2013

Assessment of Library Instruction on Undergraduate Student Success in a Documents-Based Research Course: The Benefits of Librarian, Archivist, and Faculty Collaboration

Paul Victor Jr.

Eastern Washington University, pvictor@ewu.edu

Justin Otto

Eastern Washington University, jotto@ewu.edu

Charles Mutschler

Eastern Washington University, cmutschler@ewu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.du.edu/collaborativelibrarianship>

Part of the [Information Literacy Commons](#), and the [Scholarly Communication Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Victor, Paul Jr.; Otto, Justin; and Mutschler, Charles (2013) "Assessment of Library Instruction on Undergraduate Student Success in a Documents-Based Research Course: The Benefits of Librarian, Archivist, and Faculty Collaboration," *Collaborative Librarianship*: Vol. 5 : Iss. 3 , Article 2.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29087/2013.5.3.04>

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.du.edu/collaborativelibrarianship/vol5/iss3/2>

This Scholarly Article is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ DU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Collaborative Librarianship by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ DU. For more information, please contact jennifer.cox@du.edu, dig-commons@du.edu.

Assessment of Library Instruction on Undergraduate Student Success in a Documents-Based Research Course: The Benefits of Librarian, Archivist, and Faculty Collaboration

Paul Victor Jr. (pvictor@ewu.edu)
Eastern Washington University

Justin Otto (jotto@ewu.edu)
Eastern Washington University

Charles Mutschler (cmutschler@ewu.edu)
Eastern Washington University

Abstract

This article discusses a successful collaboration between multiple subject specialist librarians, the University Archivist and a faculty member teaching an undergraduate course in documents-based social science research. This collaborative partnership allowed for each subject specialist to expose students to specific information literacy skills they needed to be successful in their class. The authors used pre- and post-assessments to gauge student comfort level in conducting library research, as well as a rubric to assess the annotated bibliography of a student's final research paper. The data from these assessment tools are analyzed and the results discussed. The data indicates that students benefited from the specialized instruction they received.

Keywords: Collaboration, Librarians, Faculty, Library Instruction, Information Literacy, Assessment, Archivists, Archives.

Introduction

The ability to identify and navigate relevant sources of information is a fundamental component of information literacy. In order for students to be successful in advanced research in the social sciences, literacy with information resources must extend beyond an understanding of indexing and abstracting databases to include a wide variety of resources in multiple formats, organized in a variety of ways. Information sources not usually included in introductory library instruction sessions, such as the university archives or government documents, can be valuable tools for more advanced and detailed research of social sciences topics. In many college and university libraries these topic specialties are the responsibility of different subject specialists. This article describes the development of an information literacy collaboration between subject specialist librarians, the University Archivist, and the instructor of CSBS 331, a

documents-based research course in the social sciences curriculum at Eastern Washington University (EWU). The History Librarian, Government Documents Librarian, and University Archivist each provided separate, subject-specific instruction sessions for the CSBS 331 course in multiple academic quarters. This project provided an opportunity for the archivist to participate in an expanded library instruction program. The librarians and archivist may benefit from learning and applying new techniques within their areas of expertise. The benefits of a greater understanding of the depth of research for upper level undergraduate classes may be one advantage students receive from this collaborative instructional process. The librarians and archivist also conducted an assessment of their collective contribution to student learning in the course, the results of which are analyzed and discussed.

Literature Review

Librarian-Faculty Collaboration for Information Literacy

Collaboration is an integral part of success in instruction and information literacy initiatives. The ACRL guidelines state that libraries need to enable librarians to “collaborate with faculty and other academic professionals in planning, implementing, and assessing information literacy programming...”¹ The ACRL best practices document echoes this same sentiment in category three (planning) that says a good information literacy program “Encourages librarian, faculty, and administrator collaboration...”² In fact, collaboration is important enough for ACRL to create an entire category for it within the Best Practices document. ACRL states that librarians need to collaborate with faculty, librarians, administrators and others to foster good communication, enhance student learning, and align information literacy outcomes with disciplinary content.³

Perhaps the most comprehensive coverage of academic librarians and faculty collaborating to improving student information literacy skills is Mounce’s nine-year review of the library literature.⁴ This article reviewed 133 journal articles and surveyed collaboration at 116 higher education institutions. Most of the articles reviewed are from the United States with a small amount of international articles (focusing mostly on English speaking countries). One point of interest to the Mounce study is that of the subject areas studied, social sciences had the highest collaboration rate (31%) between librarians and faculty.⁵ Therefore, the results of this paper fall within the established norms of high social science collaboration that the Mounce study indicates.

Numerous journal articles discuss librarian-faculty collaboration, but few focus specifically on the collaboration of multiple librarians using their different subject expertise in an instructional capacity. A good example of one such successful collaboration occurred at California State University in Northridge where librarians teamed up with faculty from educational psychology and counseling.⁶ Four instruction librarians from different subject areas (education,

psychology, and social sciences) taught multiple library instruction sessions and collaborated with faculty to develop learning outcomes. They developed a pre- and post-assessment to determine graduate student comfort level with finding library resources. They also held a research session where students completed hands-on searching and the librarians offered research assistance (including assistance with citing sources). This article is significant because it is similar to the authors’ actions with the CSBS 331 project.

At the University of California, Berkley, librarians successfully collaborated with subject faculty in an environmental studies course.⁷ What is interesting about this course is that it was interdisciplinary, covering the humanities as well as the sciences. Six librarians were enlisted to teach library instruction sessions in diverse subject areas such as the humanities (including literature), social sciences, and sciences (especially biosciences). The goals for the sessions focused on ensuring students understood the concept of peer-reviewed journals, distinguishing between primary and secondary sources, and properly citing sources. The topics covered in the library instruction sessions, as well as the collaboration of librarians and faculty with diverse expertise, makes the article significant to this paper.

