Reframing a General Education Course

A Case Study of the ACRL Framework in Action

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Overview

- Background of our partnership
- Evolution of course products and information literacy integration
- Bringing in the frames
- Brainstorming
Background

- General Education at UNCG
  - LG1. Foundational Skills: Think critically, communicate effectively, and develop appropriate fundamental skills in quantitative and information literacies. [GRD, WI, SI, GLT, GFA, GPR, GHP, GMT, GNS, GSB, GL, GN] (UNCG General Education Council 2009).
Background

● General Education at UNCG
  ○ LG1. Foundational Skills: Think critically, communicate effectively, and develop appropriate fundamental skills in quantitative and information literacies. [GRD, WI, SI, GLT, GFA, GPR, GHP, GMT, GNS, GSB, GL, GN] (UNCG General Education Council 2009).

● Political Science 240: The International System
  ○ Core course for Political Science majors
  ○ Carries GSB and GL General Education markers
Think, Pair, Share #1

How does your library work with General education courses at your institution?
PSC 240 at UNCG

A Case Study
Fall 2011

**Product:** Three short papers on choice of prompts; students told to use “a range of sources (from scholarly to newspaper to governmental or nongovernmental reports).”
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**Session:** Covered evaluating sources; scholarly/popular; topic development; use of specific databases
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Problem: Too much content to cover
Spring 2012 - Spring 2014

**Products:** Annotation exercise, topic proposal, annotated bibliography, 6-7 page research paper
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**Sessions:** Covered topic development, search strategies, source evaluation, scholarly/popular, specific databases, APSR
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**Problem:** Annotation exercise felt disconnected, topics already decided before library session, still too much content to cover in a session
Fall 2014

**Products:** Searching assignment, topic proposal, annotated bibliography, draft, 6-7 page research paper; elevator talk
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**Session:** Started seeing impact of the Framework, session was focused on topic development and source evaluation
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**Session:** Started seeing impact of the Framework, session was focused on topic development and source evaluation

**Problem:** Timing of the searching assignment and topic proposal, amount of grading for the instructor
Fall 2015 & Spring 2016

**Products:** Topic proposal, annotated bibliography, Memo to the President, elevator talk
Fall 2015 & Spring 2016

**Products:** Topic proposal, annotated bibliography, Memo to the President, elevator talk

**Session:** intentional integration of the Framework (authority is constructed and contextual, research as inquiry), heavy focus on research question development
The session

Class worksheet
Authority is constructed and contextual

“Information resources reflect their creators’ expertise and credibility, and are evaluated based on the information need and the context in which the information will be used. Authority is constructed in that various communities may recognize different types of authority. It is contextual in that the information need may help to determine the level of authority required” (ACRL 2015).
Authority is constructed and contextual

Knowledge practice:

● “define different types of authority, such as subject expertise (e.g., scholarship), societal position (e.g., public office or title), or special experience (e.g., participating in a historic event)” (ACRL 2015).
Authority is constructed and contextual

“When you start searching, take a minute to think about which organizations or people in general would be authoritative sources on your topic. List a few ideas below.” (from class worksheet)

This aligned with changes to the assignment.
Research as inquiry

“Research is iterative and depends upon asking increasingly complex or new questions whose answers in turn develop additional questions or lines of inquiry in any field” (ACRL 2015).
Research as inquiry

Relevant knowledge practice:

- “Determine an appropriate scope of investigation” (ACRL 2015).

Relevant disposition:

- “Consider research as open-ended exploration and engagement with information” (ACRL 2015).
Research as inquiry

In Spring 2016, we integrated an additional class activity before diving into the worksheet.
Think/Pair/Share #2

Partner up and brainstorm a short in-class activity that you could do based on the research as inquiry frame.

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**Problem:** NONE!
Fall 2015 & Spring 2016

Products: topic proposal, annotated bibliography, Memo to the President, elevator talk

Session: intentional integration of the Framework (authority is constructed and contextual, research as inquiry), heavy focus on research question development

Problem: NONE! Just kidding.
Problems

- Requires instructor buy-in
- IL concepts must be integrated throughout the course
- Teaching the integration of sources into a paper
- Memo format
Benefits

- Memo format (for some students)
- Students chose sources appropriate to their level
- More in line with real work in Political Science/Public Policy
References


Questions?

Thank you!

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