The Core Competency Standards

I. Define the research problem and the need for information by:
   a. Articulating a research question, problem, issue or information need.
   b. Becoming familiar with key concepts and terminology related to their research need by obtaining background information.
   c. Defining a manageable focus and timeline for completing their research need.
   d. Identifying the types and formats of materials that can be used for research (books, journals, government documents, media, e-resources, websites, etc.).

II. Construct effective search strategies appropriate for an information need by:
   a. Differentiating among the types of available tools at North Carolina A&T State University (specialized encyclopedias, article databases, citation indexes, bibliographies, library catalogs, search engines, etc.) and the value of each.
   b. Formulating synonyms and related terms for accessing the various information retrieval systems.
   c. Choosing terms suitable to the selected information retrieval system to gain access.
   d. Reviewing successes and failures, revising research strategies, and attempting different techniques and retrieval systems as needed.

III. Locate and retrieve information by:
   a. Utilizing the information retrieval systems suitable for their information need.
   b. Interpreting the components of a library record or citation accurately.
   c. Recognizing key elements such as call numbers, URLs, database icons to physically locate library materials.

IV. Evaluate information by:
   a. Distinguishing between reliable and unreliable sources of information.
   b. Investigating the authority, accuracy, timeliness and completeness of the information retrieved.
   c. Determining whether the information retrieved is relevant and sufficient for their information need.

V. Organize, synthesize, and communicate information by:
   a. Managing the information selected and the research materials consulted.
   b. Integrating new and prior information from a variety of sources appropriate to the project (presentation, paper, or product).
   c. Communicating the project (presentation, paper, or product) effectively to others.

VI. Apply principles consistent with the ethical and legal uses of information by:
   a. Complying with institutional policies regarding intellectual property, plagiarism, and fair use of copyrighted materials.
   b. Acknowledging sources appropriately.
   c. Creating accurate bibliography or reference page using a consistent citation style.

References:
