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We discuss an educational development approach to embedding academic literacies instruction within disciplinary curricula. This developmental, embedded approach contrasts with the generic, extra-curricular, study-skills approach adopted in many universities. Learning Commons partners at York University, including librarians, writing instructors, and learning skills counsellors, collaborated with educational developers in the York Teaching Commons to design a program for course instructors and teaching assistants (TAs) who seek to improve their students' academic literacies. This program includes interactive workshops focusing on strategies to facilitate the redesign of courses and assignments so as to give explicit attention to process-related practices and abilities involved in library research and writing. The academic theory underpinning this program is outlined along with its key content elements. We also describe how the program draws on SPARK (Student Papers and Academic Research Kit), an online resource, created by the York Learning Commons under a Creative Commons license with the goal of helping students succeed with written academic assignments. Feedback from instructors and TAs support that the program has played an important role in helping them to question their assumptions and redesign their teaching practice.

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Introduction

Acquiring solid academic dispositions and practices is often proposed as the key to an engaging, high-quality student experience, particularly in the transition to higher education (Bowles Fisher, McPhail, Rosenstreich, & Dobson 2014; Chanock, Horton, Reedman & Stephenson 2012; McInnis 2004). Today many institutions formally list academic abilities such as reflective writing, information literacy, critical thinking and analytical problem-solving among the expected outcomes of study at their institutions (Gunn, Hearne & Sibthorpe 2011).

Descriptions abound of the manner in which individual academics or departments – often in collaboration with reading, writing or information-literacy specialists – might develop supplemental or integrated curriculum components to support student development of one or more of these academic practices. Increasing attention to them is seen in some universities giving strategic priority to mainstreaming their instruction, for example, in the form of First Year Experience initiatives (Johnston 2010). Some attention, but much less, has also been given to describing initiatives to enhance the interest and ability of faculty members to embed effective academic-literacy instruction in their subjects.

We describe here a faculty-development program created to help faculty members design subjects, assignments and exercises to facilitate the development of their students' academic literacies – in particular, to enhance the effectiveness of their academic reading, academic writing and library research. The program, a joint project of the Learning Commons and the Teaching Commons at York University, seeks to integrate, rather than separate, attention to these diverse academic literacies. It makes considerable use of SPARK, an open, online resource that adopts a holistic, recursive approach to research and writing. We describe the theoretical foundations, content and evolution of our faculty-development initiative; and we close by reflecting on its successes and challenges, as well as its future possibilities.

Academic literacies – theoretical foundation

Academic literacies have developed as a significant area of study over the past 25 years. In the UK, Lea and Street (1998) have been especially influential. Their work, in turn, has its theoretical underpinnings in New Literacy Studies (Barton 1994; Baynham 1995; Street 1984). Wingate and Tribble (2012) point out that Bazerman's (1988) early work in the US and the later work of Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) have also been significant. What these conceptions have in common is a shift away from a focus on written text to a recognition that "writing and reading are understood as social and context-dependent practices that are influenced by factors such as power relations, the epistemologies of specific disciplines and students' identities" (Wingate & Tribble 2012, p.482).

Lea and Street's (1998) theoretical comparison of three models, including one explicitly labelled as the *academic literacies* model, is helpful in understanding this comment fully. The three models are not mutually exclusive, nor does one replace another. Rather, each successive model is seen as broadening the scope of the others, with the academic-literacies model as the most encompassing.

Surface features of language are the predominant theme of the *study-skills* model, teaching grammar, punctuation and sentence structure, for example, as skills that may be deficient. There is an assumption that skills are like units that can be transferred readily from one context to another.

The model is strongly influenced by behavioural psychology, with an emphasis on "fixing" problems associated with students learning the skills.

The *academic-socialisation* model connects the teaching of writing and other academic skills with the acculturation of students into disciplinary genres and discourses. The sources of this perspective lie in social psychology, constructivist education and situated learning. Moreover, it is important to acknowledge links between the academic-socialisation model and fields such as sociolinguistics, discourse analysis and genre theory. Genre theory, including embedding teaching of writing within disciplinary contexts, has been explored by many researchers, starting with Gee (1990), and later Hyland (2000) and Monroe (2003, 2006). These theorists recognise that texts vary linguistically, reflecting their purpose and context, and that they exist in discourse communities that have their own norms and conventions (Wingate, Andon & Cogo 2011). Central metaphors associated with this approach include that of *apprenticeship*, since the instructor introduces students to what it means to think and act like a disciplinary "expert"; for example, a sociologist or an historian (Lillis & Scott 2007).