Archival Instruction

An extensive search of the archival literature revealed that there is a dearth of research on the topic of archivist collaboration with academic librarians; especially with regard to library instruction. Academic librarians routinely instruct both one-on-one in a reference capacity and in large scale information literacy classes and programs. The archival field has a very different approach in that most instruction takes place in an archival reference capacity in small groups and often one-on-one with researchers. Duff, et al, discuss the knowledge necessary for archival reference.⁸ The archival literature tends to primarily examine archival training and preparation to provide reference service while giving much less attention to group archival instruction.

Exceptions focus on archivists providing critical thinking skills as part of a class or workshop on the use of archival collections for history courses. Marcus Robyns examined critical thinking and evaluation of archival materials in the context of preparing students to engage in historical research and understand the informational and evidential content of primary source materials.⁹ Robyns listed mostly articles on critical thinking from a library perspective, or archival reference in general. Focusing specifically on undergraduate experience, Magia Krause provided an assessment rubric for evaluating student learning in the archival training component of a history course.¹⁰ Mackey and Jacobson's 2005 article focused on the archival component of information literacy referencing an information technology course utilizing archival materials offered at the University of Albany.¹¹ Collaborative instruction involved librarians teaching students how to distinguish between primary and secondary sources, and how to obtain appropriate sources for their projects. The authors found a lack of journal articles relating to collaborative instruction, so the items cited in this article are the most recent examples found in a search of archival literature. A review of the most recent archival literature reviewed here suggests that few academic libraries are developing integrated, collaborative library instruction strategies like the one implemented in the CSBS 331 class.

Background on CSBS 331: Documents-Based Research Methods

Eastern Washington University is a regional comprehensive university with an enrollment of approximately 12,000 students. CSBS 331 is a five-credit, 11-week college course introducing students to documents-based research methods. The goal of this course is to prepare students to conduct in-depth research and write successful papers. Topics covered include framing research questions, locating and recognizing different types of sources, evaluating primary and secondary sources, and exercising scholarly ethics. Student assignments relevant to the library instruction sessions include a research proposal, annotated bibliography, and a substantial research paper with accompanying bibliography. The theme of CSBS 331 changed each time it was taught and the subject often varied greatly. For

example, the two themes for 2011 were "Lincoln & the inevitability of the Civil War" followed by the theme of "disaster relief or recovery." The 2012 themes were also equally diverse: "U.S. Constitutional Crisis" and the "Kennedy Assassination." For this study, the two 2012 courses were assessed. These courses occurred in different academic quarters but taught by the same instructor.

Learning Objectives

While the instruction sessions were independent of each other, the librarians, archivist, and class instructor met to discuss the learning objectives of the library sessions. All agreed on a set of general learning outcomes for the sessions that were based off the instructor's syllabus and goals. The instructor agreed that students should be able to:

1. Identify appropriate sources of information for their given topics.
2. Understand the nature and organizational structure of different types of sources for documents-based research.
3. Retrieve and critically evaluate information sources relevant to their topic.
4. Properly cite sources.

Once these learning objectives were agreed upon, the library subject specialists and archivist met to coordinate instruction efforts.

To fulfill learning objective one, students needed to identify appropriate sources of information for their topics. For example, students needed to distinguish the difference between primary and secondary sources. Another instance was students with current event topics needing to consult resources published more frequently (e.g., newspapers and magazines). Course-specific online research guides (*LibGuides*) were maintained for each class (<http://research.ewu.edu/csbs331crisis> and <http://research.ewu.edu/csbs331kennedy>) and contained links and other access information for relevant resources. The library instruction sessions involved descriptions of many of the resources listed in the guide, the kinds of information they offered, and how they met the student research needs.

For learning objective two, librarians discussed different types of sources and how that information is organized. For example, some sources may be available full-text electronically (i.e., recent journal articles) while other information (old newspaper articles) may only be available in microfilm (an unfamiliar format to many students). Another example was the difference in call numbers used for academic books (Library of Congress) and government documents (SuDocs).

CSBS 331 emphasizes student writing an in-depth research paper using mostly scholarly journal articles and primary sources. Therefore, learning outcome three focused on the students finding those types of information sources. Students were guided to appropriate databases to find scholarly articles and how to limit to peer review materials while searching. Students were also given handouts teaching them the criteria for evaluating information sources and class time was devoted to discussing these criteria.

Learning outcome four pertained to the students being able to properly cite their sources in their annotated bibliographies and the final bibliography of their research paper. Since many students struggle with citation, it was important for them to learn of the citation resources available to the modern researcher. Students were informed that the library has the manuals for all the major citation styles available for check-out. A citation tab was also created in the LibGuide for both classes. It contained links to reputable Web sites such as Purdue OWL or various style guide Web sites (i.e., APA). Furthermore, EWU has a subscription to the RefWorks citation management service. The LibGuide for both courses had links to RefWorks, as well as many help guides on how to use it. The Constitutional Crisis class also had a 45-minute class showing students how to use RefWorks. In case students did not want to use RefWorks, links to other online, open-source citation management software was made available.

Instructional Progression of the Library Sessions

The first time library instruction was offered for this course, it used the history-based Lincoln theme. When the class instructor for CSBS 331 first approached the library about instruction, it was only for one basic library instruction session. Through consultations with the course instructor, it was determined that the amount of information she wanted covered was too much to fit into only one instruction session. She was convinced that it would be valuable to break up the library instruction into two sessions (one for primary and the other for secondary sources). Thus, a partnership was formed between the History Librarian and University Archivist. In order to accommodate the evolving themes of the courses, and the specialized information needs of students, the Government Documents Librarian was brought into subsequent sections of CSBS 331 to provide instruction in that subject area. These three distinct sessions made up the consistent structure of the library sessions for all of the courses that were taught after the initial Lincoln-themed course (see the Format section for more details). The class instructor recognized the value of the library sessions and was willing to devote three class periods on library instruction (and sometimes four classes in order to include a *RefWorks* workshop). It is unusual for class instructors to dedicate that many classes to library instruction and it allowed for a unique opportunity to impart solid information literacy skills to students.

