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The Best Laid Plans of Librarians and Faculty: Information Literacy Instruction in a General Education Literature Course, Difficulties and Successes

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THE BEST LAID PLANS OF LIBRARIANS AND FACULTY: INFORMATION LITERACY INSTRUCTION IN A GENERAL EDUCATION LITERATURE COURSE, DIFFICULTIES AND SUCCESSSES

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Land Grant Institution

13 colleges and schools

191 bachelor's, master's, doctoral,
and professional degree programs

Fall 2013

Total Enrollment = 32,348

Undergraduate = 22,757

Graduate & Professional = 6,079

Students come from 113 nations, every
US state (and D.C.), and all 55 West
Virginia counties



ILCEP Grant: Course Enhancement & Development

WVU Information Literacy
Course Enhancement
Program [ILCEP] Grant:
Summer 2012



What did we win, Johnny?

English 272: Modernist Literature

British and American poetry,
drama, and fiction from 1900 to
1960.

-- *WVU Course Catalog*



No gentleman ever has any money.

(Oscar Wilde)

izquotes.com



A woman must have money and a room of her
own if she is to write fiction.

(Virginia Woolf)

izquotes.com

What The Customer Wants

- Incorporate more digital resources and / or have students use them more efficiently
- Update assignment: explication / group presentation about a WWI poet
- Use *The Modernist Journals Project* site in some way



New and Improved!

*The First World War Poetry
Digital Archive*

Old Assignment

- Group presents on WWI era / themed poem.
 - ▣ Brief Bio of poet
 - ▣ Explication of poem

New Assignment

- Group presents on WWI era / themed poem.
 - ▣ Extended Bio of poet
 - ▣ Explication placing poem within historical context
 - ▣ Use information & images from *The First World War Poetry Digital Archive*:
<http://www.oucs.ox.ac.uk/ww1lit/>

The Modernist Journals Project

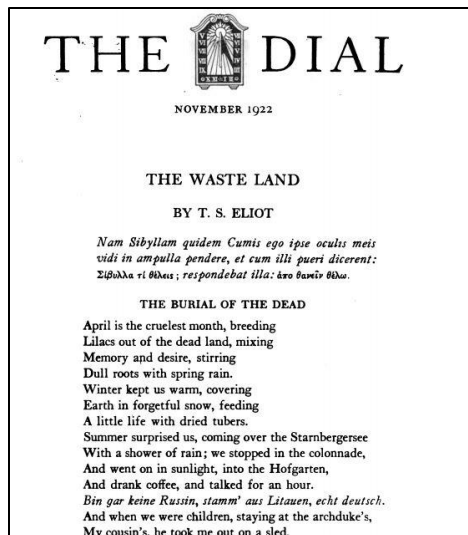
- A joint project of Brown University and The University of Tulsa
- [Modernist Journals Project: http://modjourn.org/](http://modjourn.org/)
- Assignment to teach students about Modernism and the role of the author



The *MJP* Assignment

Assignment: Students choose a Modernist Writer and compare

- ▣ How s/he reviewed another Modernist's work
- ▣ How a specific work of his / hers was reviewed



Learning Objectives (IL)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Organize and compose research projects using a variety of source materials
- Understand the structure of information within the field of literary research
- Identify and use key literary research tools to locate relevant information
- Plan effective search strategies
- Recognize and make appropriate use of library services in the research process
- Understand that some information sources are more authoritative than others and demonstrate critical thinking in the research process.

Two Information Literacy Sessions / Two Assignments

Assignment: World War I Poetry Presentation

IL Session I:

- Humanities Information Cycle
- Database Group Work

Assignment: Modernist Journal Project Reviews

IL Session II:

- Use of Citations in Research
- Database Group Work

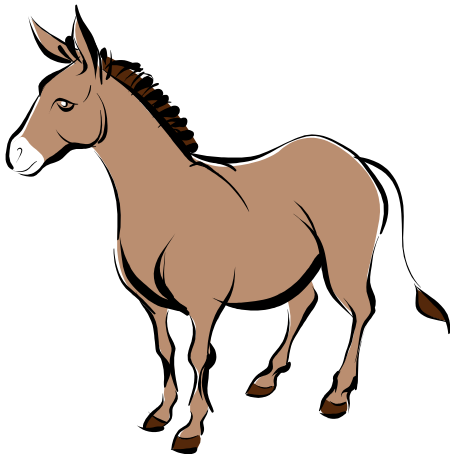
The WWI Poet / Poetry IL Lesson Plan

- Brief overview of humanities research
 - free archive / primary sources
- Brief demonstrations
 - WWI Poetry archive
 - Reference literature databases (LRC; Magill)
 - Online catalog
- Group work
 - Explore a database & report
- Support instruction with a class LibGuide

Will students buy it?



articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com



U

ME

Gen Ed Requirements at WVU

Problems and Effects on Literature Classes



WVU General Education Curriculum Requirements

- Students take between 41 and 43 credits in the Gen Ed Curriculum
- Most course fulfill two GEC objectives
- Courses satisfying GEC objectives may also satisfy course objectives for a major.