Going beyond skills and socialisation, the *academic-literacies* model views literacies as social practices. From this point of view, writing and learning raise issues of identity and epistemology; and, thus, they involve affective elements (Lea & Street 1998). Students must switch among initially unfamiliar practices as they move from one setting to another. Their work is seen as connected to meaning-making processes, and contestation around meaning, rather than to skills or deficits. Parallels thus exist between this approach (and its predecessor, New Literacy Studies) and social critical theory. Wingate and Tribble (2012) also highlight links with critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 1992) and critical language awareness (Ivanič 1998). As Street (2003) indicates, Maybin (2000) also linked New Literacy Studies to Foucauldian notions of discourse and Bakhtinian notions of intertextuality.

Academic literacy theory has been characterised as a response to inadequate approaches that fail to take account of the complexity of literacy practices; thus, current models are characterised as providing a "critical research frame" (Lillis 2003, p.195). Despite the recognition of the limits of other approaches, however, to date the academic-literacies model remains more of a theoretical construct. Lillis (2003) points to an absence of established design frames and pedagogical models to apply and implement within higher education. The criticism is made that academic-literacy researchers have not developed alternatives to the models they find lacking and, in reality, what exists to draw on are only a few small-scale case studies (Lea & Street 2006; Lillis 2003; Wingate 2006; Wingate, Andon & Cogo 2011).

In practice, the study-skills model predominates in higher education (Lea & Street 2006) despite the many questions about the efficacy of this approach. Wingate (2006) states that this "study skills" or "bolt-on" approach has major limitations, as "it separates study skills from the process and content of learning" (p.457). She says that at best all it does is establish effective study techniques. Wingate (2006) cites Drummond, Alderson, Nixon and Wiltshire (1999) and Durkin and Main (2002) regarding other problems. For example, extracurricular skills support is typically not sought out by the students who need it most; and, study-skills instruction is offered in the form of a generic subject, students do not see it as relevant to their subject-specific degree pursuits.

Haggis (2006) argues that a model in which academic literacies are supported in an extracurricular way through academic support services on campus (for example, libraries or writing centres) sends

a message that these skills are generic and transferable, and that the cause of any problem lies with individual students; that is, that the "problem" can be approached on a case-by-case basis outside the curriculum. This approach can be considered a deficit or remedial model, with students who need help often being described as "at risk," or mature, or ESL, with the result that the approach itself becomes stigmatised. Wingate (2006) cites a number of studies to argue that evidence is accumulating that students from *all backgrounds* need help with academic literacies (Blythman & Orr 2002; National Audit Office (NAO) 2002; Thomas 2002). More recently, Head's (2008, 2013) Project Information Literacy results and those of Arum and Roksa (2011) establish that academic literacies, including information literacy, need attention among all undergraduates.

Faculty perspectives and behaviours may unintentionally perpetuate the deficit model. One suggestion for avoiding attributions to deficits is to characterise the divide between faculty and student researchers as one of experts and novices (Leckie 1996). Also, faculty members may not accept responsibility for enhancing students' research practices, nor do they necessarily have the expertise to do it (Gunn, Hearne & Sibthorpe 2011). A hindsight effect, too, may be at work, as faculty have difficulty remembering what it was like to acquire the "discipline's epistemology and literacy conventions through a lengthy process of acculturation" (Wingate, Andon & Cogo 2011, p.70). The result is that they may take this knowledge for granted, and focus on disciplinary content in the classroom without articulating or addressing the whole area of academic literacies in a disciplinary context.

