

Special issue – the Creating Knowledge VI conference

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EDITORIAL

This Special Issue emerges from the [Creating Knowledge VI conference](#) held in Bergen, Norway 8-10 September 2010. It contains abstracts and links to videos from the invited keynote speakers, abstracts from the workshop facilitators, as well as summaries of other posters and papers presented there.

A year has already passed since the Creating Knowledge VI conference took place. The conference committee received much interesting feedback from those participants (55 % response rate) who handed in the feedback form. The majority of respondents were positive about the content, the framework, the hospitality, the organisers, the city, and even the weather! And they also contributed several welcome suggestions for improvement.

The conference was titled “Information Literacy and Diversity in Higher Education. Mapping the Learning Environment”. Its main topics were the challenges posed by diversity and the creation of effective learning environments. Higher education institutions are characterised by increased diversity, with a growing emphasis on internationalisation and interdisciplinarity in research and teaching. Students not only represent different social, ethnic and cultural backgrounds: there is also a great diversity in their ages, their motivation for learning and their educational needs. Fresh models of teaching and learning are needed in response to this diversity. This situation involves both possibilities and challenges for academic institutions as they embark on planning and re-developing their learning environments.

The first keynote speech was a short address by Ralph Catts ([video](#)), Vidar Gynnild ([video](#)) and Bill Johnston ([video](#)) on “Teaching and learning in higher education in regard to information literacy and diversity”. In the following panel discussion, which also included questions and comments from the audience, the conference topic was debated from a number of angles ([video](#)). The next presenter was Kari Smith, and in her keynote speech she analysed existing research in language and assessment to discuss challenges posed by diversity ([video](#)). Erda Lapp’s keynote presented LOTSE, a national German information literacy online tutorial ([video](#)). Maurice Mittelmark shared useful advice for both authors and journal editors in his presentation “Getting your paper published with minimum sweat and tears” ([video](#)). Finally,

Andrew Whitworth's contribution centred upon the three domains of value, and why IL practitioners must take a holistic approach ([video](#)).

The invited workshop facilitators were asked to focus, respectively, on transliteracy as the latest stage of the literacy continuum (Susie Andretta); mapping staff competencies for information literacy interventions (Sheila Corral); evaluation and assessment in information literacy and the WASSAIL tool (Nancy Goebel); and IL, diversity and the role of reflection in creating knowledge (Thomas E.Vibjerg Hansen).

The conference called for proposals regarding

1. Diversity, Information Literacy and Assessment
2. Diversity, Information Literacy and Academic Writing Across the Curriculum
3. Diversity, Information Literacy and Educational Tools
4. Diversity, Information Literacy and Postgraduate Students

The accepted poster presentations embraced the topics of information literacy (IL) in the Chez Republic (Dohnalkova, Chez Republic); Google Wave and learning possibilities (Gasparini, Norway); graduate IL module (Sweeny, Conrick, Bradfield & MacNaughton, Ireland); and the issue of developing diverse learners' conception of IL through different tools and spaces (Webber, UK).

The accepted papers also dealt with diversity and information literacy (IL) in higher education, and all of the thematic perspectives from the conference topics were represented. As in the poster presentations, diversity was also represented in the presenters' home countries.

From the south, Akiteng & Musoke presented an African voice and the IL initiatives at Makerere University Library. One of the local Bergen contributions was Austrheim presenting the blogs in [Search & Write](#) as tool for librarians when relating to students learning processes. Other Norwegians were Skofsrud & Eng who had examined the issue of plagiarism from a student perspective: their conclusion endorsed collaboration between academics, faculty and library to meet the students' challenges regarding preventing plagiarism. Hyldegård presented a case study of the Danish Google generation's information behaviour, and while many negative myths are confirmed in her study, she did find that her subjects knew something about the *what* but less about the *how* of optimal information-gathering. One of the contributions from Finland was Kakkonen & Virrankoski who shared their experiences from successful teacher-librarian collaboration in an IL project. Kähre from Sweden discussed different models of artificial intelligence, how knowledge is created and who creates knowledge; and how this relates to the social media. The other local Bergen voices were Mikki & Cutler who presented publishing literacy for academics and discussed the role of the library. Another Swedish contribution was Nyaas & Söld who presented the Borås model of collaboration for development of students' IL. Oliveira from Brazil discussed the consequences that the information society had on intellectual property, and why an information specialist should be concerned about this. The next Finnish voice was Palmgren & Heino who presented and shared their experiences from the "Tools for Master's Thesis" course. From Italy came Ravagni, who discussed findings from her research about the web as an information source from the students' point of view. Spiranec & Zorica from Croatia claimed that changing anatomies of IL should lead to refinements of models and shifts in assessment at the postgraduate level. The Estonian contribution was Virkus who presented and discussed her findings of the development of information related competencies in European open and distance learning institutions.

The one-year postponement of this Special Issue has been unfortunate: not least since the editors believe that the topics raised here remain vital and current ones. We must keep addressing the challenges posed by the changing needs of our higher educational institutions.

Finally, therefore, the NORIL editors strongly encourage the NordInfoLit's steering committee to contribute to the arrangement of the highly successful Creating Knowledge Conference every second year in one of the Nordic countries.