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Embedding Information Literacy Skills in Undergraduate Research Studies

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Embedding Information Literacy Skills in Undergraduate Research Studies

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Introduction
At the beginning of this research studies worked with both the teacher and the librarian to identify an educational problem that was important personally.

The purpose of our Information Literacy classes was to engage students in scholarly work and teach them basic concepts:

1. To scaffold their thinking process using the scientific method
2. To assist them in describing their own research

Engaged Learning is both a process and a product involving students and faculty. This refers to building meaning around a researchable topic and teaching students how to develop focused research that includes academic literature, using full-text, peer-reviewed articles.

The goal is to describe the steps and have students apply each step, building their research work in stages. In this process we developed a roadmap for students.

Methods
Students need to:
• Acquire academic and information literacy skills
• Demonstrate how to navigate the databases using keywords, subject headings, and limits
• Create a conceptual overview of the topic while expanding their schema
• Organize sources accurately and avoid plagiarism
• Apply hands on training and instruction in a computer lab with access to databases and RefWorks

Instructional Process
Steps in Developing a Topic into a Viable Research Focus
Building a Review of the Literature:
• Start with a topic. Consider this topic as a starting point.
• Look at the references at the end of the article to lead to knowing how to locate research articles in professional journals
• Look at a topic, focus in describing it specifically,
• Look at articles. Within articles, examine subject headings to lead to new articles.
• Look at the references at the end of the article to lead to deeper research and further exploration
• Examine multiple databases
• Gather, review, and select articles to further develop the research focus

Explore reliable websites such as government statistics and educational/university sites.
• Use site: .GOV or .edu for this purpose
• Internet exploration makes it seem simple for students to locate what they may believe is credible information on a research question. However, they may locate specific information that limits their view of the scope of their research question especially in regards to bias. Setting the research question in historical context is another step in getting the students to step back from their topic and use it in perspective.

Basic Skill Set:
1. Knowing how to use search terms to focus on one’s topic
2. Knowing how to navigate in searching for information
3. Knowing how to use the university’s library’s website to find books and databases
4. Understanding how to search the databases themselves
   • Knowing how to locate research articles in professional journals
   • Learning to identify poorly researched articles in books and journals
5. Learning how to evaluate the authority and the effectiveness of the evidence in light of one’s research focus

Strategies:
• Form a well-stated thesis statement
• Identify your topic
• Use subject headings
• Unlike wikipedia for keywords. ONLY
• Use scholarly peer-reviewed articles
• Find primary sources such as studies
• Observe the context, objectivity, bias and date published
• Critically analyze and evaluate information retrieved
• Understand and look at the LibGuide produced by the library
• Know your limits and ask for assistance as needed
• Create a precise bibliography using RefWorks
• Utilize an annotated bibliography for literature review
• Understand the nuances and methods for using reliable websites
• Locate a professional organization that pertains to your topic and pursue the website, journal, professional conferences and workshops for information pertaining to the research

References
For information on the Dominican University of California, San Rafael, CA, visit at: http://mrsmyersblogs.wordpress.com/ and http://www.dreamstime.com/stock-image36045539

Acknowledgments
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Los Angeles, CA

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School of Education Students
Kathleen Martin "War on Terror"”

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