In contrast to the deficit model, Haggis (2006) proposes that higher-education teachers and administrators come to see academic literacies not so much as "missing" but rather as not yet developed in the direction of the academy – a development that cannot be reasonably expected to occur without guidance. She further proposes that student acquisition of critical academic literacies will be fostered far more effectively when based in a developmental model, and argues that the root of the problem lies not with individual students, but rather with the whole framing of higher education. She advocates a process-based view that focuses instead on ways of interacting with the curriculum (processes) that stand in the way of students accessing a subject. In her view a more effective model would address the matter systemically by embedding academic-literacy instruction within course curricula to ensure incremental building of students' familiarity of discourse communities – a view consistent with the academic-socialisation approach embraced by the academic-literacies model (Lea & Street 1998). Wingate (2006) is also a proponent of the embedded approach, citing how it can address a complex set of literacies in a holistic and inclusive manner by building knowledge throughout a degree course. She believes achievement of deep learning and understanding requires student participation in the context of a subject discipline, with explanations, modeling and feedback from subject tutors.

Though not common, examples of successful embedded, genre-based approaches to teaching academic literacies exist in the literature. Their prevalence varies by country. In the UK there are only a few examples of discipline-specific writing instruction (Wingate, Andon & Cogo 2011; Ganobesik-Williams 2006), typically driven by individuals or individual departments within a few universities. In Australian universities genre-based literacy pedagogy is quite widely used (Wingate & Tribble 2012), while the "Writing in the Disciplines" model represents the most significant mainstream writing-development approach in the United States. Russell, Lea, Parker, Street and Donahue (2009) have studied genre approaches to writing; that is, approaches in which writing is positioned as a central aspect of disciplinary learning for all students. McWilliams and

Allan (2014) cite a number of studies that focus specifically on the benefits of embedding attention to academic-writing practices in curricula, including work by Hill, Tinker and Catterall (2010), Leach, Zepke and Haworth (2010) and Salamonson, Koch, Weaver, Everett and Jackson (2010).

Embedding academic-literacies instruction in disciplinary subjects – outline for an educational-development approach

The context

York University is the third largest university in Canada, with a student population of about 55,000 students (including 47,000 undergraduates). Twenty-nine percent of these undergraduate students are the first in their families to attend university, and one-third have a mother tongue other than English. Since 2012 the Learning Commons (the Libraries, Learning Skills Services, Career Development Centre and Writing Department) has worked in partnership with the Teaching Commons (educational developers on campus) to deliver both in-person and online programming to help instructors embed academic-literacies instruction within their subjects. Target audiences have included full- and part-time subject directors, as well as teaching assistants (TAs), whose duties often include leading tutorial groups.

The Course Design @ York program, coordinated by the Teaching Commons, helps instructors design new subjects or revamp existing ones. As part of this program, the Learning Commons has offered a three-hour workshop on teaching academic literacies in the context of subjects, typically once each semester. In addition, TAs' attendance at academic-literacies workshops can be used toward "Record of Completion" certificates. This includes one workshop on teaching writing and library research and one on teaching critical reading.

SPARK (Student Papers and Academic Research Kit)[1], is a primary component of all the academic-literacies workshops, is an online tool designed by the Learning Commons to help students develop the ability to write academic essays. It has 13 modules, mostly on academic literacies, all under a Creative Commons license, so that they can be adapted freely by other schools. It includes text-based instructional materials, videos and more than 30 worksheets, activity sheets and check lists for student use. The SPARK Faculty Module[2] is featured in the workshops. It is organised to help instructors succeed in integrating SPARK into their subjects and to facilitate their design of effective assignments.

Introducing academic literacies and the "taken-for-granted"

Our workshops typically begin with a brief conceptual orientation featuring selective summaries of the ideas, constructs and models reviewed above. We point those eager to pursue these topics more fully to the *Learning More* section[3] of our SPARK Faculty Module, which links to a supplemental guide featuring resources in the specific areas of academic reading, writing and information literacy. The organising theme of our introduction is that for most academics in higher education, literacies involve mostly tacit knowledge that they take for granted when

[1] Learning Commons. York University. SPARK. http://www.yorku.ca/spark.
[2] York University. Learning Commons. York University. SPARK Faculty Module. http://www.yorku.ca/spark/faculty/index.html.
[3] York University. Learning Commons. York University. *Teaching with SPARK*. http://researchguides.library.yorku.ca/SPARK.

teaching. A primary purpose of our workshops is to help faculty members unpack this knowledge set and range of abilities both for themselves and for their students.

