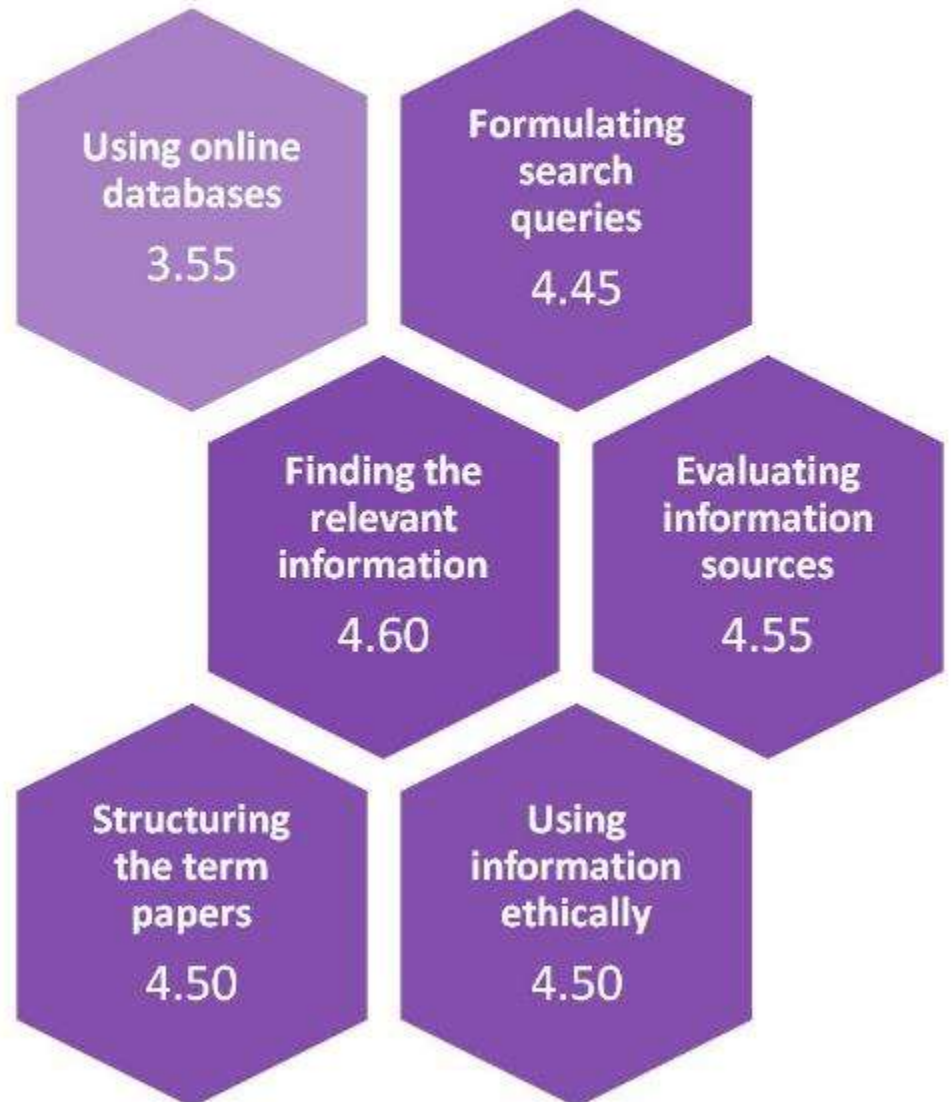
Likert-type scale

1 = low importance
5 = high importance

Highlights from the surveys' results

Students believe they know much more than the professors percieve they know

Despite the students' self-confidence, they see the IL course as needed and usefull

Professors rate the IL competencies as highly important - much more than:
- the students believe they possess
- the professors percieve the students possess

Professors' perceptions (interviews)

Some professors perceive IL as a set of skills that is separate from learning and study in the disciplinary contex!

"...for my courses it is not important to know how to search (for information) because I give them the readings I selected as valuable although I am aware that maybe it is not the best way. For their final thesis it is important that they know how to do their research independently." (P3)

Library affirmation

Some professors become aware of the library's educational role and capacities only through the IL course!

"I learned to do it all myself and I did not know that our library offers such service, that someone can help me with that." (P3)

Professors and librarians collaboration

Some professors are aware of the need for collaboration with librarirans in building IL competencies within a disciplinary context

"I think that the collaboration with the librarians is needed (..) customized especially for the students of Ethnology because every disciplinary area has its own pecularities." (P10)

Conclusions of the research and follow up

Standalone elective course in IL which includes librarians as teachers is generally not new practice

BUT

it is important in **building IL culture at the University** because it:

- improve students' IL competencies

- raises professors' and students' awareness about IL

- opens up space for more complex forms of teaching IL

- contributes to the recognition of librarians as partners in the educational process

Questions?

Comments?

Suggestions?