College Librarian Project Abstracts

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**CHM 210: Organic Chemistry Lab II Honors**
In CHM 210: Organic Chemistry Lab II Honors, students design their own synthesis for benzil and benzilic acid based on literature searches. There are hundreds of possibilities that the students uncover in journal articles and books using Google, Reaxys, SciFinder, Organic Syntheses, Combined Chemical Dictionary and any other sources they choose to consult. I list preferred sources on a libguide for the class. Under my supervision, students do hands on tutorials, learning the details of Reaxys. The professor and students discuss various parameters that students can use to narrow down their choices for the synthesis they will use. Some parameters are cost, toxicity of reagents, time required, equipment required, etc. Prior to the class, the students know about the library, our basic databases, and some organic chemistry databases including Sigma Aldrich online, CRC Handbook of Chemistry and Physics, SDBS: Integrated Spectral Data Base System for Organic Chemistry, and the Organic Chemistry Online. While students cite their sources in ACS style in their lab reports, I don’t typically discuss how to do this.

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**INTD 203: Social Foundations of American Education**
This course takes place in Block one of the six blocks education students must complete. It is the only class required (and taken at the same time) by elementary and secondary education students. Specifically, students examine significant social and cultural challenges emerging in our country, legal and judicial issues, both at the national and state level, the economics and politics of schooling, the history and philosophy of education, and the historical evolution of curriculum and instruction in American schools. The challenge is that the class is taught by different professors and each one approaches it (and the assignments) in a different manner.

**Class A** - for this class the professor focuses on position papers and a philosophy of education paper. The students need to find newspaper articles on current events, scholarly articles and books, and organizational websites. I give the students a pre-assignment, where they give their opinion on the topic “paying students for getting good grades.” During the session we start with a discussion about how they came up with the information for the pre-assignment and if they would approach it differently if it was a research paper for their class. They then spend the rest of the session looking for research to back-up their opinions and then evaluating and discussing what they found. They have a takeaway assignment where they find another source. They have to evaluate the source as well. This is recorded in a Google Doc.

**Class B** - for this course the professor focuses on examining pivotal events in the history of education and their final assignment is writing a research paper on an event of their choice. They need to use primary and secondary sources in their paper. We start the session with an exercise where they look at secondary and primary sources and develop criteria to differentiate these sources. The rest of the class is spent searching for primary sources based upon the criteria they created. They have a takeaway assignment where they look for another source - this one can be either primary or secondary. This is
Class C - for this course the professor has the students perform research on their high school. They need to find primary sources and secondary sources. They also have to interview someone from their high school. I created a libguide with links to resources that can help them find the sources they need for the assignment. They spend the class exploring the resources and looking for content for their topic.

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Classics 209: Ancient Roman Religion
This course explores the religion of the ancient Romans from the time of the founding of the city of Rome in the eighth century BC to the end of the Roman imperial period in the fifth century AD. (a) The students each must present on a topic in class and lead the discussion, with that topic being (ideally) the springboard for their final research paper. It typically has freshmen and sophomores who have often not written a research paper in Classics before, and almost none of them has had to do a presentation and then lead class discussion. (b) The students are expected to use peer-reviewed sources and some fairly particular databases - a step away from our Summon discovery service. They make use of Bryn Mawr Classical Review (http://bmer.brynmawr.edu/ a resource on the open web – and these book reviews often contain thoughtful arguments), L’Annee Philologique (http://www.annee-philologique.com/index.php?do=les_equipes), and Archäologische Bibliographie (Archaeological Bibliography - https://dyabola.wordpress.com/about/) the catalog of the German Archaeological Institute in Rome). This means that they are often finding sources the library doesn’t own, and must use InterLibrary Loan. (c) The students are seldom familiar with the databases or with the language of the discipline - this is usually their first attempt at it. The students meet with me in their small presentation groups and then again when they are working on their research paper. (d) With such specific tools needed for their presentations, the course guide has both the sources where they begin their research, and we encourage one-on-one and live chat when they're in the midst of their search. (e) The students often find it hard in this class to make an original claim and defend it at first; they tend to be focused on "what do the experts say happened" and "what do the experts think this means?" without making room for their own position. (f) The professor is the best partner in this - she demands not that they find a good source, but that they find the best sources. When we present in class on the topic, we'll discuss what makes a source a good one. A book from 1908 might be really useful (if it’s an account of first discovering a site), but also might be riddled with out-of-date ideas – when dealing with assumptions about women or racial groups. When the students and I are working together, I have the authority to also encourage them to think critically, look further, and take the extra step to use Interlibrary Loan and follow the scholarly conversation. The University is so new to LibGuides that I don’t have one for this class yet, but here’s a very similar page: http://libguides.lib.rochester.edu/CLA221