In our workshops we primarily promote and identify ourselves with the academic-socialisation model or genre framing of academic literacies, as described by Lea and Street (1998). We share teaching strategies and approaches in this vein with instructors. We choose this model because its underlying philosophy fits very well with our context, pedagogical approach and goals for instruction, as explained more fully below.

In part, our choice of this model constitutes a rejection of other approaches. More specifically, in contrast to the study-skills model, which divorces disciplinary content from process-related abilities (seeing literacy as a set of atomised skills simply transferable to other contexts), the genre approach treats academic literacies as fundamentally intertwined with students' learning of new subjects and disciplinary knowledge. Moreover, like Wingate (2006), we reject the notion that students' challenges with writing can be addressed effectively by focusing on surface or technical aspects of learning literacies. Such a generic approach does not allow students to grasp the complexity of academic reading, writing and research in the context of academic discourse. In contrast, the academic-socialisation model sees literacies as best taught in curricular contexts, where the instructor's role is to induct students to the norms and cultures of specific disciplines. Practical considerations also influence our choice of approach. We are providing instruction to subject directors and TAs who are designing and teaching subjects, tutorials and assignments in the context of specific disciplinary programs. The genre approach fits well here, as in this model, students learn within the context of a subject or program.

The fact that this model has its roots in social psychology and constructivist education, which emphasises that students learn by doing and by constructing their own meaning and knowledge (Lea & Street 1998), appeals to us also. Modeling, explanations, practice opportunities and feedback designed by instructors play a key role in coaching students to speak and write the discourse (Northedge 2003). The strategies and activities we introduce in our teaching practice, as outlined below, are in keeping with this approach.

The academic-literacies approach is viewed as the optimal model by Lea and Street (1998) relative to both the study-skills and the academic-socialisation approaches. While we appreciate this approach for its attention to the cultural and contextual aspects of writing and reading practices, and for emphasising literacies as social practices, the aforementioned lack of practical design frames (Lillis 2003) has impeded our ability to design a workshop that fits with this approach. Integrating aspects of this approach in future workshops is something we aspire to, but at the current time the academic-socialisation model has been our main focus.

Following are the key concepts that we explain and endorse; they are linked primarily to the academic-socialisation model, or genre-framing of academic literacies.

- **The contrast between a supplementary model (or study-skills model) and an embedded, developmental model for facilitating academic literacies.** Following Haggis (2006, p.526), we hope to shift from questions such as "what is wrong with this student?" and "how can the students get help outside class to remedy their deficits?" to "how might we change features of the curriculum and of interaction processes around the curriculum that are preventing some students from being able to access this subject?"

(p.526). Like Haggis, we propose that giving more attention to the nature of taken-for-granted processes in the discipline will be particularly helpful.

- **The academic world as a discourse community** with its own norms, conventions and academic-literacy practices. We note a link to sociocultural theory, and we emphasise Gee's (1990) term "ways of being in the world". We describe disciplines as sub-communities within the academic-discourse community, each with their particular "ways of being".
- **Vygotsky's notions of scaffolding and the internalisation of observed social practice.** As described by Moll (2014), students learn more effectively when they play an active role, observe their teachers and construct meaning for themselves as they internalise the practice of their teachers and others within the discipline.
- **Apprenticeship** as a model for building understanding. We suggest that students learn to truly appreciate literacies in a disciplinary context when they observe, simulate and do the *actual* work of academics, beginning to see and use the literacy practices of a political scientist, psychologist or other type of academic.
- **The difference between content-area literacy and disciplinary literacy** as discussed by Shanahan and Shanahan (2008) and Fang (2012). We contrast generic literacies for learning the content of a field with learning how literacies are used within a particular discipline.
- **Threshold concepts.** *The Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*, recently released by the Association of College and Research Libraries (2015), defines threshold concepts as "core or foundational concepts that, once grasped by the learner, create new perspectives and ways of understanding a discipline". The key idea of the framework report is that acquiring information literacy involves gradually coming to understand six concepts that underlie literacy practices. For example, coming to understand that "scholarship is a conversation" is like crossing a threshold into a world where the literacy and knowledge practices of a discipline suddenly make sense. Prior to crossing it, students doing library research may think of themselves as just gathering some facts which they need to document and write up. Crossing the threshold permits characterising themselves as identifying and evaluating the viewpoints of the multiple participants (authors) within a conversation, as well as perhaps beginning to see themselves as potential participants.

