

Measurable Goals

By the end of this session, students should:

- 1. Understand the similarities and differences between theory-based and practice-based curriculum and education in LIS.**
- 2. Be able to relate LIS curriculum to the skills and knowledge required in library and information work settings.**
- 3. Be conscious of their place, as potential LIS educators, on the continuum of theory- and practice-based approaches to education and curriculum, as well as the context of their place.**
- 4. Be able to reflect upon, debate, and critically assess strategies for spanning and integrating these approaches into LIS curricula in general and individual courses or seminars in particular.**

How measurable?

- 1. Through class discussion; have students grasped these two approaches and the continuum that exists between them?*
- 2. Through class discussion of the Blankson-Hemans article and outcomes of Activity #1*
- 3. Measurable through participation and engagement levels in and outcomes of Activity #2, as well as discussion of the three articles (especially Audunson)*
- 4. Measurable through level of debate in class discussion, presence of critical thinking and reflection upon discussion and the Ponti article*

Rough Schedule

2:00	Introductory discussion: Theory-based and practice-based curriculum Prompts: What are they? How are they similar? Different? Polar opposites? Degrees of difference? Continuum?
2:10	Discussion of Blankson-Hemans and Hibberd (2004) Findings, recommendations, etc.
2:20	Activity #1: Relating Curricula and Practice 2:20-2:35 group time 2:35-3:00 group "presentations" and discussion
3:00	Discussion of Audunson (2007) His views, opinions, beliefs on LIS education and curricula, particularly in relation to theory, practice, and the continuum between them
3:10	Initial presentation of Activity #2: The Theory-Practice Educational Continuum: Finding Your Place
3:15	Break (<i>with students thinking about activity #2</i>)
3:25	Activity #2: The Theory-Practice Educational Continuum: Finding Your Place 3:25-3:40 individual phase 3:40-3:50 paired phase 3:50-4:10 pair "presentations" and discussion 4:10-4:15 wrap-up discussion
4:15	Discussion, reflection, debate on strategies Strategies for spanning and integrating approaches into LIS education in general, individual courses or seminars in particular. (Including Ponti article)
4:45	End of class

Activity #1: Relating Curricula and Practice

Intro: As seen particularly in the Blankson-Hemans and Hibberd article, it is important for LIS curricula to reflect the skills and knowledge that are required of graduates. As we have discussed, the authors found some potential reasons that curricula do not always match well, including that there is not enough guidance of students in gaining skills and that knowledge and accreditation are not always in sync with the required professional skills. They also found a lack of business and management-oriented courses and a lack of entrepreneurial-based training in LIS programs, skills critical for many non-traditional information jobs (and indeed in many library jobs as well). While you may agree or disagree with their recommendations, their article does stress the importance of relating the LIS curriculum to the skills and knowledge required by employers.

Instructions

- Students will form groups of two or three (3 groups total, one group will have three members)
- Instructor will distribute one job ad to each group (semi-randomly, there are five so two will not be discussed)
- Groups will review one job ad in each group to identify
 - Skills and knowledge **explicitly** required, suggested/recommended
 - Skills and knowledge **tacitly** required, suggested/recommended
- Groups will consider how (and if) these can be taught and fulfilled via LIS curriculum and coursework
- **Timing:**
 - **15 minutes** in groups
 - Each group then discusses its job ad and relation to curricula with class for about **5-10** minutes each
 - Activity total: **about 40 minutes**

Activity #2: The Theory-Practice Educational Continuum: Finding Your Place

Intro: If you currently TA, or have previously, you are already an LIS educator! Even if you have no TA or teaching experience, there is a good chance you will fulfill an educational role in an area covered by LIS curricula in the not-too-distant future. As such, it is important that you consider what you see as your own personal approach to LIS education. Do you feel that it is most important for students to learn the theory of library and information work, then apply it once they graduate and find employment? Or is practical, hands-on work the most important experience for students in their degree? Do you teach LIS as a vocation, a profession, or a discipline? Or all three? In this activity you will consider these questions and your place as an educator in the field, and how that might relate to your conception of LIS curriculum.

Instructions

- Instructor will give first two steps of instructions below (on individual phase) prior to break, to get students thinking over the break period.

Stage 1: Individual Exploration

- What competencies and/or goals do you believe students should achieve during their time in an LIS program? Why are these important to you? You should focus your thoughts on general competencies, but may consider those that apply within a specialization as well. An exhaustive list is not necessary; two to four competencies is enough for this activity.

7.5 minutes

- Think how you might, as an educator, have students achieve your competencies and goals. Write down your thoughts. Why would you choose one approach to achieving a competency over another?

7.5 minutes

Stage 2: Paired Discussion

- Pair up with a classmate and discuss your answers. What similar competencies and goals do you share? What differences are there in your beliefs? How and why are your curricula approaches similar or different? How do your approaches relate to the theory- and practice-based continuum and the articles we read?

10 minutes

Should be three pairs total, one may be a group of 3

- Discuss with the class your competencies, curricula, and findings during your paired discussion.

20 minutes (about 5 minutes per pair)

- **Total activity time: 45-50 minutes** (including wrap-up discussion leading into strategies discussion and debate)