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Report on Implementation of an Instructional Plan “Research and Information Literacy” Funded through The Information Literacy Stipend

In the fall of 2013, I worked with *EFND 501 Educational Psychology* graduate course to develop and enhance graduate students’ research and information literacy skills as outlined in the document “Information Literacy Competency: Standards for Higher Education.” Standards and outcomes targeted in the project are provided in Appendix A. My instructional activities were aligned with the plan that I initially proposed.

1. I collaborated with the librarian Betsy Moylan regarding all components of the plan. In summer of 2013, we discussed assignments for the course, our plan for working with students during the fall semester, and course materials (pre- and post-instruction surveys, grading rubrics, and research reports (or res

5. I prepared and delivered two in-class presentations that communicated to students the process of preparing article reviews and a final (summative) research paper. The materials used for the presentations are enclosed in Appendix E.

Overall, I found the work on developing research and information literacy skills very beneficial. Perhaps, the best testimony of the effectiveness of this project is the students' feedback that I received in the post-instructional survey (Appendix B). In response to a request to provide some comments regarding their learning of preparing a research paper students wrote:

“I really enjoyed doing research. I find it to be an excellent method for learning material and a pleasant alternative to the traditional methods of learning. Likewise it is a nice reflection of the real world. I would defiantly recommend it for future classes.”

“The most beneficial part of my experience writing a research paper was the explicit

Appendix A

Table 1. Standards and related outcomes adopted from the “Information Literacy Competency: Standards for Higher Education” with reported assessments.

Standards (abridged)	Outcomes (abridged)	Assessments Results
Standard 1: Students determine the nature and extent of information needed.	Student: 1.a. identifies a research topic 1.b. develops a thesis statement 1.c. explores general information sources 1.d. modifies the information needed to achieve a manageable focus 2.c. defines a plan to acquire information 4. a. reviews the initial information for further clarification of the question.	

Appendix B

Pre- and Post-Instruction Survey Results Pertaining to Students' Progress towards Standards.

Table 2. Evidence of meeting Standard 1(Students determine the nature and extent of information needed) & Standard 2 (Students access information effectively and efficiently).

Question 1 **Pre-instruction survey:**
Didn't pose a question about

Question 3: **Pre-instruction
survey**
Did you receive prior

Responses to an open-ended survey question: post-instruction

Question: Provide some other comments about your experience of writing a research paper if you think they are important for the instructor to know (e.g., what you enjoy about the process, what parts of the process you find particularly challenging, and some other comments).

It was sometimes difficult finding a topic that was interesting to me. On the other hand, it was frustrating to have found a topic and to be unable to find literature about it. Nevertheless, I found writing these papers rewarding and highly beneficial in terms of gaining knowledge.

I really enjoyed doing research. I find it to be an excellent method for learning material and a pleasant alternative to the traditional methods of learning. Likewise, it is a nice reflection of the real world. I would defiantly recommend it for future classes.

Research papers are completely opposite from anything that I have ever written. However, I was comfortable with the transition into research papers, even actually enjoying it. I like summarizing and analyzing the articles, seeing how everything connects and plans out.

It would have been nice if we were explicitly told the expectations of the APA format prior to the first paper, rather than after. Or at the very least, an option to correct for some amount of points back. Researching was fine. I enjoy looking up relevant information for topics I'm interested in.

The most beneficial part of my experience writing a research paper was the explicit instruction we had before a review was due. The most helpful was the workshop we had for our final paper, which I also think will be the most challenging.

I think this was a great way to encourage us to explore areas we were personally interested in, not just the basics we covered in class.

I really enjoyed learning about the APA formatting, for some reason it was appealing to me.

Starting the article reviews was tough, but once I started the paper, it became enjoyable.

I gained more knowledge about issues in education. Improved my thinking ability and writing ability as well.

I like writing.

Group work was lots of fun.

Writing papers can be tedious, and so can looking up articles. Some topics were a lot easier to address than others, however, all in all, the effort put into the writing and research process was fair. It's not my favorite thing, but it could be a lot worse. Kudos.

Appendix C

Research Report

This report is a part of your assignment. As you work on your review, respond to these questions and provide details when necessary. Thank you!

- 1) What was your initial research ques

Final Paper

Directions for the assignment:

In this paper, students will present their summary of research on an independently identified topic. While previous research reviews were designed to help students develop in-depth expertise of a particular topic, the goal of the final paper is to develop the skill of presenting a synthesis of literature on a particular topic.

In introduction, students will introduce the reader to the problem and explain the reason for selecting the topic. In the main body of the paper, students will present the synthesis of existing research on a topic around 3 or 4 main ideas as identified in the articles reviewed. In conclusion, students will provide a succinct summary of the review and will reflect upon how studying the topic contributed to their professional growth.