As we introduce our participants to the idea of tacit knowledge, we encourage them to examine their own assumptions about students' academic literacies. We draw, in particular, from Leckie (1996), Head's Project Information Literacy studies (2008, 2013) and Krause (2001) for examples of how they have found students' novice conceptions of library research and essay writing to differ from their instructors' more expert ones. Krause, for example, highlights the difficulties that students have in conceptualising the audience for academic papers, primarily because of their lack of familiarity with that audience. Similarly, she points to problems in determining what to include and what to omit from an essay, a difficulty that Graff (2003) would likely attribute to students' lack of familiarity with the importance of argument in academic discourse and academics' failure to identify its importance and nature for students.

Prior to providing the examples of tacit knowledge, we explicitly ask participants, "What experiences do you recall from your own early undergraduate years as a novice with respect to academic reading, writing and library research?" We organise the presentation of our examples in three categories: academic reading, academic writing and library research. We devote about 15 minutes to each area and use the following as guiding questions for discussion of the examples:

- How do you do your own academic reading/academic writing/library research?
- What knowledge or abilities do you think are required for effective academic reading/academic writing/library research?
- What aspects of reading/academic writing/library research might you carry out automatically, without thinking, as a result of years of experience as a scholar?

We conclude the section on tacit knowledge by pointing participants to the *Making the Implicit Explicit* page[4] of the SPARK Faculty Module, where the examples discussed and other examples are provided with respect to several different aspects of completing an academic paper.

Academic literacies and the design of subjects and assignments

The second part of our workshop focuses on introducing participants to principles and models for designing their subjects and assignments to effectively facilitate students' development of academic literacies. We emphasise the benefits of a critical-pedagogy approach and the notion that the practices associated with reading, writing and information literacy should be conceptualised not as basic study techniques, but as a set of critical, complex interrelated abilities. As Wingate (2006, p.462) explains, this complexity "involves understanding the nature of knowledge and how it is constructed", and is best approached within the context of a discipline.

We organise the second part around three specific assignment-design principles:

- Attend to both content goals and process goals in an assignment;
- Break out the component processes within more-complex processes and address them separately in a sequence of assignments;
- Align the assignment goals with the activities called for by the assignment and with the assignment evaluation provided to students.

Attending to process goals. We share evidence with the participants that when instructors design assignments, they typically overlook process-related abilities. Head and Eisenberg (2009) looked at almost 200 assignment handouts distributed at 28 college campuses in the United States. Despite the fact that most students, because they lack guidance, struggle with a typical research paper (Head 2008, 2013), most instructors (83% of the handouts in the sample) failed to provide any guidance at all. Moreover, 53% expected students to choose their own topic, only 43% mentioned that library databases should be used and only 14% gave pointers on which ones. In addition, only one in four handouts addressed the importance of evaluating information sources, with few giving guidance on using freely available internet sources. Plagiarism was typically addressed in a cursory fashion, with a main focus on the consequences of academic dishonesty.

Break out and sequence component processes. "Process cannot be delivered," Haggis (2006, p.532) writes, "it can only be described, discussed, compared, modelled and practised." To master the processes of academic literacy, students must have multiple opportunities to engage in relevant tasks with clear process elements. We recommend to instructors that they design separate assignments to focus on separate processes. For example, rather than preparing a single, comprehensive assignment aimed at critical analysis, instructors might prepare multiple smaller assignments focusing students on an element of the critical-analysis process – for example, to

[4] York University. Learning Commons. Making the Implicit Explicit. SPARK Faculty Module. http://www.yorku.ca/spark/faculty/making_the_implicit_explicit_making_the_implicit_explicit.html.