WVU General Education Curricula

- Communication (English 101, 102, and a W, or writing intensive course)
- Basic Mathematical Skills & Scientific Inquiry
- The Past & Its Traditions
- Issues of Contemporary Society
- Artistic Expression
- The Individual in Society
- American Culture
- Western Culture
- Non-Western Culture

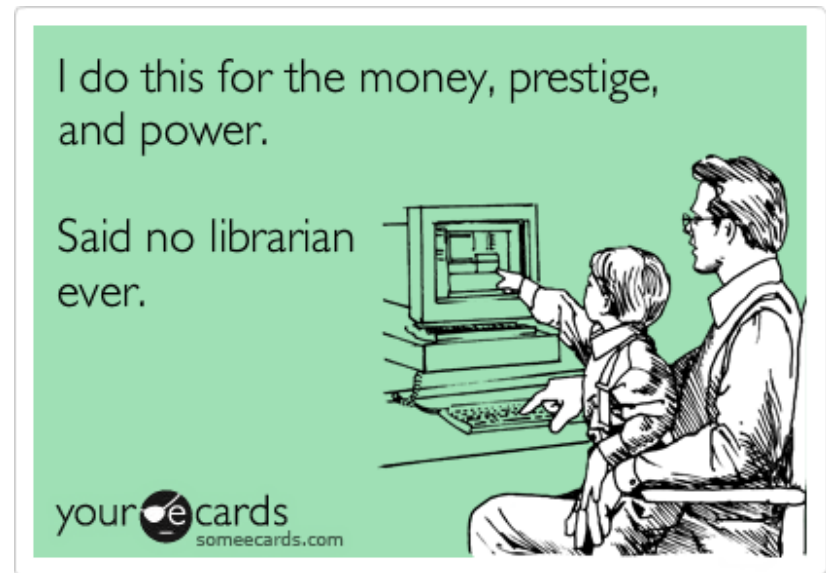
GEC Effect on English Classes

- Lack of pre-requisites = Underprepared GEC students in courses with English majors
 - ▣ literary analysis
 - ▣ close reading
 - ▣ higher-level research and writing
- Large class sizes relative to other English classes (capped at 44)
 - ▣ Little individualized attention to writing compromised
- Student culture
 - ▣ Apathy and expectation that GEC classes should be easy.
 - ▣ Friction with English majors.



Time to Reinvest: *Modernist Journals Project*

- Revise!
 - ▣ Focus brief lecture on primary sources and journal citations
 - ▣ Gave more direct instructions on how to use MJP
 - ▣ Assign group work with more directed questions
 - ▣ More direct librarian intervention



Modernist Journals Project: Group Work

Search for reviews of TS Eliot's *The Wasteland*

Then, look for reviews written by TS Eliot with a specified time period

Report to the class:

- How did you perform each search?
- What are the differences in results between the two different search tasks?
- How are articles retrieved or saved?
- What works well in this database? What needs to be improved?
- Compare database to MJP

Results from Pre and Post-Test

Pre and Post Test:

- I) 19 multiple choice questions covered the learning objectives from the two information literacy sessions.

- II) Five short answer questions asked students' comfort level and attitudes toward library research in general and the information literacy sessions in particular.

Sample Size:
N=20

PRE Test: MC	Total
Correct Answers	230
Incorrect Answers	150

60% Correct

POST Test : MC	Total
Correct Answers	257
Incorrect Answers	123

68% Correct

8% Improvement from Pre-Test to Post-Test

Student Comments

EbscoHost is awesome!

Thank you for teaching us more about this! It was extremely helpful!

