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Instruction @ the URI Libraries - January 2015

Mary C. MacDonald
University of Rhode Island, marymac@uri.edu

Amanda Izenstark
University of Rhode Island, amanda@uri.edu

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Part of the Information Literacy Commons

Help Us Help You Help Your Students!
Questions we use to help plan instruction for your students

The Libraries are busily scheduling spring semester information literacy and library instruction classes!

To assist instructors in thinking about what their students really need to learn in the library session, and to help librarians plan effective and efficient information literacy lessons for students, we've developed a list of questions that will guide the planning conversation you'll have with the librarian who will be teaching your students.

Whether you are a new instructor with a new assignment, a returning instructor who has brought their class to the library before but now has a new assignment, and even if you've worked with a librarian before and have used the same assignment for years -- we'd like to engage you in conversation about the desired results of the information literacy session your students will experience.

Many library instruction sessions are only one class visit in length, so it's important to make every minute count. The idea is to focus on teaching transferable information research skills that students can use again and again. So, beyond the usual logistical questions - time, day, syllabus, student learning outcomes, specific assignment information and so forth - we'll be asking faculty to share with us their specific goals for each session.

If you are interested in scheduling an instruction session for your students, please contact your subject selector (contact information is available at http://web.uri.edu/library/selectors/) or Mary MacDonald, Head of Instruction, at marymac@uri.edu or 401-874-4635.

Here is a sampling of questions you might consider when you plan your next session:

- **What should students be able to know or do at the end of the information literacy instruction session?**

- **What do you think your students already know about research in your discipline, and how can we build on that?**

- **How did it go last time: what worked and what didn't work? Did the previous class meet your learning outcomes?**

- **Will students have an opportunity to practice their skills shortly after the session?**

Google Scholar vs Library Databases

In many classes and personal interactions, URI librarians hear some version of this question: "What about Google Scholar?" Google Scholar's ease of use and clean design makes it an appealing research tool. Unfortunately, it is not the comprehensive source it seems to be.

First, not everything in Google Scholar is scholarly. Google Scholar broadly searches for items that *appear* to be scholarly, which includes legitimate scholarly articles but also finds items in universities' institutional repositories, which may include undergraduate research projects and archived materials that have not been reviewed by outside scholars.

Google Scholar can also miss important reports, book chapters, and highly relevant professional publications because they do not classify as "scholarly."

Finally, Google Scholar does not provide information about the breadth and depth of indexing it provides, while library databases make information about sources and dates of coverage readily available. That said, Google Scholar can be useful when used in conjunction with more comprehensive and transparent library databases, especially when it's linked to the University Libraries' online journals. For details on accessing this feature, see our Google Tips & Tricks guide at http://uri.libguides.com/google.

By the Numbers

In Fall 2014…
Over 1,700 URI 101 students in 118 classes learned about Library resources.

Over 1,200 students in 55 WRT 104 and 106 classes came to the library for an introduction to finding articles.

EGR 105 included 3 lectures and 16 lab classes for 530 students.

Subject-specific classes were provided for undergraduate students in ARH, AAF, ENG, HIS, CVE, HLT, MUS, NUR, PSC, PSY, and WRT; and for Graduate students in CHM, EEC, ENG, LSC, and NUR.

Related Updates
Changes coming to the library catalog

The URI Libraries have selected a new catalog and will be working to implement it over the coming months. The new catalog will provide improved access to URI's physical and online collections and support the research needs of the University community. While an exact launch date is still not yet determined, updates about the new catalog will be distributed via email, the Libraries' website, and social media.

Search Savvy Seminars for Spring 2015 scheduled - spread the word!

Learn how to use Google Drive for research and writing, formulate search strategies for databases and search engines, use Google's advanced features, and track the use of your research by other researchers. Sessions are open to all. See the full schedule at http://web.uri.edu/library/2015/01/13/spring-2015-search-savvy-seminars/.