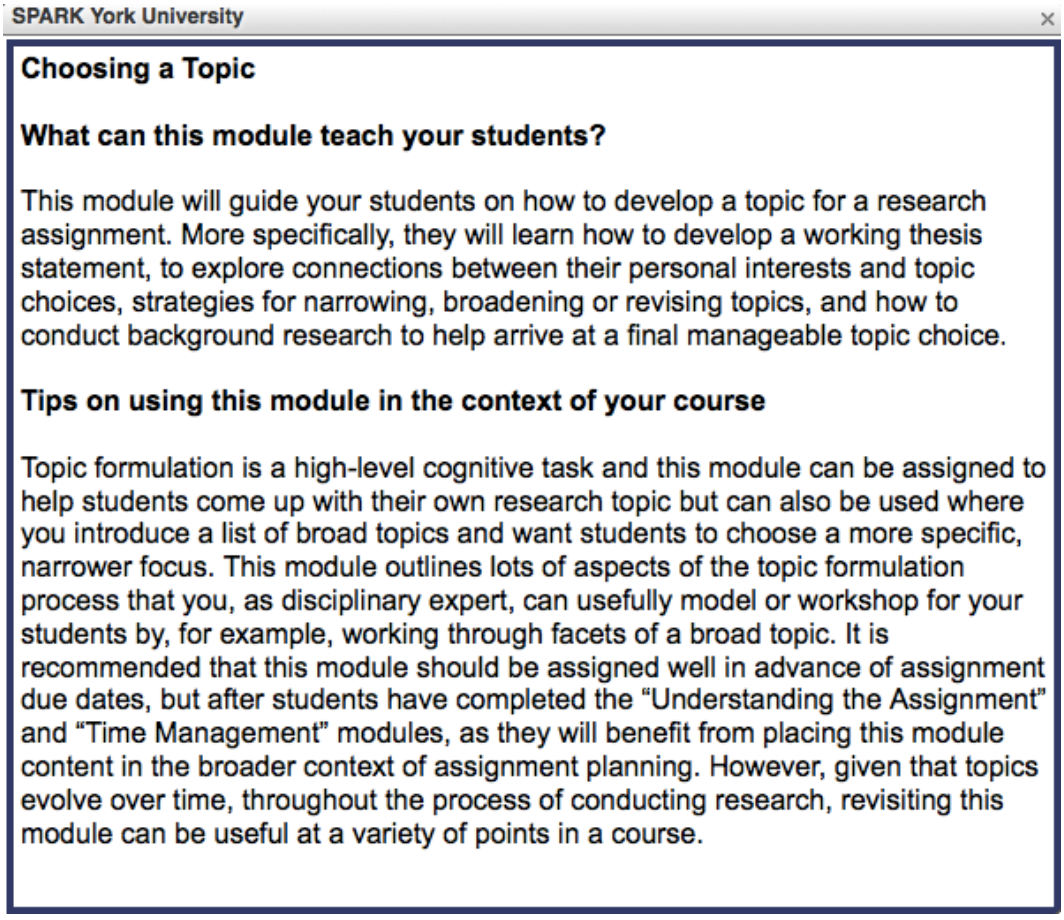
identify key features of the argument in an assigned article, to summarise the argument of an article selected by the student, to compare perspectives from two articles and other assignments building on other aspects of the critical-analysis process. To the extent possible, each assignment might incorporate the processes practiced in previous assignments.

Align goals, activities and evaluation. The constructive-alignment principle (Biggs & Tang 2007) builds on the idea of setting process goals, and can be used in a way that complements scaffolding and sequencing. The central idea is that one's assigned teaching/learning activities and one's assessment tasks should relate directly to the process goals. Secker and Coonan's (2011) *Information Literacy Curriculum* is extremely useful in illustrating how this principle can be applied to both information literacy and academic literacies more broadly. The 10 strands of the curriculum include everything from low-order to high-order cognitive abilities. Each is broken down into constituent learning outcomes such as critical analysis, finding resources in databases and citation ethics. These, in turn, are aligned with example activities and assessments. The curriculum clearly models the unpacking of different types of academic literacies, and it can be adapted readily to a wide variety of goals – for example, practicing how to skim an article (goal) by giving students 15 minutes to pull key points from a previously unseen reading (activity) and then pairing with another student to compare their lists to one provided by the instructor (assessment).

Specific activities and resources for developing students' academic literacies – using SPARK

A core goal of our workshops is to engage participants by demonstrating sample activities and assignments that will help them to build their own subject materials for enhancing students' academic-literacy practices. In doing so, we draw extensively on SPARK. We encourage instructors to integrate SPARK into their subjects, rather than to simply point to it as a resource that students can use independently. We recognise that few disciplinary subjects would be able to touch on all the SPARK content, and therefore we recommend that instructors carefully choose a subset of content elements from SPARK that matches their own sense of what literacy goals are best addressed by their subject and their personal interests. The SPARK Faculty Module contains instructor guidelines for each of the 13 modules, including both a description of the specific skills taught and tips on using modules in a subject context. Figure 1 shows guidelines for the "Choosing a Topic" module.