The paper should be based upon analysis and synthesis of at least 7 to 9 resources. At least 4 of the resources should be articles not previously used for reviews or as required reading materials. For this paper, you may use one of your research papers as a starting point. Students' final paper should be 10-12 pages long and should include a cover page, an abstract, a reference page, and written in APA style (6th edition). The grading rubric is attached.

Grading Rubric for Final (Summative) Paper

Criteria	Gradation of quality and points assigned	Instructor's comments
Introduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No background information for the topic is presented - 0 2. Some background information is presented, but presentation is rather sketchy - 1 3. Detailed background information is presented - 2 <p>Total – 2 points</p>	
Research question	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research question is not stated - 0 2. Research question is not clearly stated – ½ 3. Research question is clearly formulated - 1 <p>Total – 1 point</p>	
Overarching ideas (themes) (at least 3 ideas)	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>For each overarching idea in your paper:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The idea (theme) is not clearly stated and no supporting sources are provided - 0 2. The idea (theme) is not clearly stated or no supporting or relevant sources are provided - 1 3. The idea (theme) is clearly stated and supporting and relevant sources are provided - 2 <p>Total (3 ideas): 6 points</p>	
Supporting details (quotes) to the identified ideas (themes)	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>For each overarching idea in your paper:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No supporting details (or quotes) - 0 2. No clear link between the identified ideas and supporting details (quotes) - 1 3. Supporting details are relevant - 2 <p>Total (3 ideas): 6 points</p>	
Flow of the report	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The report has some direction; many parts are lacking transitions and/or disjointed - 0 2. Most of the sections are tied together; some parts are lacking transition - ½ 3. All sections are tied together coherently - 1 <p>Total – 1 point</p>	
Conclusion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The conclusion is generic and is not tied back to the research question - 0 2. The conclusion is somewhat connected with the research question, but no or some reflection is provided – 1 3. The conclusion is connected with the research question and personal reflection is provided - 2 <p>Total – 2 point</p>	
Abstract	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The paper does not have an abstract - 0 2. The abstract fails to capture the essence of the review – ½ 3. The abstract concisely captures the essence of the review - 1 	

Appendix E

Guidelines for Preparing 1st Literature Review

What is the purpose?

- Develop expertise on a particular topic.
- Making sense of the body of research on a topic.

Categories of Literature

- Theoretical
- Research
- Practice
- Policy

Introduction

Why is the topic important?

Provide some background information that sets the paper in a larger context.

Why is it important to you?

You may provide some personal experience that led you to the topic.

Research Question

Research question - a **clear, focused, concise, complex and arguable** question around which you center your research. You should ask a question about an issue that you are genuinely curious about (Writing Center/George Mason University). <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/?p=30>

Body of your paper

Results as presented in study 1
Supporting details/quotes;

Results as presented in study 2;
Supporting details/quotes;

Results as presented in study 3
Supporting details/quotes.

Conclusion

Summarize how studies under investigation provided a response to your research question.

Or

Summarize how studies under investigation provided support to your thesis statement.

Connect with your personal experience (if you wish).

Reflect on significance of investigation to your professional/personal growth.

Resources

Aveyard, H. (2007). *Doing a literature review in health and social care: A practical guide*. (2nd Edition)/E-book.

Writing Center at George Mason University
Owl Lab

Guidelines for Preparing a Final Research Paper

Introduction

1. Think of your research question (or topic that you are intrigued in) and
2. Why this research question/topic is important.

Synthesis of Literature

1. Put together all articles that you found relevant to your research question/topic.
2. Sort available articles into groups: (a) literature review /discussion articles; (b) empirical investigations; (c) others.
3. For each group of articles establish important points:

Literature Reviews/Discussions	Empirical Investigations
<u>Article 1:</u> Discussion point 1 Discussion point 2 Discussion point 3	<u>Article 1:</u> Aim of the study Participants Method Results XXX XXX
<u>Article 2:</u> Discussion point 1 Discussion point 2 Discussion point 3	<u>Article 2:</u> Aim of the study Participants Method Results XXX XXX

4. Look for similarities across identified points and group similar points into themes.
5. Develop a list of themes (or overarching ideas).
The main body of your paper will be structured around these themes.
6. Provide some supporting examples (or quotes) for each theme.
Supporting examples should be illustrative, but should not present all the details about the study.
7. Identify points or findings that are unique and haven't been reported in majority of studies.

Conclusions:

1. State how your literature review provided a response to your research question.
2. State about some limitations (limited amount of studies being reviewed).
3. State how your findings fit a larger problem.
4. Reflect how the review informed you/shaped you as a future professional.