Format of the Library Sessions

Three library instruction sessions, each approximately 1.5 hours in length, were conducted for each course. The three sessions were scheduled early in the term to give the students as much time as possible to apply their new skills. The sessions were conducted by a subject librarian or archivist within their realm of expertise. The general format of topics covered in the sessions was:

- Secondary sources in history research, taught by the History Librarian
- Archival and primary source research, taught by the University Archivist

- Government documents research, taught by the Government Documents Librarian

The order of the sessions depended on the scheduling availability of the librarians and archivist. A combination of lecture, demonstration, and hands-on teaching methods were used in all three sessions to achieve the desired learning outcomes. A fourth session devoted specifically to citation management using *RefWorks* was included in the Spring 2012 class (Constitutional Crisis).

Instructional Spaces

The John F. Kennedy Library building at EWU has a computer classroom outfitted with 25 personal computers, an instructor podium and overhead projector. These computers also have standard software, including appropriate plug-ins necessary to allow students to use library instruction related programs (i.e., Write and Cite plug-in for Microsoft Word). The room also has wireless capacity for those individuals who want to bring their own laptops.

For the secondary sources and government documents presentations, students were instructed to sit at computers and actively follow along with the presentations (i.e., searching online resources). After each section of the presentation was completed, students were given hands-on searching time to apply what they had just learned. Because students had individualized research topics that were often very different from each other, they usually conducted research individually. The structure of the archival presentation necessitated some changes. The archivist started in the instructional classroom and used hands-on searching with students to find archival resources. Later on in the session, the class was moved to the Archives & Special Collections Reading Room so students could use their physical collections.

Reinforcing Student Learning

Having three separate library instruction sessions meant that students had time to practice ample hands-on searching. This structure offered some advantages for students and the librarian. First, it meant that students had a safe

environment in which to experiment and try to find sources for their research topic. If students encountered problems while trying to search for materials, then they were able to get instant research assistance from the librarian, archivist, or class instructor. Next, the library instructors did not want to leave the hands-on searching portion to the very end of the library sessions. They felt that 45 minutes to an hour of material at one time would be information overload and cause students to forget much of what they were shown. By inserting the searching time after each major section of information covered, it meant that students could immediately apply and reinforce the skills they just learned. Thus the topics reviewed by the librarians were divided into manageable portions to help students retain the information presented.

Collaboration between Library Subject Specialists and the University Archivist

The archives and special collections is an important part of university libraries. However, they are often an underutilized resource because they tend to be isolated from the rest of the library. This isolation hampers relationship-building with fellow librarians, as well as missed opportunities to participate in information literacy initiatives that expose students to archival resources. A unique aspect of the Eastern Washington University Libraries is that the University Archivist participates with other subject librarians to provide instruction.

Course Themes

Spring 2012: U.S. Constitutional Crisis

The theme of the class in the Spring 2012 was U.S. constitutional crisis. Students picked an issue that conflicted with the U.S. constitution and different levels or branches of government. The students' research topics were divided into "modern" (20th and 21st Century) or "historical" (19th Century) topics. The modern topics included "Obamacare" and "Same Sex Marriage." The historically based research topics included "Lincoln's Suspension of Habeus Corpus" and "The Secession Crisis of 1860-1861." A *LibGuide* was created for this class to provide students with all the resources from the different library sessions

in one place

(<http://research.ewu.edu/csbs331crisis>).

CSBS 331 Fall 2012: Kennedy Assassination

During Fall 2012 the students analyzed the events and information surrounding the John F. Kennedy assassination. They were to examine government information from Kennedy's time period (i.e., Warren Commission Report) as well as more contemporary sources (i.e., House Select Committee on Assassinations). Students then picked one of the various assassination theories, examined the quality of the arguments and evidence and drew their own conclusions of what happened. A LibGuide of useful resources was also created for this class and referred to during the library instruction sessions

(<http://research.ewu.edu/csbs331kennedy>).

Library Instruction: Secondary Sources

The library instruction sessions by the History Librarian focused mainly on finding secondary sources: scholarly journal, magazine, and newspaper articles as well as books. Students were shown how to find scholarly journal articles for historically-based topics in the databases *JSTOR* and *America: History and Life*. Next, some students in the Constitutional Crisis class chose current event topics such as "Obamacare" (very new at the time) that required more timely information. Those students were instructed to consult the EWU Libraries news databases (see Table 1 for more details). For students who wanted to argue the legality of an issue, they were shown how to search relevant databases to find law reviews (Table 1).

During the secondary sources session, students were shown how to access EWU's electronic resources from off campus, and they learned the characteristics of the different databases, how to do basic keyword searching, and how to limit those searches (date, peer-reviewed, etc.). To maximize student interest, searching examples were taken from student research topics. Since students often get confused in finding the full text of articles when only a citation exists (e.g., EBSCO) particular attention was paid to using link resolvers (*WebBridge*). A step-by-step method taught students how to determine if

EWU had the article electronically, in print format, or how to order the item through the inter-library loan system. Students were also given guidance on exporting citations from the databases. Students were given hands-on research time after each of these sections to search for resources and receive help from the History Librarian or class instructor.

Because the course instructor wanted students to find primary source periodicals on the Kennedy assassination, students in that class were shown how to find magazine or newspaper articles from that time period. The instruction began with an introduction on searching the library catalog to see if the library owned a specific magazine or newspaper. This topic led to a discussion of the different formats of materials (i.e., print, microform, electronic), the locations of the various materials, and the years of coverage. Some older periodicals were available online through one of our subscription databases or journals. However, more often than not, electronic access to older periodicals was either spotty or not available. While students could still use a periodical in print or microfilm to find articles, they were encouraged to use electronic finding aids whenever possible to make efficient use of their time. Thus, students were introduced to *Readers' Guide Retrospective* database which allowed them access to citations and some full-text of older magazines and newspapers. Students were also shown how to find older periodicals using the *Time Magazine* or *New York Times* online archives from the publishers' Websites. Once students found citations to relevant articles on their topic, they then searched the library catalog to find the periodical in the library.