Figure 1. SPARK instructor guidelines for the module "Choosing a Topic"



SPARK contains 36 resources (tip sheets, checklists, worksheets and exercises)[5] spread through the 13 modules. These can be used just as they appear in the modules; however, they are also available as Word files for ready adaptation to an individual instructor's goals and subjects. An instructor version of each resource exists under the "Instructors' Guides" section of the Faculty Module, and in each case, these guides illustrate what academic practices each resource is designed to develop, as well as how each of the resources might be used in a subject context. Each guide also outlines feedback and evaluation options for each resource – for example, personal reflection or self-assessment, in-class exercise or small-group discussion, peer evaluation, instructor evaluation and tracking without evaluation.

[5] York University. Learning Commons. Sitemap – SPARK http://www.library.yorku.ca/spark/sitemap/ Note that all resources are listed here as .pdf documents. MS Word versions of these resources are available as part of the Teaching with SPARK Libguide at http://researchguides.library.yorku.ca/SPARK.

We typically select two or three resources from SPARK to demonstrate in some detail. While almost any of the resources would probably work well, we typically discuss the Search Strategies worksheet,[6] the PARCA test[7] and the Peer Review Guide[8], as these respond to very common concerns.

- **The Search Strategies worksheet** provides a framework for students to move from a research question to key concepts and on to a keyword search, including application of Boolean logic. It also covers appropriate tools by offering a customisable template for instructors to give students specific recommendations on resources they expect them to use and search tools to source them.
- **The PARCA test** guides students through evaluating the material they identify through their search strategies based on five criteria: Purpose, Authority, Relevance, Currency and Accuracy.
- **The Peer Review Guide** helps students move beyond copyediting in the process of reviewing a peer's draft. It asks students to identify such things as locations where they become confused when reading the draft, points they find hard to believe or ideas they would like to learn more about.

We usually conclude by asking workshop participants to identify the academic literacies they would be most interested in trying to address in their subjects, and to identify relevant SPARK activities and resources to support their efforts. We work with them individually in the final portion to begin a plan for appropriate activities and assignments, typically based on SPARK resources.

Feedback from workshop participants

Feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive. Table 1 shows the aggregated data and comments available to the authors from the workshops up to the end of August 2015.

Table 1. Academic-literacies workshops– aggregated evaluation responses

Evaluation Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The topics in this course are useful for my future reference	-	-	1	26	40
This course has stimulated me to reflect on my teaching practice	-	-	2	24	43

[6] York University. Learning Commons. Search Strategy Worksheet. SPARK. http://www.yorku.ca/spark/research_strategies/determining_keywords_determining_keywords.html.
[7] York University. Learning Commons. PARCA Test. SPARK. http://www.yorku.ca/spark/research_strategies/evaluating_search_results_evaluating_search_results.html.
[8] York University. Learning Commons. Peer Review Guide. SPARK. http://www.yorku.ca/spark/revising_your_arguments/reviewing_reviewing.html.

I will apply what I have learned from this course to my teaching	-	-	3	28	39

When asked three questions designed to assess the value and relevance of the content to participants' teaching contexts, the results indicate that the 70 participants who completed evaluations were very satisfied. Ninety-eight percent of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the topics covered were useful for their future reference, 97% either strongly agreed or agreed that the workshop stimulated them to reflect on their teaching practice and 96% either strongly agreed or agreed that they would apply what they learned from the course to their teaching.

When asked to comment on how they would apply what they learned in their teaching, many participants indicated that the workshops would help them improve their assignments:

> "I will develop classroom activities that correspond to the modules we were shown."
>
> "Will redefine learning objectives and rethink assessments and assignments."
>
> "Will break down larger tasks into smaller activities to build on literacy skills – particularly reading comprehension and research."

