

Introduction

The Train-the-Trainer model, in which **experts train non-experts how to teach specialized topics**, has been a staple in fields such as education, healthcare, and the military. However, seldom has it been employed in academic libraries for information literacy. As the demand for such classes grows, librarians must find ways of expanding their programs despite time and staffing deficiencies. At the University of Kentucky, we accomplished this by using the Train-the-Trainer model to train Biology Teaching Assistants to teach our information literacy content.

The Problem

With no existing information literacy program, the Biology Department was clearly recognized as an underserved population. However, we lacked the time and staff to take on another large group of students using a traditional approach. After exploring several options, our desire to **create a sustainable program with no associated increase in staff** led us to the Train-the-Trainer model.

Course Details



BIO 155 is the introductory laboratory course required for all Biology majors at the University of Kentucky and is composed primarily of freshmen and sophomores. It is taught by Biology Teaching Assistants, each of whom is responsible for teaching two or more sections.

We targeted BIO 155 in particular because it presents the opportunity to:

- 1) Work with students in an **interactive environment** (see photo above)
- 2) **Reach students early** in their academic careers (500-630 per semester)
- 3) Reach students at the **point of need**

Obtaining Faculty Buy-in

Faculty buy-in is essential for any successful information literacy program, but especially so with the Train-the-Trainer model because **it takes away from both class time and TA training time**. We believe we were successful in obtaining the course coordinator's approval because we:

- 1) Came in with a clear set of objectives
- 2) Demonstrated that we understood the course structure
- 3) Understood the needs of the class
- 4) Were willing to collaborate and compromise

Implementing the Model



Our Information Literacy Teams: 2013-2014

For the training sessions during the first semester, we **showed** the Powerpoint presentations and worksheets to TAs, then **modeled** the first of each of their sections.

Introduce content



Model first session



Assist TA during second session

For the training sessions during the second and third semesters, we created an **active learning environment**. Specifically, we treated TAs as undergraduates so that they could **experience** the classes. Additionally, we **omitted the modeling component** and assisted TAs in both sections.

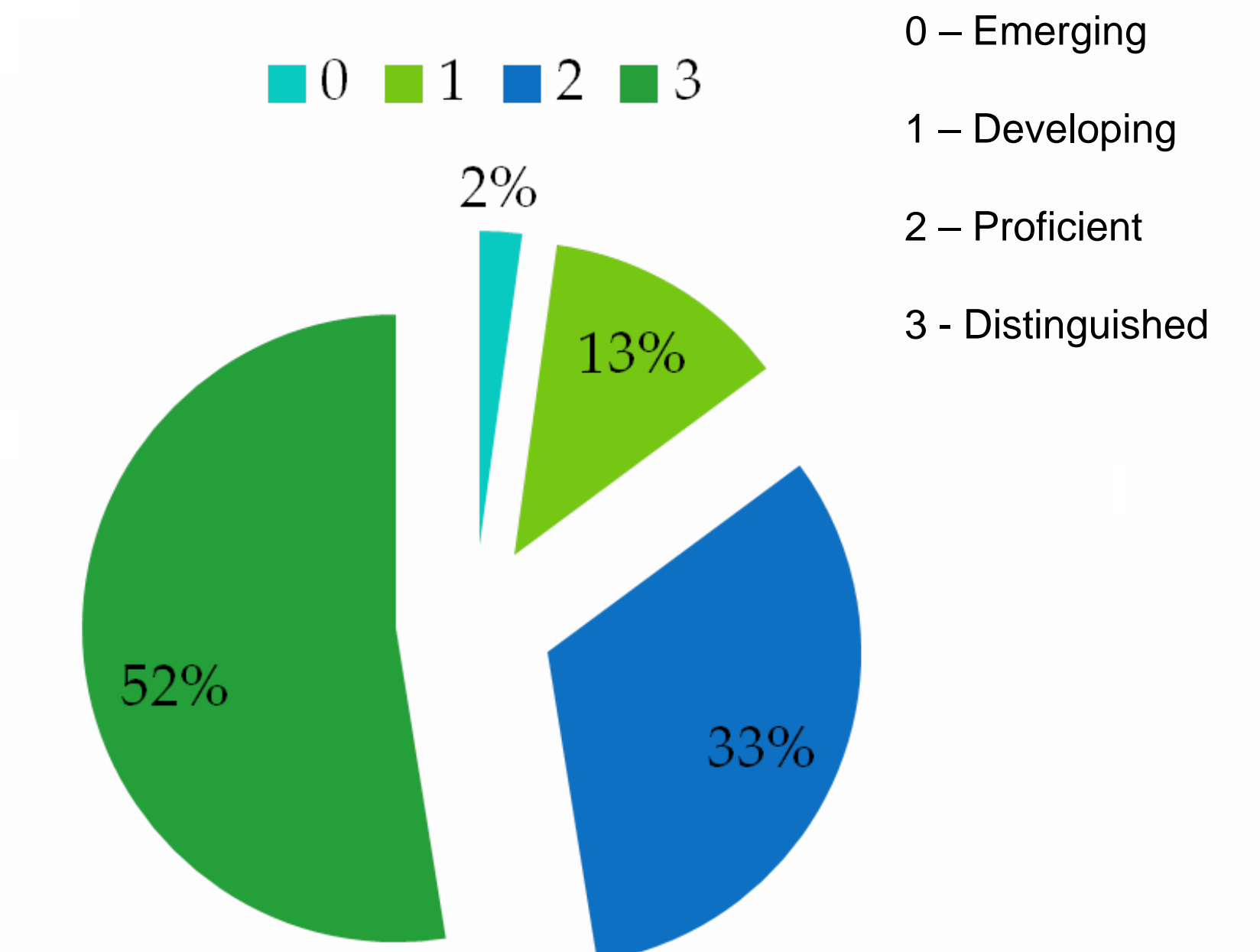
Introduce content via active learning



Assist TA during both sessions

Assessment

BIO 155 Fall 2013 Scores



We used UK Libraries' rubric with normed paired scoring to assess student artifacts on UK Information Literacy Learning Outcome 2:

Students will be able to construct an effective research strategy in order to identify a variety of relevant information sources.

What We Learned

Benefits of the Train-the-Trainer Model

- Effective way to create a new, sustainable information literacy program!
- Reach >500 students each semester without associated increase in staff
- Broaden audience (students *and* trainers)

Active Learning Techniques in Training

- Better understanding of the material
- Better understanding of student needs

Things to Bear in Mind

- Scheduling can be a challenge!
- Approach faculty with specific ideas
- Be open to compromise
- Trainers will have different levels of comfort and understanding of material

Acknowledgments

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