For citation styles, we try to focus on the reason for citation – giving credit to the authors, but also to provide the means for future scholars to trace the work that’s been done. We often use scholar.google.com to show the “conversation” by using the “Cited By” link for an article – allowing the scholar to trace backwards. We also encourage citation managers – not just citation generators – because they can help students practice keeping track of their sources, as well as work within groups and share citations. We have a paid subscription to EndNote and RefWorks, but also encourage the use of Zotero (https://www.zotero.org/) and Mendeley (http://www.mendeley.com/) (free citation managers).
LEST271: Legal Writing
As an example of the sorts of “high stacks” products students are expected to produce from their college level research, LEST271, Legal Writing, presents a fair estimation of a shift from simply writing a paper that is read, corrected, and graded by one single faculty member, to a presentation witnessed and critiqued by professionals in the field.

In LEST271, students from all levels, including freshmen, learn about legal texts, both primary and secondary. The students work in pairs on a semester long project, where they act as either the defending or prosecuting attorney for a hypothetical case. Each case touches upon a particular controversial legal principle such as students’ rights, pornography, juvenile justice, morality clauses in contract law, in-vitro fertilization and custody, and others. No simple answers here, as these are issues that have no definitive answer! They must find evidence to support their side of the argument using legal precedent in court cases, administrative regulations, legislation, and legal scholarship.

The students work with the librarian on two occasions, once toward the beginning of their research and again later, as they discover the shortcomings of their arguments. They are also encouraged to work one-on-one with the librarian, most seeking individual assistance. During their library sessions, students engage with legal databases like WestLaw and HeinOnline to find legislation, court cases, and law reviews on their legal issue. They are also instructed on Boolean logic, concept terms, brainstorming for terminology, and identifying legal citations. The students are expected to cite using Chicago style and The Bluebook, a manual specific to legal citations.

Each student writes a legal brief for their side of the case, but most importantly, their final presentation requires them to argue their cases in front of a panel of real judges and attorneys. The judges then offer an opinion on the case, proclaiming a winner. The judges wrap up the presentations by critiquing the students’ work and discussing their experiences in the profession.

FSEM 121: The Olympics – People, Places, Passion, and Power
At Hobart and William Smith Colleges, sense of place has been a hot topic for several years. Students at all levels, but particularly first years, have assignments that prompt them to investigate our local community, Geneva and the Finger Lakes.

The following assignment is one that was given to a section of First Year Seminar (FSEM) students. The theme was the Olympics. In groups of 4, students were required to develop an Olympic bid for the City of Geneva. They were expected to follow the guidelines that currently exist for the 2022 Olympic Games. They could choose to do a bid for either the 2022 winter or 2024 summer games. The Olympic bid was the final project for their course. They were required to submit a 30 page written proposal, provide an oral presentation on the proposal to the “HWS International Olympic Committee”, and respond appropriately to questions from the committee.
FSEM courses are a requirement for all incoming freshmen. Themes of the course vary widely, as do the research experiences that students have within the course. Almost half of the sections of FSEM work with the library in some way and require some type of research in the course.

For the Olympic bid, students were required to find peer reviewed journal articles, books, statistical evidence, and other relevant sources. It was required that all sources be credible and cited correctly using MLA format. As requested, specific focus was placed on finding historical and cultural information about Geneva and the Finger Lakes region, during the library session. They looked at books, newspaper articles, journal articles, demographic information, and government websites. In addition to finding relevant historical and cultural information, emphasis was placed on the environment and sustainability. Students looked at websites such as the EPA for regulations dealing with air and water quality. Subject specific databases such as Environment Complete, Social Explorer, ProQuest Direct, New York State Historical Newspapers, in addition to others were consulted.