All major workshop segments were seen as beneficial. Many comments describe the value of the introductory section on the theory of academic literacies:

> "Thinking about the various invisible literacies that need to be attended to in course design."
>
> "To be reminded of these things we take for granted in 'doing academe.'"

The section on principles and frameworks for designing subjects and assignments to integrate academic literacies also received positive comments:

> "The connection between learning objectives – activities – resources – the overall strategy."
>
> "The concept of 'scaffolding'."

Finally, the concrete activities and examples modelled and discussed in the workshops were mentioned frequently as offering value. Indeed, participants would value even more examples.

> "Will refer to resources in SPARK, access handouts, and supplement the activities and handouts."
>
> "Discussion and modelling of writing resources."

Subsequent to the workshops (April/May 2015), we sought to learn more from our participants by means of a survey about how SPARK and our workshops had affected their teaching practice during the period since we had seen them. The response rate to this survey was 25%. We were encouraged by the fact that 70% of survey respondents do currently use SPARK in their teaching. When asked whether the workshops had inspired them to change any aspects of their subjects or

tutorials to actively incorporate attention to developing students' academic skills, 74% said yes, 17% said no but that they were planning to implement changes, and only 9% stated that no changes had been made subsequent to the workshops.

Areas for improvement and next steps

The two major threads in participants' evaluations relating to areas for improvement were to build in more time for group discussion and to give instructors more time to work on their own individual subjects during the workshops to put into practice what was learned.

To address instructors' concerns that time is insufficient to allow them to fully engage with and apply the concepts, tools, and strategies, we have formulated some future goals. We have been inspired by Miller (2010) and her colleagues at Eastern Washington University, where various formats were explored in the design of faculty-development programming, with the goal of integrating information literacy incrementally in different disciplinary programs. The most successful formula involved a three-day workshop where librarians worked with teaching faculty members in different programs. Miller reports that the programming was most successful when faculty members were given ownership. Their workshop facilitators posed general questions, then let the faculty members discuss their concerns and issues. Faculty members greatly benefited from a forum for sharing experiences, though Miller has said that better results are achieved if they come from disciplines with similar epistemologies.

Incentives can be put in place to encourage strong participation and facilitate the application of what is learned in the programming. For TAs, attending our academic-literacies workshops helps them earn credits toward their "Record of Completion" certificates for programming offered by the Teaching Commons at York, which can promote a more successful career. Attendance at our TA workshops has been consistently very high. In contrast, our workshops offered for instructors as part of the Course Design @ York program has had much lower participation (always under 10 people). Attendance has been somewhat better, however, when the workshop has been scheduled as an integral part of a larger two-day course-design program, rather than as a stand-alone element. Experience at other institutions has shown that offering instructors stipends or grants to attend faculty-development programming, and facilitating release time to redesign subject content and assignments, has met with good results. For example, the adoption of this strategy to mainstream information literacy in curricula has a track record of success (Fister 2009; Iannuzzi 1998; Miller 2010), and the same principles could easily be applied to a broader program focusing on academic literacies.

An additional general strategy that we are exploring involves being mindful of what portions of the university faculty are most likely to be responsive to the idea of embedding academic-literacies instruction in their subjects. For example, instructors in York's General Education program have a mandate to teach "critical skills" in an interdisciplinary context as part of students' undergraduate breadth requirements. Also, both the Learning Commons and the Teaching Commons are partners in an initiative that began in summer 2015 to improve the First Year Experience at York through more explicit attention to academic literacies in first-year subjects. Both literacy experts and educational developers will work with first-year instructors, who will be awarded small grants to revamp their first-year subjects in accordance with the goals of the program.

Conclusion

For universities and colleges that wish to make progress in equipping their instructors with the knowledge, strategies and tools to embed academic literacies in curricula, York University's approach through the Learning Commons/Teaching Commons partnership offers a small-scale, but useful and effective, model. Feedback from our workshops indicates that faculty members worry about students' lack of academic-literacy skills, and that they share a concern and interest in helping foster development in this domain. Our evaluations have shown that the programming we offer, including the emphasis on SPARK, is seen as valuable in supporting this development. We believe that our work to date has been conducted largely within the academic-socialisation model, and future goals include turning our efforts to designing and incorporating more activities explicitly within the academic-literacies framework to better understand the differences between these approaches in theory and outcome.

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