

How to Enhance Information Literacy for Asian Studies Students: Surveying UBC Asian Library’s Instructional Materials Using the ACRL Framework

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Introduction

UBC Asian Library is in the process of formalizing an educational program which identifies information literacy as a core component for library instruction. Based on a governance document and adaptation of the *ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* (the Framework) developed by Grace Park (personal communication, 2025), former Student Librarian, this project maps instructional materials created by five subject librarians for Asian Studies courses to the Framework, with the goals to identify existing gaps in practice and inform communication with UBC Asian Studies faculty in order to improve instruction that meets the needs of the students.

Method

The Framework was adapted locally into a tiered format, tracing novice to expert progression based on educational levels. Moreover, a more concise skill-tracing matrix is developed with a focus on research skills and research values for Asian Studies students. Using these two documents, I created a codebook to analyze the instructional presentations based on these six concepts: **Authority Is Constructed and Contextual**, **Information Creation as a Process**, **Information Has Value**, **Research as Inquiry**, **Scholarship as Conversation**, **Searching as Strategic Exploration**. Each presentation was examined at the slide level to reveal relevant concepts introduced in the context of an instructional session.

Codebook

The following table shows the codes and their example topics.

Authority Is Constructed and Contextual (AICC)	Information Creation as a Process (ICaP)	Information Has Value (IHV)	Research as Inquiry (RaI)	Scholarship as Conversation (SaC)	Searching as Strategic Exploration (SaSE)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and assess different types of resources Identify and assess scholarly resources Discussion on credibility and authority Plagiarism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiate scholarly formats, elements, and creation processes Discussion on reliability and bias Knowledge production and dissemination in Asian Studies (notable journals, scholars, schools, and schools of thought) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English and non-English source citations Ethics and academic integrity surrounding citation practice Copyright and intellectual property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research scope Research methods, processes, and ethics Locate trends, topics, and scholarly works in different spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion on positionality Citation through the lens of scholarly conversation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intro to library resources (physical and online collections, librarian support) Boolean search strategy in databases Romanization and its impact on searching

Analysis


Mapping Instructional Slides to the Framework

Below shows an example of applying the codebook to a slide from the presentation “Introduction to Asian Library for Incoming Master’s Students” where the targeted concepts are recorded. A total of 14 presentations were analyzed at this stage.


Overview of Asian Library | Physical Collections

Language Collections Housed at Asian Library

- Chinese
- Hindi
- Japanese
- Korean
- Nepali
- Persian
- Punjabi
- Sanskrit
- Tibetan
- Urdu



