Information Literacy of Physical Science Graduate Students in the Information Age

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Abstract

This article reports on findings from a survey exploring the information literacy of physical science graduate students. The study also describes the graduate students' perceptions of the physical and psychological components that enhance or detract from their ability to find, appraise, and use information and how they feel during the various stages of an information search. This snapshot investigation illustrates that physical science graduate students form an information-literate microcosm despite the lack of formal library instruction. The students offer a small number of reasons why they may be inhibited from locating an information source and report experiencing little anxiety as they search for information. They also describe their ideal information-seeking environment as being within the comfort of their home or the convenience of the library. Further, they place some emphasis, but not total reliance, on the capability to connect to the Internet quickly. Relevance, quality, and speed are the cornerstones of a successful search quest. Recommendations for outreach to graduate students who are
not native speakers of English are made. Also, suggestions are proposed for library instruction that is specifically designed for, and attracts a greater number of, physical science graduate students.
Request PDF on ResearchGate | Information Literacy Education for PhD students - a Case Study | A credit bearing course aimed at PhD students within the area of computer science was given at Skövde University during the spring semester of 2003. One of the key aims of the course was to encourage students to develop their own concepts of information literacy and to... Reflection on finding and managing information was a focus of a Swedish course designed to help PhD students develop their information literacy skills (Pilerot, 2004). Research Students in the Electronic Age: Impacts of Changing Information Behavior on Information Literacy Needs. Article. Full-text available. Research on library use and information literacy of graduate students has been growing in recent decades. Researchers report varying levels of success in meeting the information literacy needs of the graduate student population. There is a demonstrated need to develop graduate students’ library research skills, but no single approach has emerged as the best for doing so. A survey of physical science graduate students (Brown 1999) revealed high levels of information literacy skills among respondents, although only half of them reported receiving library instruction. This raises the question of how to best support students. On our “For applicants” and “Awards and Funding” webpages, you will find information about our programs and about applying for them, as well as information about funding available to graduate students in Physics. Email us with questions that are not answered on our website. Location. University of Alberta is located in Edmonton next to the beautiful North Saskatchewan River valley and is also a short walk from Edmonton’s vibrant south-side urban neighbourhoods. The city has a population of nearly 900,000 and hosts a diverse spectrum of music, theatre, arts and sporting events. Office of Graduate Studies Department of Physics 4-183 CCIS University of Alberta Edmonton, AB Canada T6G 2E1. physgradprogram@ualberta.ca. Forms for Applicants.