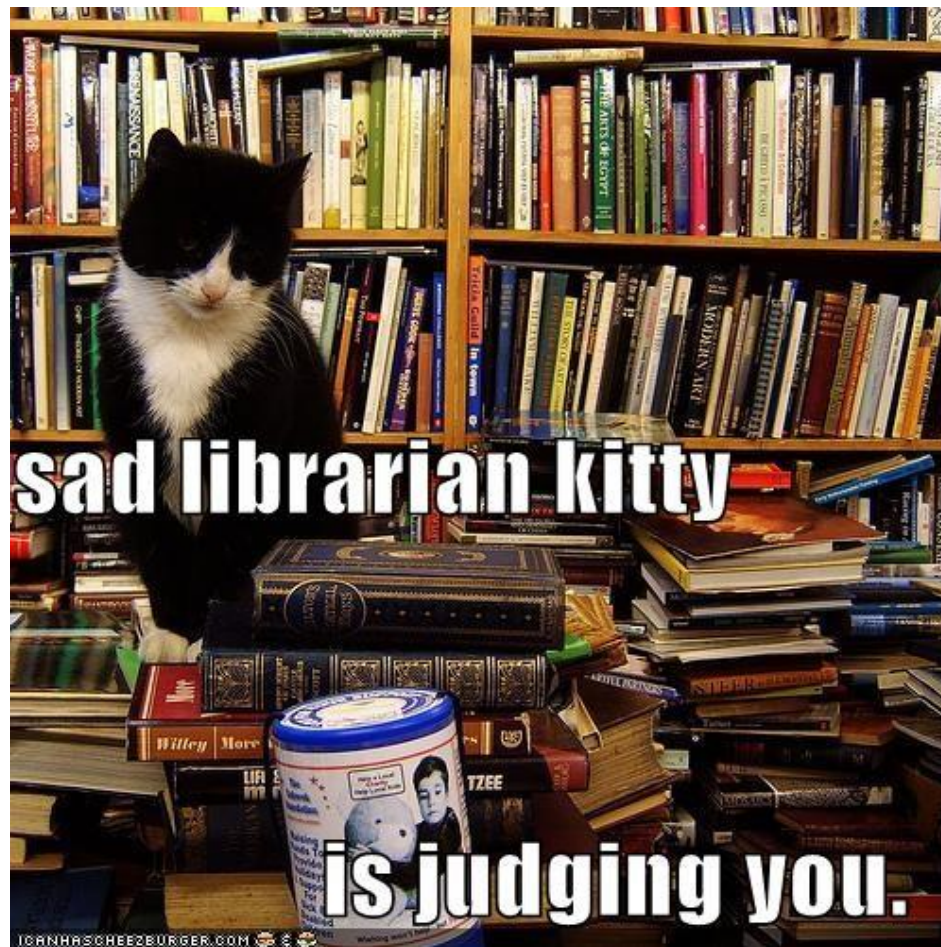
I learned where to start with literary research and how to make better use of advanced search options. (Both awesome things to know.)

I think more classes could benefit from the integration of library instruction.

All of my experiences in the library this year were great! I felt very confident and received all the assistance I needed.

I learned what databases to use to find different sorts of information; how to organize my research; how to narrow down topics for research.

Second Quarter?



One Size Does Not Fit All



Find new funny stuff daily @ www.lollaffs.com

lollaffs.com

Balance Sheet: Student Learning (Research)

Student Credits

- Improvement from pre to post-test
- Students who took a 300-level version of the class the following semester used the resources for assignments

Student Debits

- No connection between sessions and assignments
- Did not understand which sources were appropriate for assignments
- Used information from WWI Archive but not MJP

Balance Sheet: Student Learning (Writing)

Student Credits

- Better awareness of library resources
- Better understanding of how a GEC class should build research & writing skills

Student Debits

- Writing was still shallow and superficial
- Student fell back on old writing habits

The Audit (Classroom)

- Incorporate more scaffolding into research assignments
 - ▣ Assume little prior experience with humanities research
 - ▣ Place requirements on types of sources used



The Audit (Library)

- ✓ Pitch instruction at lower level
- ✓ Assume little prior knowledge of humanities research
- ✓ Reiterate importance / use of primary sources in literature
- ✓ Group work more directed
- ✓ Use LibGuides survey function to survey students beforehand
- ✓ More individual hands-on help



Student Comments (post-revision)

Use multiple databases to get results rather than sticking to one to database and searching over and over

Use these databases! It's much better than me using google or google scholar.

Search on multiple databases and use the research guide for the course when I get stuck.

Using the advanced search so that I can get specific articles centered around my topic

use quotes, more specific searches, scream less at the computer when im frustrated with my search results. probably freak out less. :]

always use advanced search
what a huge difference

Use multiple databases instead of just EBSCO Host

I really enjoyed the relaxed environment and the interaction.

It was very informative and a great refresher on how to do research

Go straight to these databases instead of using google or other research engines that give you too much information

Questions?