Students were shown how to find books and other materials using the *WorldCat Local Catalog*. They were once again exposed to basic keyword searching, limiters, and the different types of materials in the catalog. For materials owned by the EWU Libraries, important information such as location, call number, and status of the book was pointed out so students knew how to find it. The EWU Libraries participates in the Orbis Cascade Alliance, a cooperative of 37 public and private universities, colleges, and community colleges in Washington State, Oregon, and Ida-

ho. Since *WorldCat* contains materials from other libraries, it was important that students distinguish between these materials and understand how to obtain them. Because all the students working on the Kennedy assassination theme had the same basic topic, and it is a widely researched field, some useful encyclopedias and relevant subject headings were included on the *LibGuide* (see the books tab: <http://research.ewu.edu/csbs331kennedy>).

For the Constitutional Crisis class, the professor also allowed an extra 45-minute presentation on how to use the citation management software called *RefWorks*. Students learned how to create an account and login to the system, how to import citations from the database searches in previous sessions, and how to import citations from Websites using the RefGrab It feature in *RefWorks*. Creating folders and moving citations to specific folders reinforced organizational skills, and building bibliographies and using in-text citations were reviewed using the Write and Cite feature in *RefWorks*. Students followed along during each part of the *RefWorks* presentation and were able to ask questions or get help from the librarian or professor during the session. The *RefWorks* presentation for the Kennedy assassination themed class had to be omitted due to time constraints of the course instructor. A section of the *LibGuide* (<http://research.ewu.edu/csbs331kennedy>) was devoted to citation resources in order to ensure students still had guidance in this area.

Library Instruction: Archival Resources

The focus of the EWU Archives & Special Collections is largely regional in scope, therefore it was not possible to provide actual archival materials for everyone since the students had such a broad range of research topics. For students with topics related to the region, the archivist assisted them in locating collections in the EWU archives to support their work. For students whose research topics were not covered by EWU's archival holdings, the archivist provided suggestions for primary sources held in other archives or available in digital collections.

The archivist discussed the difference between primary and secondary sources and introduced

students to a variety of archival finding aids and examples of different materials typically found in an archive (see Table 2 for more details).

Students in the Constitutional Crisis class working on the Civil War were given an opportunity to examine documents, diaries, letters, memoirs, and photographs that dealt with the subject. The archivist explained the difference between working with online collections with indexing, and materials with minimal indexing and description (a common situation for many archival collections). Examining materials for evidential, as well as informational, content was discussed at length with examples such as a letter from a soldier to his parents with remarks about 'contrabands' (see Figure 1). This letter could be seen as expressing the writer's views about abolition, slavery, and secession even though none of those subjects were expressly discussed in the letter. The students understood the importance of evaluating the evidence of the letter writer's thoughts of secession rather than just looking for a letter about secession.

Students researching issues with largely contemporary subjects were directed to online legislative digests for access to currently active political issues (i.e. gay marriage or "Obamacare"). The current online environment contains different content from material documenting 19th century issues. Few archives are collecting materials on current controversies, thus the Washington State Digital Archives was consulted for material on gay marriage and for state activity in support of the federal health care law.

Since the Kennedy assassination was committed in Dallas, Texas and the funeral and burial were in Washington D.C., the assassination of President Kennedy falls outside the regional scope of the EWU Archives. Therefore, if students wanted to use EWU's archival material, they would have to focus on the local response to the assassination. Students learned about the Washington State Digital Archives and how this resource could be used to examine the local response to President Kennedy's death.

For students looking more at the national aspects of Kennedy assassination, it was necessary to conduct searches of digitized collections

Table 1: Secondary Sources Instruction Sessions for CSBS 331

Spring 2012, "Constitutional Crisis" theme

Secondary Sources

Topics covered during the session:

- Remote access to databases
- Basic keyword searching
- Limiting searches
- Finding full text using link resolvers (*WebBridge*)

Scholarly Journal Articles

History Databases:

- *JSTOR*
- *America: History and Life*

Newspapers (current)

News Databases:

- *Lexis Nexis Academic News*
- *ProQuest Newspapers*
- *EBSCO's Newspaper Source*

Law Reviews

Legal Databases:

- *Lexis Nexis Legal*
- *EBSCO's Legal Collection*
- Legal journals in *JSTOR*.

Books

Catalogs:

- *WorldCat Local*

Citation

Citation Management Databases:

- *RefWorks*

Fall 2012, "Kennedy Assassination" theme

Secondary and Primary Sources

Topics covered during the session:

- Remote access to databases
- Basic keyword searching
- Limiting searches
- Finding full text using link resolvers (*WebBridge*)

Scholarly Journal Articles

History Databases:

- *JSTOR*
- *America: History and Life*

Older Magazines and Newspapers (primary sources)

Magazine and News Databases (supplementing print and microform collections):

- *Readers' Guide Retrospective*
- *Time Magazine* online archive
- *New York Times* online archive

Books

Catalogs:

- *WorldCat Local*

Table 2: Primary Sources Instruction Sessions for CSBS 331

Spring 2012, “Constitutional Crisis” theme

Primary Sources

Topics covered during the session:

- Introduction on the differences between primary and secondary sources
- Finding aids

Archival Collections (physical or online)

WorldCat Local Catalog:

- EWU Archives & Special Collections
- Materials held by other regional/national institutions (i.e., order via ILL)

Digital Archives

- Library of Congress
- National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)
- Washington State Digital Archives

Fall 2012, “Kennedy Assassination” theme

Primary Sources

Topics covered during the session:

- Introduction on the differences between primary and secondary sources
- Relationship between the NARA and presidential libraries
- Issues surrounding personal privacy and the Freedom of Information Act
- Finding aids

Archival Collections (physical or online)

WorldCat Local Catalog:

- EWU Archives & Special Collections
- Materials held by other regional/national institutions (i.e., order via ILL)

Digital Archives

- Library of Congress
 - National Archives and Records Administration
 - John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum
 - Washington State Digital Archives
-

Figure 1: Civil War era letter from EWU Archives and Special Collections

available online from government and other archival institutions (see Table 2 for more details). The archivist discussed the relationship between the National Archives and Records Administration and presidential libraries, as well as some of the issues pertaining to the conflicting considerations of personal privacy rights and the Freedom of Information Act.

