

HELPING UNDERGRADUATES CONDUCT SUCCESSFUL RESEARCH

Research comes easier to students when you have clearly stated expectations, provide time to research, incorporate progress checks along the way, and make students aware of library resources and help.

Elements of a successful library instruction session:

1. The instructor shows that the library and research are a priority.
 - a. The instructor is present at the session.
 - b. The instructor is engaged with the librarian and the content during the session.
 - c. The sessions are most effective when librarians have the whole time to cover the material and follow up with students during hands-on time at the terminals.
2. The students are focused and ready to work.
 - a. The students have been given the research assignment.
 - b. The students have at least some idea of their research topic, if not a thesis statement prepared.
3. The librarian is engaged with the students, focused and ready to work.
 - a. The librarian has been in communication with the instructor.
 - b. The librarian has a copy of the research assignment and where possible, student research topics.
 - c. The librarian demonstrates an enthusiasm for the research topic.
 - d. The librarian makes use of student research topics during the talk.
 - d. The librarian develops a rapport at the individual level with the students: the librarian is seen as a person who can help, rather than a “librarian.”
4. Other elements leading to a successful library session (sometimes out of the scope of control):
 - a. All of the technology is working.
 - b. The class size is manageable—20-30 students.
 - c. There is time for hands-on work to apply research principles.