Students were required to understand their target audience, find appropriate evidence to support their statements and arguments, be organized and creative in their proposal, and anticipate readers concerns and biases.

I worked with several students outside of the library session in one-on-one research consultations. Students struggled with grasping the scope of the project, and with paring something so large down to the specific details they needed to be successful. To have a successful proposal students needed to develop and answer many different research questions and use a variety of sources and types of information.

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ANTH 100: Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

The final project involves a pair of students interviewing someone from a culture that is different from their own (this could be a regional culture like an international student from China, a religious culture like a hindu student, or a subculture like vegans). The culminating research product is a poster that will be shared at a last-day-of-class poster session. The library instruction focuses on guiding students to peer-reviewed sources, as well as current news stories and background country research (as appropriate). The goal is to have students frame their interview questions in solid research findings that they can then generalize. For instance, if the group is interviewing an international student from China, they may research articles that provide a snapshot of the Chinese college system (in comparison to the American college system), that detail statistics and trends of Chinese students attending and graduating from American colleges, and/or that report the experience of assimilation, participation, and/or isolation for international students on an American college campus. Depending on the research questions asked, students are led through the process of picking a general subject area (e.g., Education, Business, Sociology) and then looking through databases within those areas (e.g., ERIC, ABI/Inform, Sociological Abstracts). We work on Boolean operators, proximity, truncation, and brainstorming key terms, and students get their feet wet in locating appropriate resources that answer their research questions and can serve as a base for well-informed interview questions.

Students are required to incorporate a minimum of 2 scholarly resources which must be cited within the poster’s content (in-text and works cited). References are expected to be written in American Anthropologist citation style. The professor and I have worked on this library session for years now and her opinion is that the posters’ content has become more professional and well-grounded in solid research. Last summer, we transitioned the in-class lesson to an online-only format.
**ANT202: Introduction to Archaeology**

This course is an introduction to anthropological archaeology that meets several general education requirements and often has students ranging from first-year to seniors. The major research paper accounts for 25% of the student’s grade, with 7% for the outline and 18% for the paper itself. It has to be 6 to 7 pages long, contain a minimum of 6 scholarly sources, and include references in the text according to a citation style of the student’s choice (APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.). The professor even specifies that the paper must be word processed and not handwritten.

The librarian has worked with the professor over the past five years to develop a library session that fits the students’ needs along with tweaking the assignment so that the desired outcome is achieved. The purpose of the outline is to make sure that students have found scholarly sources, have read them, and can summarize them and say why they are appropriate for this paper. In the library session students are reminded of what scholarly sources are, with concrete examples for this course. The most obvious example is *National Geographic*, which has good articles on archaeology but not scholarly ones. A list of scholarly journals that students have full-text access to is provided, not as an exhaustive one, but for examples. Brockport recently acquired a federated search, so they learn how to use that first, since it also includes books which they can use if they come from an academic publisher. They then learn about JSTOR since it is rich in scholarly articles, followed by ScienceDirect where the professor’s published articles available. Students seem to connect with that fact at times. The Ebsco databases, Academic Search Complete and Humanities International Complete are also mentioned, although many students say they are familiar with the Ebsco platform. Google Scholar is always mentioned (and sometimes used by students) because we have it set up to connect to the College at Brockport holdings. They also learn how to search by citation, so that they can find articles using the bibliographies of relevant articles. During the library session they need to find at least one scholarly article that they can use for their outline.