Library Instruction: Government Resources

Since EWU's Library is a Selective Federal Depository, the government information instruction sessions began with a discussion of the Federal Depository Library Program and issues unique to government information. For instance, copyright law does not apply to government

information in the way that it applies to most other publications, which allows for government documents to be digitized and placed on the internet without restriction. Therefore, emphasis was placed on strategies for recognizing legitimate sources of government information, both historical and contemporary, on the internet. Not all government documents are available online, however, and thus EWU's physical Federal Depository collection was also discussed as a resource to support research in government information.

In the "Constitutional Crisis" themed course, the students' research topics were divided between "modern" (20th and 21st Century) and "historical" (19th Century) topics. The modern topics

included “Obamacare” and “Presidential Executive Orders and the killing of Anwar al-Awlaki”. The librarian led a discussion of online sources for recent government information to address these topics. The historical research topics included “Lincoln’s suspension of Habeus Corpus”, “The Nullification Crisis of 1832”, and “The Secession Crisis of 1860-1861”. EWU became a Federal Depository in the 1960s and has a limited collection of historical government information. EWU relies on online collections of historical documents, both subscription based and free from the government, to provide access to historical government information. These online collections were also discussed in the instruction session. Table 3 provides greater detail on the topics discussed in the Constitutional Crisis government information instruction session (see Table 3).

The Kennedy Assassination-themed course had a narrower focus. It is a 20th century topic and therefore no distinction was made during the instruction session between “historical” and “modern” government information. Much of the publically-available material on the Kennedy assassination has been digitized and is available through the internet. Therefore, this instruction session began with a discussion of strategies for recognizing legitimate sources of government information. Emphasis was placed on highlighting legitimate resources on the Kennedy assassination. Some documents on the Kennedy assassination that have yet to be released and provided an opportunity for a discussion of the Freedom of Information Act and how one can file a FOIA request. Government information, such as Congressional testimony, can be challenging to cite properly, therefore time was devoted to citing Government Information (Table 3).

Assessment Design

The assessment of CSBS 331 students was conducted in two parts. The first was a pre-and post-test; both of which consisted of numeric and written answers. The pre-test was given at the beginning of the first library instruction session and the post-test was administered at the end of the term. The second part of the assessment was an examination, using a pre-

determined rubric, of the bibliography in the students’ end-of-term final research paper.

The assessment received EWU Institutional Review Board approval and was voluntary and anonymous. The course instructor assigned numbers to the participants so their pre- and post-tests could be matched up with their final projects. The assessment was conducted over the course of two academic quarters with one section of CSBS 331 in the spring of 2012 and one in the fall of 2012.

The Pre- and Post-Test Questionnaires

The questionnaires were designed to give the students both the opportunity to rate their own confidence level with various types of resources presented in the instruction sessions and the opportunity to express their impressions of whether or not the library instruction sessions contributed to their learning in the course. The pre- and post-test results from the two classes were aggregated into one data set. For the full pre- and post-test questions, see Appendix 1.

Pre-Test Questionnaire

The pre-test consisted of two sections. The first asked students to rate their confidence level in finding and citing different types of resources such as books, journal articles, primary sources, magazines, newspapers, government documents, and Websites. All of the assessment forms were designed on a 1-5 point Likert scale in which 1 meant “Not confident at all”, 3 meant “Somewhat confident”, and 5 meant “Very confident”. The second section of the pre-test contained open-ended questions that focused on the students’ prior experience with research and evaluating resources. Questions had them distinguish between scholarly versus popular articles, identify primary versus secondary sources, and list examples of primary sources. Other open-ended questions allowed students to identify what type of criteria they would use to evaluate a Website and determine if it is a reliable source. And finally, they were asked if they had received prior library instruction or ever met with a librarian.

Table 3: Government Information Instruction Sessions for CSBS 331

Spring 2012, “Constitutional Crisis” theme

Introduction to Government Information

- The Federal Depository Library Program
- Strategies for recognizing legitimate sources for government information

Online sources for recent government information

- *FDSys* from the Government Printing Office
- *THOMAS* from the Library of Congress

Online sources for historical government information

- *Archive of Americana* from Readex
- *A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation – U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates* from the Library of Congress
- *American Memory* collection from the Library of Congress
- National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) website

Discussion of the physical Federal Depository collection at EWU

Fall 2012, “Kennedy Assassination” theme

Introduction to Government Information

- The Federal Depository Library Program
- Strategies for recognizing legitimate sources for government information

Online resources for Kennedy Assassination government information

- *President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection* from NARA
- *Report of the Select Committee on Assassinations of the U.S. House of Representatives* from NARA

Physical Federal Depository collection at EWU

- *Warren Commission Report*
- *Hearings before the President’s Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy*

Citing Government Documents

Discussion of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Post-Test Questionnaire

The post-test contained three sections. The first part reproduced the first section of the pre-test and asked students to rate their confidence, using the same 1-5 Likert scale, in finding resources for their research (books, articles, etc.). Identical questions were asked on both the pre- and post-test so that the data could be compared to see if students felt that their ability to find those resources had improved or not. The second part of the post-test asked students if they had used the *LibGuides* that were created for their class, if they found those resources useful, and if they might use the library research guides

in the future. The third section of the post-test offered open-ended questions focused on the student impressions of the contribution of the librarians and archivist to their learning throughout the course. For example, some questions asked students if the library presentations were clear, organized, and relevant. Other questions asked if the library instruction sessions were helpful to them in their research. An open-ended, general comment question was created to capture any feedback from the students that they were not able to give in other, more focused questions.