S. Eshghi Furuzawa, personal communication, 2025.

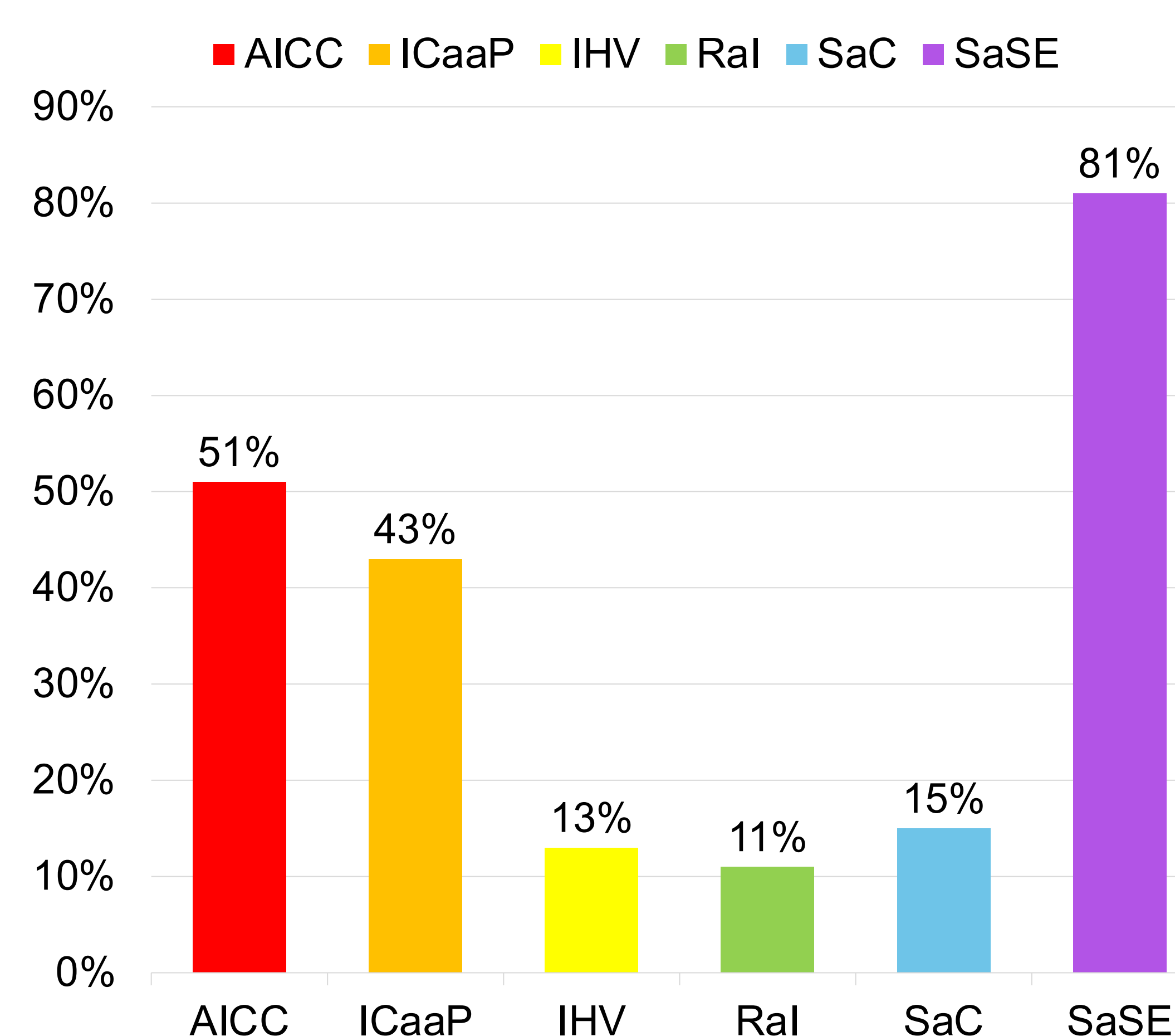


AICC	ICaP	IHV	RaI	SaC	SaSE
✓					✓

Figure 1

Percentage of Slides Addressing Each Concept of the Framework

The analysis focuses on slide content that is addressing information literacy. At the slide level, title pages, agenda lists, land acknowledgements, and activities are scoped out from the assessment.



Findings

- Instructional materials have a higher concentration on **Searching as Strategic Exploration** (81%) and **Authority Is Constructed and Contextual** (51%), showing the focus on teaching the use of library and the evaluation of sources
- Romanization, citation, and bias are common topics among instructional sessions across course levels, types, and languages, reflecting Asian Studies students’ needs to navigate the differences in knowledge production and transmission between the English-speaking context and their own research areas
- Information Has Value**, **Research as Inquiry**, and **Scholarship as Conversation** are less in focus, often introduced when teaching about citations

Discussion

These preliminary findings are drawn from a small sample size, without accounting for factors such as session purpose and format when sampling. Recognizing these limitations, the project highlights the common concepts addressed by Asian Library’s instruction and considerations to expand on concept introductions. As the Framework was adapted into a tiered format with an attempt to introduce information literacy progression based on educational level, this project finds it challenging to assess whether the level of knowledge introduced aligns with the skills required in a given grade level. In all, this initial survey provides a systematic understanding of current practices that can be utilized to enhance support for Asian Studies students.

References

Association of College Research Libraries (ACRL). (2016, January 11). *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*. <https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/iframework>

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