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Assessing Archival Instruction Through an Active Learning Survey

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Southeastern Archives Association and the Society of Georgia Archivist Summer Symposium 2024

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Survey framework

UNO Libraries Instruction SLOs	Description	SAA Learning Objectives and Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy, 2018	Description
Articulate their information need	Establish the scope of their research; Formulate questions to guide their research.	Conceptualize	B. Articulate what might serve as primary sources for a specific research project within the framework of an academic discipline or area of study;
Develop effective search strategies	Identify key concepts and terms in their research questions; Select appropriate resources for their research.	Conceptualize	C. Draw on primary sources to generate and refine research questions.
Select appropriate source material	Identify the resources available for their research; Examine search results and adjust searches as needed; Choose sources that are relevant to the scope of their research.	Find and Access	B. Use appropriate, efficient, and effective search strategies in order to locate primary sources. Be familiar with the most common ways primary sources are described, such as catalog records and archival finding aids.
Evaluate information and information sources	Assess information for accuracy, reliability, and validity, and critically analyze for context, intention, and audience.	Interpret, Analyze, and Evaluate	A. Assess the appropriateness of a primary source for meeting the goals of a specific research or creative project. B. Critically evaluate the perspective of the creator(s) of a primary source, including tone, subjectivity, and biases, and consider how these relate to the original purpose(s) and audience(s) of the source. C. Situate a primary source in context by applying knowledge about the time and culture in which it was created; the author or creator; its format, genre, publication history; or related

Mapping Student Learning Outcomes Chart, created by author

Padlet

Spring 2022 HIST 2980

History Instruction 2/10/2022

CLAIRE DU LANEY   JAN 27, 2022 03:15PM

Before Class: What are some questions you have at the beginning of class?

What information is available in the ASC?   — ANONYMOUS

I don't have any specific questions yet   — ANONYMOUS

No specific questions   — ANONYMOUS

None yet   — ANONYMOUS

Nothing Specific   — ANONYMOUS

no questions   — ANONYMOUS

How to keep safe photos. Family etc   — ANONYMOUS

If ASC doesn't have something I want/need can they track it down from somewhere else?   — ANONYMOUS

Can I just talk to anyone in there? Or like just you?   — ANONYMOUS

no questions   — ANONYMOUS

Before Class: Have you used archival material for research or a project before? If so, what were things you liked and what where some challenges?

Never   — ANONYMOUS

I have not yet   — ANONYMOUS

I have not   — ANONYMOUS

No I have not.   — ANONYMOUS

Yes, I work at a museums so I need to reference our archives often   — ANONYMOUS

Primary Source assignment: What did you learn? What was challenging? What was easy?

It was challenging to answer some of the questions about audience because our source was a personal diary   — ANONYMOUS

Once again documents that I never even consider have been preserved here and theyre always interesting to view   — ANONYMOUS

From this I learned how holocaust survivors came to Omaha and what they did hear. A challenge was knowing exactly what to look at and focus on. It was easy to stay interested and to look at things.   — ANONYMOUS

It was challenging to interpret why the entry was written since we have the diary entry. With the level III question we talked about can we believe this document since its a one person entry, we have no reason to not believe her point of view.   — ANONYMOUS

It was challenging to answer some fo the question cause my docuement was a list of restaurants, but it was very interesting   — ANONYMOUS

I learned more about the archives online and how they work. It was challenging to find the answer to some of the questions.   — ANONYMOUS

The challenging part was who was the audience, was it a generation he was speaking to? Fellow survivors? To me, it was ambiguous. It was easy to find out who the author was and what place he had in society.   — ANONYMOUS

SOC 3700: Archives and Special Collections

padlet.com/cdulane/aynwkhra935twllq

CLAIRE DU LANEY   FEB 10, 2021 10:31PM

Nothing at all

Before Class: What do you know about archives or special collections materials?

Nothing really.   — ANONYMOUS

little to nothing   — ANONYMOUS

nothing   — ANONYMOUS

Nearly nothing.   — ANONYMOUS

Nothing   — ANONYMOUS

Yes   — ANONYMOUS

Little to nothing   — ANONYMOUS

No   — ANONYMOUS

Not a lot currently.   — ANONYMOUS

Not much   — ANONYMOUS

nothing   — ANONYMOUS

Not a lot   — ANONYMOUS

nothing   — ANONYMOUS

No   — ANONYMOUS

I have not   — ANONYMOUS

nothing   — ANONYMOUS

Not yet, but I'm very excited to use the archives   — ANONYMOUS

No   — ANONYMOUS

yes!   — ANONYMOUS

Yes   — ANONYMOUS

No I have not.   — ANONYMOUS

I think I have.   — ANONYMOUS

no   — ANONYMOUS

No   — ANONYMOUS

My boyfriend use to work at the chuck hagel archives so I've been there but that's about it   — ANONYMOUS

I think I did in one of my English classes   — ANONYMOUS

nope!   — ANONYMOUS

Before Class: What do you initially think of when you hear the term "archives"?