Examination of the Final Paper Bibliographies

The final project in both CSBS classes was a research paper based on the topics chosen by the students within the theme of the course. A rubric was developed to analyze the final project bibliographies to investigate whether or not the students were effectively employing the types of resources introduced by the archivist and librarians. The rubric included criteria for consistent employment of a citation style, currency and relevance of sources to the topic, and a count of the number of each type of source cited (see Appendix 2). The three librarians individually analyzed the final bibliographies and then reconciled any discrepancies to achieve one set of assessment results.

Results and Discussion

The assessment results from both CSBS 331 classes were combined into one data set of 20 respondents (11 from Spring 2012 and 9 from Fall 2012) who completed the pre- and post-tests and the final project. The answers to the open-ended questions on the pre-test indicated that the students in both classes were familiar with common types of library resources. Therefore they had a good foundation on which the librarians and archivist could build with more advanced library instruction on less-commonly used types of resources such as archival materials, government documents, and primary source materials (see Table 4). Even before the library instruction sessions began a majority of respondents indicated they had used databases and other library resources to retrieve information. Some reported they used a mix of library and Internet resources. Only a few stated that they did not use library resources when looking for information. The vast majority demonstrated an understanding of the concepts of peer-review and could distinguish scholarly from popular sources. They demonstrated they came to the course with an understanding of the concept of a "primary source" from a historical research perspective. Most of the students also showed at least a general understanding of how to evaluate a Website for its suitability for use in academic research. This point is important from the standpoint that many historical document

collections, especially within the realm of government information, are freely available on the Internet. Finally, when asked about their confidence with citing sources the respondents rated themselves as "Somewhat confident" or about an average of "3" on a five-point Likert scale in which 1 meant "Not confident at all" and 5 meant "Very confident".

Respondents' Self-Confidence with Resources

The pre-and post-tests revealed that the respondents' self-confidence with a variety of research resources increased after receiving library instruction. Overall, the students' self-rating of their level of confidence increased from about a "3" (Somewhat confident) to a "4" (Confident) on the 1-5 Likert scale, or by about 24%. The biggest increases in the confidence of respondents were with government documents which revealed a 31% increase and with primary source materials (both archival and non-archival) which increased by about 29% (see Table 5). This is not an entirely unexpected result given that many students employ journal, magazine and newspaper research in a variety of classes, while government documents and primary source materials (both archival and non-archival) are more specialized and less commonly used. Nevertheless, the results suggest that the combination of library instruction sessions provided by the archivist and librarians had a positive impact.

It should be noted that the self-confidence scale used in this assessment did not differentiate between archival and non-archival materials. For example, primary source materials can be unique and reside in an archive or they can be available through an online library database. One of the goals of the archivist and librarians in coordinating their instruction sessions was to break down perceived barriers between archival materials, online databases, and government documents to show students that they are all part of an overall research toolkit and should not be thought of differently just because of the steps necessary to access them. For example, in asking about respondents' self-confidence with primary source materials in general the authors

Table 4: Pre-test open-ended questions on prior experience with research and evaluating resources (n=20)

Knowledge of the Library and Databases as a source for research materials	
Use Library & Databases	11
Use mix of Library & Internet	6
Use Internet only	3
Understanding of Scholarly/Peer-reviewed materials	
Knowledge of peer-reviewed	19
No knowledge of peer-reviewed	1
Knowledge of Primary Source materials	
Demonstrated knowledge of primary sources	16
No knowledge of primary sources	4
Understanding of criteria for evaluating websites for academic research	
Demonstrated knowledge of criteria	16
No knowledge of criteria	4

Table 5: Change in respondents' self-confidence rating from pre- to post-test (n=20)

Resource type	Average pre-test self-rating (scale of 1-5)	Average post-test self-rating (scale of 1-5)	Average change in confidence	% change in confidence
Academic journals	3.35	4.55	1.20	24%
Books	3.00	4.40	1.40	28%
Primary source materials	2.45	3.90	1.45	29%
Magazines	3.55	4.25	0.70	14%
Newspapers	3.65	4.40	0.75	15%
Government documents	2.80	4.35	1.55	31%
Internet resources	3.10	4.40	1.30	26%
Mean Scores	3.13	4.32	1.19	24%

sought to capture the overall impact of the contributions of all three subject specialists together.

Open-ended responses on the post-test

The open-ended responses on the post-test revealed additional information that indicated the contributions of the archivist and librarians, when taken together, had a positive impact on the students and their ability to understand and use appropriate resources for their research. All

twenty respondents found the presentations by the librarians and archivist to be clear, logical, and understandable. All but one of the respondents found the presentations by the librarians and archivist to be well-planned and organized. Eighty-five percent of the respondents reported that the instruction sessions were very relevant to their work in the CSBS 331 courses. The other 15% percent of respondents indicated that the sessions were at least moderately relevant.

While all of the respondents thought that the instruction sessions were at least moderately relevant to the coursework in the class, about 25% percent of the students reported that they did not think that librarian involvement in the class helped *their* research because it did not fit their topics. Seventy-five percent of respondents felt that librarian involvement in the class definitely helped their research, indicating that the librarians and archivist were successful in tailoring their instruction sessions to be relevant to the themes of the two courses.

After completing the document-based research methods course roughly two-thirds of respondents felt it was definitely helpful to have three separate instruction sessions. Their primary rationale was that it would have been too much content for one session and splitting it into three separate sections allowed for focus and retention on the different types of resources introduced in the sessions.

Examination of Final Project Bibliographies

Table 6 shows the total usage of different types of resources (by percent) and the percentage of respondents using each type of resource in their final project bibliographies. The rubric analysis of the final project bibliographies shows that the actual use of various types of resources tracks fairly closely with the respondents' self-reported confidence with those resources. For example, respondents reported a 31% increase in confidence with government resources (Table 5) and 85% of respondents cited at least one government resource in their bibliography (Table 6). In total, government resources comprised 20% of all resources cited in the bibliographies. While we cannot know if the same percentage of respondents would have used government information without library instruction, this result does seem to indicate that instruction had a positive influence on the respondents' familiarity and comfort with government information and thus their willingness to employ it. Similarly, respondents' confidence with books increased by 28% (Table 5), 75% of students used books, and books comprised 21% of the resources cited (Table 6).

