

## Cohort 6 – Report

<b>Section Header</b>	<b>Description</b>
CARLI Counts Participant	Gavena Dahlman, Director of Library Services, Richland Community College
Project Name/Title	Investigating Whether Pre-Class Information Literacy Orientations Improve Community College Student Understanding
Single Sentence Abstract	This study examined incoming students' baseline information-literacy knowledge and evaluated whether a Canvas module, featuring an overview and examples of the five components of information literacy, along with pre- and posttests, could strengthen their skills prior to beginning classes.
Motivation(s) for Project	In the 2024-2026 Strategic Plan in Goal 1 Transform teaching and learning to improve academic excellence: Has 3 implementation strategies, including one to increase faculty participation in information literacy instruction. One of the implementation strategies to create Canvas modules that can be embedded into classes. I am hopeful that the module in the new student orientation, will help create a more of an even starting ground and give some data to show how even basic information can help improve students' information literacy skills.
Partners and Stakeholders	Gavena Dahlman – Director of Library Services & Librarian Jarry Brown – Director, Teaching & Learning Center Anna Shapland – Director, Teaching & Learning Center (after J. Brown left)
Inquiry Question	What is the impact of a Canvas Information Literacy Module on new RCC students' basic understanding of Information Literacy?
Study Participants/Population	All new students entering Richland Community College
Method(s) of Data Collection and Analysis	Using the survey method, a pre-test with multiple choice answers, will be given, then the student will work through a module with discussion and examples of the 5 components of good information literacy skills. When the module is completed, the student will take a post-test. Both the pre-test and post-test will have the same questions. The module will be part of an overall RCC orientation in Canvas that all new students are required

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	<p>to complete. Each section of the orientation must be completed before moving forward to the next. At the end of the Orientation open time period, we will collect the data from the Library Information Literacy Module only. We will compare the pre-test and post-test scores to determine if there is any change in their understanding of the skills discussed.</p> <p>Because we have strong Dual Credit and Prep Academy programs, there will be many underage students participating. Although they are considered “adults” at RCC our IR specialist felt that not gathering demographic information would be best.</p>
Findings	<p>There are no findings yet, as the Canvas module is not scheduled for inclusion in new-student orientation until the Fall 2026 semester.</p>
Use of Findings	<p>NA</p>
Next Steps and Other Results	<p>Due to a change in institutional plans, the module originally scheduled for inclusion in the Spring 2026 new-student orientation has been postponed to the Fall 2026 semester. In the meantime, I will collaborate with key faculty to embed the module into their courses, allowing for a meaningful test-run to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement before it is fully implemented in orientation.</p> <p>This project has been an enormous learning experience, far more than I can easily summarize. Before this project, I had no idea how to even begin work of this kind, so nearly every step involved learning something new. One of the most impactful lessons from CARLI Counts was understanding that setbacks are a normal part of the process. When I returned from medical leave and learned that my project had been removed from the Spring 2026 orientation due to time constraints, I might previously have assumed the project was no longer viable. However, CARLI Counts taught me how to pivot, adapt, and respond to changing needs. Instead of abandoning the work, I reframed the delay as an opportunity to refine the module, conduct testing, and focus on what will make the implementation successful next semester.</p>
Additional Reflections	<p>The project itself is straightforward. The Canvas module is intentionally simple and designed to take only 25–30 minutes to complete. Its purpose is not to serve as students’ sole exposure to information literacy, but rather to provide a general snapshot of incoming students’ baseline understanding while offering a brief introductory overview. This structure</p>

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	also supplies faculty with insight into what new students have previously encountered. The module was created with flexibility in mind and can be broken into separate, more in-depth components for classroom use.
Timeline	The first five months of the project were devoted to developing the module, which became the most time-consuming phase due to several restarts prompted by shifting needs. During this period, I consulted with Institutional Research and received valuable guidance on aligning the project more closely with institutional priorities. This proved essential; once I incorporated a strategic-plan goal, the project gained strong support from colleagues, ultimately leading to an invitation to include the completed module in new-student orientation. Although we experienced a setback one year into the project when the module was not included in the Spring 2026 orientation, it is now scheduled for implementation in Fall 2026. In the coming months, I will use this additional time to embed the module into selected courses within Canvas and analyze the resulting data as a test run, allowing me to refine and strengthen the project before its full launch.
Bibliography/Works Cited	PDF Attached
Appendices	PDF Attached

Note: Submit report as a single PDF to Michelle Haake ([mjhuls@uillinois.edu](mailto:mjhuls@uillinois.edu)) and cc Lisa Hinchliffe ([ljanicke@uillinois.edu](mailto:ljanicke@uillinois.edu)) by February 1, 2026.