[http://library.brockport.edu/archaeology](http://library.brockport.edu/archaeology)

Also of interest: Program objectives for a typical freshman writing/composition course, [http://www.brockport.edu/english/undergrad/composition/eng112.html](http://www.brockport.edu/english/undergrad/composition/eng112.html)

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**HIST 190: American Women’s History**

This course involved a semester-long project to create or substantially edit a Wikipedia entry on a topic relevant to American Women’s History. The entries could be on an individual, event, or theme. As part of this assignment students needed to not only research their chosen topics, but also develop an understanding of the Wikipedia editing culture including Wikipedia’s Five Pillars (fundamental principles). The professor expected students to use a variety of sources, but primarily wanted them to depend on scholarly journals and books for contextual background and analysis and primary source material (e.g. newspaper articles, archival materials) for individual details. Students relied on several of RIT’s multidisciplinary databases (e.g. JSTOR, ProQuest, Academic Search Elite) as well as online web resources, all of which were identified as part of an in-class library presentation and on a corresponding online library guide. Because Wikipedia does not rely on any one citation style, students were allowed to choose the citation style they wished to follow (either MLA, APA, or...
Chicago/Turabian), but were required to be consistent throughout. For this project students seemed to engage well with the academic literature striking a nice balance between scholarly sources and primary materials; the bigger challenge was learning how to edit Wikipedia.

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**BIOL 213: Plant Biology**
A. What types of research projects take place the freshmen/sophomore year? - Sophomore students prepared an annotated bibliography on an invasive species for the Finger Lakes Regional Invasive Species group (PRISM).
B. What types of sources are students expected to use? Select one of five science databases to find original research, review articles or patents.
C. What is your assessment of students’ knowledge/familiarity with a discipline’s academic literature? Do they know how to read/use it? We introduce conference proceedings because it is a big way to disseminate early findings and students are completely unfamiliar with it.
D. What kinds of databases/search tools were most helpful in completing the research project? How might students find these databases (i.e., library website organization)? Select one of five science databases (ACS Web Editions, Agricola, Science Direct, Web of Science, PubMed) to find original research, review articles or patents.
E. Incorporating research findings into student writing – Do students know how to make an original claim and defend it through their research? Students include a sentence or two in their bibliography of why this particular article should be of interest to the Finger Lakes PRISM.
F. What are expectations for students when it comes to citations? Introduced to CSE citation style, clicker questions to test some structure/theory questions. Construction of a CSE citation expected for their lab report at end of the week.

This semester the compiled bibliography of all the students was posted as a resources to the Finger Lakes PRISM website. Each entry had their names, article citation and their annotation listed. Lesson Plan [https://sites.google.com/a/sjfc.edu/michelle-dubaj-price/events/plant-biology](https://sites.google.com/a/sjfc.edu/michelle-dubaj-price/events/plant-biology)

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**EDI 413/513: Special Education Methods**  
This course is a course for pre-service teachers and is often taken by sophomores. Students are expected to generate a resource guide to help with culturally relevant pedagogy / English language learners / students with disabilities. Students are expected to find 8 sources covering a variety of prompts in the paper, but all must be peer-reviewed. For this assignment they are new to the discipline, but will need to use Education Source to complete the work. This is not a writing intensive assignment as it is a resource guide with paragraphs instead of pages. Students are expected to cite in APA.

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ENG 101: Writing Composition
At MCC, we’re seeing a transition from the once pervasive persuasive essay assignment focusing on a controversial issue (e.g. legalization of marijuana, teenage pregnancy, etc.) to ones that more effectively promote inquiry, introduce students in a deeper way to important global issues, and help to scaffold the often challenging task of focusing on a narrower aspect of a broad topic. One faculty member, for example, focuses her entire course on the topic of sustainability. Another professor asks her students to propose possible solutions to world problems.

Students are still required to use the library catalog and databases to find books and articles on their topics. We still find that Opposing Viewpoints is a good place for students to start their research and Academic Search Complete, Academic OneFile, or even our Discovery Tool to dive in deeper. Faculty typically want their students to find at least one scholarly journal article. Some faculty emphasize material found in library databases over websites. In our library instruction sessions for these classes we introduce basic search strategies as well as evaluative criteria.

ENG 101 is a class that nearly every student is required to take unless they score high enough on their Accuplacer test to get into ENG 200, an advanced writing composition course. One of the intents of it is to teach students know how to make an original claim and defend it through their research. Students are required to cite their sources using MLA format.