One type of resource that did not follow this pattern is primary source materials. While respondents reported a 29% increase in confidence with primary sources (Table 5), only 35% of respondents employed them, and primary sources comprised only 4% of the total resources cited (Table 6). One possible explanation for this discrepancy between confidence and use is the nature of the collection held by the EWU University Archives and Special Collections. EWU's Special Collections are focused on geographically relevant subjects such as Western and Native American history and do not have a broad variety of materials to support research on subjects like the Kennedy Assassination or Civil War-related topics. Archival holdings at EWU can support research on large national or international topics primarily from the perspective of how these events were observed in the Inland Northwest.

A second possibility for the low percentage of primary source materials may be the classification of materials during the rubric analysis. Some government resources, such as the transcripts of testimony, could be considered primary sources and employed in that manner. But in the course of the rubric analysis the decision was made that if a resource was produced by the government it was classified as a government resource regardless of how it was employed in the students' final projects. This decision potentially inflated the number of government resources and lowered the number of primary sources counted in the rubric analysis.

On the pre-test at the beginning of the academic term student respondents ranked their confidence in citing sources on a 1-5 Likert scale and generally rated themselves at "3" or "Somewhat confident". The respondents' final project bibliographies were analyzed with regard to completeness and consistency, currency (time-period appropriateness), and relevance of their citations. The results were encouraging as the bibliographies of the majority of respondents were ranked as either "excellent" or "good" for the completeness and consistency, currency, and relevance of their citations (see Table 7). This

Table 6: Rubric analysis of final bibliographies by resource type cited

Resource type	Percentage of total resources cited	Percentage of respondents citing this resource type
Academic journals	22%	80%
Books	21%	75%
Primary source materials	4%	35%
Magazines	10%	65%
Newspapers	8%	40%
Government documents	20%	85%
Internet resources	15%	80%

Table 7: Rubric analysis of bibliographic citations (n=20)

Rating	Completeness and consistency of citations	Currency of citations	Relevance of citations
Excellent	4	9	9
Good	10	11	10
Fair	4	0	1
Poor	2	0	0

data seems to indicate that the instruction session on *RefWorks*, and the time devoted to citation resources, made a positive contribution to student work.

Lessons Learned

In retrospect, student exposure to and interaction with archival materials and historical government documents could have been increased if we had coordinated with the course instructor to design CSBS 331 course themes and student research topics to more closely match subjects that could be supported by EWU's collections. The instruction sessions and subsequent student research could have created a richer illustration of the contribution of archival materials and government documents to research if we could have ensured that the students' research topics would be supported by materials EWU has in its collections. However, a potential drawback could be that students might not feel as much

ownership of their research (and thus enthusiasm to pursue it) if they had less freedom in their choice of topic.

Conclusion

The responses to the open-ended questions on the post-test show that two thirds of the student respondents felt that having three separate, subject specific library instruction sessions was helpful. The data indicates that the students experienced a marked increase in self-confidence in their ability to find different types of resources. Furthermore, analysis of student bibliographies shows that they found relevant sources for their research papers. The change in confidence level of the students seems to correlate with their success in finding resources for their final paper. The authors did not perform an assessment of CSBS 331 courses that did not receive library instruction. Had we done so, it would have provided an interesting comparison

by which to measure the effect of the librarian/archivist collaboration on students' ability to successfully achieve the goals of CSBS 331. Nevertheless, we feel that the student respondents' increase in self-confidence, when taken with their answers to the open-ended questions on the pre- and post-test, indicate that this librarian/archivist instruction collaboration did make a positive contribution to the learning experience of the students in CSBS 331.

It is not common for archivists to collaborate with librarians, as evidenced by the dearth of literature on the subject. The CSBS 331 course was a unique collaboration between librarian subject specialists, the University Archivist, and the class instructor that offered some great advantages. First, it raised the visibility of the archives with students who otherwise might not have been aware of it. Second, the archivist learned from the librarians and gained experience in large group instruction. And finally, this collaboration helped break down some of the barriers that can exist within a library. More research should be conducted on the benefits of collaboration between different types of library subject specialists.

Courses that are multidisciplinary in scope are best served by using subject specialists to effectively teach the various content areas. Collaborating to provide subject specific instruction is an important selling point to faculty in order to get more time with their students. At EWU, the adoption of this model by the CSBS 331 course instructor resulted in students developing more self-confidence, better research skills, and improved research papers. It is the authors' hope that librarians and archivists at other institutions will see the results of our collaboration as evidence that there can be opportunities for information specialists with disparate subject specialties to collaborate with faculty to bring their subject expertise to students.

Note: The authors wish to thank Dr. Patricia Chantrill, Associate Professor of Communications Studies at Eastern Washington University, for her participation and support of this research.

Endnotes

1 Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), "Guidelines for Instruction Programs in Academic Libraries," accessed 6/24/2013, <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/guidelinesinstruction>.

2 Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), "Characteristics of Programs of Information Literacy that Illustrate Best Practices: A Guideline," accessed 6/24/2013, <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/characteristics>.

3 Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), "Characteristics of Programs of Information Literacy that Illustrate Best Practices: A Guideline," accessed 6/24/2013, <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/characteristics>.

4 Michael Mounce, "Working Together: Academic Librarians and Faculty Collaborating to Improve Students' Information Literacy Skills: A Literature Review 2000-2009." *The Reference Librarian* 51, no. 4 (2010): 300-320. doi:10.1080/02763877.2010.501420. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=54329727&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

5 Mounce, "Working Together: Academic Librarians and Faculty Collaborating to Improve Students' Information Literacy Skills: A Literature Review 2000-2009," 307.

