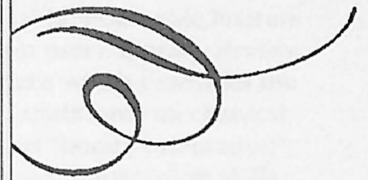# THE INSTRUCTIONAL MENU

by Marsha Miller

Esther Grassian's and Joan Kaplowitz's wonderful text, *Information Literacy Instruction: Theory and Practice*, devotes a chapter to the "Instructional Menu", referring to the many 'modes' we use to try to get 'information literacy' across. Chapter nine highlights the pros and cons of the instructional modes included. But, how often do instruction librarians tie the mode to the type of activity, either consciously or subliminally? Since information literacy is not done in a vacuum, usually the purpose of putting information literacy skills to use is because the person has a goal in mind. In academia, that goal is usually an assignment. Most often informa-

tion literacy instruction is tied to that traditional, and tired, manifestation, the 'research paper.' But we know that there are many different sorts of assignments, some because of the academic discipline, some because of the level of student, and some because a teacher and a librarian have worked together to format a new assignment. The instructional menu below has grown in the years since the Grassian/Kaplowitz text have been published. The author of this article began a conscious effort to identify as many research/writing, etc. activities as she could. The result has been fun. See what you can do with this list. If you can think of other items to include in either column, please let the author know!

Instructional Menu	Type of Activity We're Supporting
1. Signage: the Printing instructions	1. General orientation information
2. Self-guided tours: ours	2. Simple signage
3. Chalkboard/Whiteboard/Smartboard	3. Basic skills [purely library or computer/technology too?]
4. Flip charts	4. Types of academic writing:
5. Posters	a) Information writing assignment
6. PowerPoints	b) 'Extended' assignment
7. Videotapes [Passé? Retro?]	c) Case study
8. Just audio? aka MP3-type recordings	d) Review
9. 'Just' a Handout	e) Technical report
10. Point of use: legal research/legal abbreviations	f) Lab report
11. Pathfinders	g) Book report
12. Exercises	h) Critical analysis/critique
13. Tutorials	i) Bibliography
14. Concept Maps	j) Annotated bibliography
15. Course Management Systems; e.g. Blackboard/WebCT; OnCourse (a product used at Indiana University)	k) Literature review
	l) Term paper
16. Formal courses	m) Research paper
17. Discussion boards & chat [do they really work?]	a. Short
18. Web sites	b. Argumentative
19. Streaming media examples	n) Position/opinion paper
20. Blogs, RSS feeds	o) Essay
21. Portal Channels	a. Definitional essay
22. Podcasting; screencasting; vidcasting	b. expository
23. Learning Objects	p) Subject outline
24. Digital learning materials [DLMs]: no physical format; include all types of textual and audiovisual file types such as HTML Script, Flash, JavaScript, AVI, WMV, MP3, WAV, JPEG, TIFF, and more	q) Statistical summary
	r) Senior thesis
	s) Grant writing
	t) E-mail
	u) Web writing
	v) Oral presentation of written report
	w) PowerPoint presentation [yes, this is academic 'writing', too!]
	x) Historical research [primary & secondary sources]
	y) Midterm/final exam essay
	z) Resume & other 'business' writing
	aa) Experiential Learning support
	bb) Service Learning support
	5. Independent study/Lifelong learning
	6. Other?

REFERENCES

Grassian, E. & Kaplowitz, J. (2001) Information literacy instruction: theory and practice. New York: Neal-Schuman.