The New Era of Academic Mentoring

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Dr. Brenda Nelson-Porter, Doctoral Consultant, Mentor, and Subject Matter Expert (SME)

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Importance of Information Literacy for Doctoral Candidates

While searching the Internet using specific search criteria, research related to information literacy (IL) applied to doctoral level learning was extracted for analysis (Boote & Beil, 2005; Franklin, 2005; Powel, 2008). Information literacy initially involves recognizing and defining the need for specific knowledge and searching the Internet and databases (e.g., corporate or academic) for primary and secondary sources to obtain the knowledge. After organizing sources, researchers seek to gain an understanding of the information presented within the selected sources and evaluate the information to relay the findings to readers (Franklin, 2005; Powel, 2008).

Doctoral-level works require searching for an abundance of data and synthesizing findings to communicate arguments to support a particular knowledge claim (Boote & Beil, 2005). Many of the Literature Review sections of doctoral dissertations, however, do not reflect the abundance of literature on a particular topic (Boote & Beil, 2005). Integrating IL into the doctoral-level courses may help learners become familiar with locating,

A Visionary Mentor
105 Wilson Circle
Newnan, GA 30263
770-251-6765

applying, and assessing information, which are essential to prepare the literature review and communicate findings (Boote & Beil, 2005; Franklin, 2005).

Integrating IL into the advanced doctoral-level courses may give doctoral candidates insight on the roles of faculty mentors who assist with curriculum development (i.e., subject matter expert [SME]; Franklin, 2005). As a SME, articles that may assist the learners with completing an activity, however, are not identified in the syllabus and only display the abstract section are emailed to each doctoral learner suggesting to obtain the article through the Interlibrary loan system offered at Northcentral University (NCU, n.d.). Candidates may become aware how collaboration with the librarian is essential for the development of the tools that are used to prepare the doctoral learners for the candidacy role (Franklin, 2005). In relation to the courses designed and taught by the mentor, candidates are asked to evaluate and justify arguments found in the literature, whereby learners are informed constantly to obtain from the online library offered at NCU.

To ensure that doctoral learners and candidates are properly prepared during the duration in the program and for the industry is the responsibility of the education scholar (i.e., the academic mentor or visionary mentor). The nature surrounding completing the dissertation projects, with more focus on the literature review, should be a means whereby candidates apply the concept of IL to establish the fundamentals of finding, applying, and evaluating literature (Boote & Beil, 2005). Deploying IL in course activities may further

help doctoral learners and candidates gain a better understanding how the process is

positively associated with advanced career opportunities, such as becoming a SME or a

research scientist (Franklin, 2005).

References

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