6 Lynn Lampert, "'Getting Psyched' about Information Literacy: A Successful Faculty-Librarian Collaboration for Educational Psychology and Counseling," *The Reference Librarian* 43 (2005): 5-23. doi:10.1300/J120v43n89_02. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=17648356&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

7 Norma G. Kobzina, "A Faculty – Librarian Partnership: A Unique Opportunity for Course Integration," *Journal of Library Administration* 50, no. 4 (2010): 293-314. doi:10.1080/01930821003666965. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=>

[true&db=a9h&AN=49261906&site=ehost-live&scope=site.](#)

8 Wendy M. Duff, Elizabeth Yakel, and Helen Tibbo, "Archival Reference Knowledge." *The American Archivist* 76, no. 1 (2013): 68-94.

9 Marcus S. Robyns, "The Archivist as Educator: Integrating Critical Thinking Skills into Historical Research Methods Instruction," *The American Archivist* 64, no. 2 (2001): 363-384.

10 Magia G. Krause, "Undergraduates in the Archives: Using an Assessment Rubric to Measure Learning," *The American Archivist* 73, no.2 (2010): 507-534.

11 Thomas P. Mackey and Trudi E. Jacobson, "Information Literacy: A Collaborative Endeavor," *College Teaching* 53, no.4 (2005): 140-144.

Appendix 1: Pre- and Post-tests

University Libraries
816 F Street
Cheney, WA 99004-2453
Voice: (509) 359-2264 fax: (509) 359-4840

Pre-Assessment for Students of CSBS 331

1. How confident do you feel with citing sources (i.e. books, articles)?

Scale: 1 = Not confident at all 2 = Not very confident 3 = Somewhat confident
4 = Confident 5 = Very confident
1 2 3 4 5

2. What citation style do you typically use?

3. How confident are you at finding these types of research materials? Select all that apply.

Scale: 1 = Not confident at all 2 = Not very confident 3 = Somewhat confident
4 = Confident 5 = Very confident

Scholarly journal articles?	1	2	3	4	5
Scholarly books?	1	2	3	4	5
Primary sources or archival material?	1	2	3	4	5
Magazines?	1	2	3	4	5
Newspapers?	1	2	3	4	5
Government documents?	1	2	3	4	5
Good quality & reliable Web sites?	1	2	3	4	5

4. Where do you usually find these types of sources?

5. How could you tell if a journal article is scholarly? What types of criteria distinguish it from a popular source?

If you have any concerns about your rights as a participant in this research or any comments you wish to make, you may contact Ruth Galm, Human Protections Administrator (509-359-6567).

EASTERN
WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
start something **big**

University Libraries
816 F Street
Cheney, WA 99004-2453
Voice: (509) 359-2264 fax: (509) 359-4840

6. What is a primary source? What types of characteristics distinguish it from a secondary source?
7. Give an example of a primary source.
8. What type of criteria would you use to evaluate a Web site to determine if it was a suitable source to use in a research paper/project?
9. Have you ever had library instruction?
If yes, then approximately how many sessions did you have?
If yes, then approximately how long was/were the session(s)?
If yes, then what class(es) was it for?
10. Have you ever met with a librarian to get research help?
If yes, then approximately how many times did you meet with a librarian?
If yes, then approximately how long did you meet with him/her?

If you have any concerns about your rights as a participant in this research or any comments you wish to make, you may contact Ruth Galm, Human Protections Administrator (509-359-6567).

University Libraries
816 F Street
Cheney, WA 99004-2453
Voice: (509) 359-2264 fax: (509) 359-4840

Post-Assessment for Students of CSBS 331

How confident are you at finding these types of research materials? Select all that apply.

Scale: 1 = Not confident at all 2 = Not very confident 3 = Somewhat confident
4 = Confident 5 = Very confident

Scholarly journal articles?	1	2	3	4	5
Scholarly books?	1	2	3	4	5
Primary sources or archival material?	1	2	3	4	5
Magazines?	1	2	3	4	5
Newspapers?	1	2	3	4	5
Government documents?	1	2	3	4	5
Good quality & reliable Web sites?	1	2	3	4	5

Research Guides (LibGuides)

Did you use the online research guides [] that the librarians designed for the class?

What section(s) did you find most helpful?

How much did you use them?

Were they easy to understand? Why or why not?

Based on your experiences with this research guide, then would you use other library research guides in the future? Why or why not?

Turn over for remaining questions →

If you have any concerns about your rights as a participant in this research or any comments you wish to make, you may contact Ruth Galm, Human Protections Administrator (509-359-6567).

Librarian Instruction Sessions

Were the librarian's presentations clear, logical and understandable? Please explain why or why not.

Were the librarian's presentations well planned and organized? Please explain why or why not.

Was the information presented in the library instruction sessions relevant to your coursework?

Do you feel like the librarians' involvement in the class helped your research? Please explain why or why not.

Did you feel that having three separate instruction sessions on the different types of resources (government documents, secondary sources & archival/primary sources) was helpful? Why?

What part(s) of the library instruction sessions seemed most helpful to you?

Are there any other comments you would like to share with the librarians?

Thank you for your participation 😊

Appendix 2: Assessment Rubric for Final Project Bibliographies

Assessment Rubric for Thesis Bibliographies

Instructions: Please assess each bibliography based on the criteria below. Simply use hash marks for each one – the librarians are interested in how the class as a whole did on each criterion.

Class Name & Number: CSBS 331

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Citation Style Sources are cited correctly using the appropriate style.				
Currency On the whole the sources are appropriately current for the topic.				
Relevance On the whole the sources are relevant for the topic.				

Number of Sources	1-5	6-15	16-25	26+

Mix of Sources – Approximate Percentages	0	1% to 25%	26%-50%	51%-75%	76-100%
Scholarly Journal articles (print or online)					
Scholarly Books (print or online)					
Primary sources or archival materials (print or online)					
Magazine/newspaper articles (print or online)					
Government resources (print or online)					
Other websites that don't fall into one of the above categories (e.g. organizational or corporate websites, blogs, etc.)					