Old and fragile   — ANONYMOUS

old & interesting things   — ANONYMOUS

Old books.   — ANONYMOUS

Something similar to a library but with older   — ANONYMOUS

older types of work   — ANONYMOUS

I think of history.   — ANONYMOUS

old work   — ANONYMOUS

Personal or community based information   — ANONYMOUS

I think of work from a long time ago   — ANONYMOUS

Before Class: Have you researched with archival items/ primary sources at any point before this class?

yes!   — ANONYMOUS
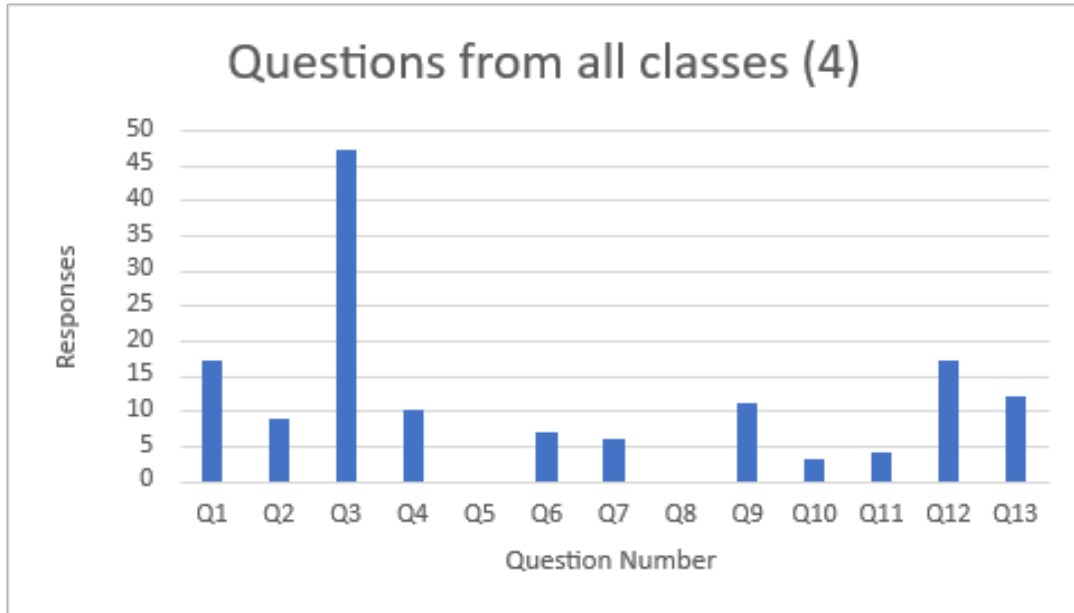
No   — ANONYMOUS

No   — ANONYMOUS

no   — ANONYMOUS

yes   — ANONYMOUS

No   — ANONYMOUS

2019Fall-2022 Fall Aggregate Questions

Questions from all classes (4)

Questions (similar variations combined)	All counts- Responses
What are some questions youhave at the beginning of class?	17
Did you know that you can schedule researchappointments with Librarians?	9
Have you used archival material for research or aproject before? If so, what were things you liked and what were some challenges?	47
How confi dent are you in researching the course topic?	10
Finding Aids: what were some of your thoughts in searching thefi nding aid databases?	0
How can you tell if a source is credible? Is it everappropriate to use a blog?	7
What does peer-reviewed mean?	6
Do you have questions about working with primarysources?	0
Database Question: Take three minutes and search for an item aboutyour research topic. Makes a few quick notes about how you areentering the search terms and using the fi lters. What did you learnabout the databases and how you search?	11
Citations: Do you feel confi dent writing footnotes and citations forthe materials you will work with?	3
what were some challenges about database research youdidn't expect? Do you have a favorite database?	4

- Q1: Before Class: What do you know about archives or special collections materials?
- Q2: Before Class: Have you researched with archival items/ primary sources at any point before this class?
- Q3: Before Class: What do you initially think of when you hear the term "archives"?
- Database Question: Take three minutes and search for an item about your research topic. Makes a few quick notes about how you are entering the search terms and using the filters. What did you learn about the databases and how you search?

Early Padlet Questions

- SQ4: Before Class: Have you heard the term digital history or digital humanities? If so, what do you know?
- SQ6: What were some challenges about historical research you didn't expect?
- SQ8: Assignment question: which course assignment (abstract, book review, annotated bib, etc) has been the most interesting, helpful, or challenging? Why?

Spring 2021: Introduction to LGBTQ+

- Q1: Before Class: What do you know about archives or special collections materials
  - Answer summary: Students had no prior knowledge, or did not want to share any prior knowledge of archives and special collections materials
- Q2: Before Class: Have you researched with archival items/ primary sources at any point before this class?
  - 6 students, or 30% had conducted primary source or archival research before this class
- Q3: Before Class: What do you initially think of when you hear the term "archives"?
  - 91% responded with the traditional "old" or some variation. Only 1 student responded with "personal or community based materials"

- Q4: After Class: What did you learn about archives and archival research?
  - 2 students learned about searching; 5 talked about the collection and purpose of ASC; 1 student talked about materials being available and accessible to all
- Q5: After Class: What did you enjoy the most from this class? What do you wish was done differently?
  - 2 students mentioned the Queer Archives specifically; 2 talked about the class engagement and conversations; 2 talked about search methods; 1 talked about empathy in archival research
- Q6: After Class: What were some challenges about this research you didn't expect?
  - 100% of responded talked about having to do more work in conducting research than they expected

Fall 2021- Fall 2022: History Courses

Research Methods Fall 2021

- Q3:Before Class: Have you used UNO Libraries' databases? What has been your experience?
  - 3 of 8 students or 38% had prior database experience
- Q7: Database search: What was challenging? What was easy? What was your favorite database?
  - 1 student responded that sifting through all the results was a challenge when using databases. 50% said the library catalog was their favorite database; 50% said JSTOR. One student who answered JSTOR also said ASC
- Q10: Archives search: What was challenging? What was easy?
  - 5 total responses. 4 of the 5 students responded that the challenges were there amount of data and knowing how to search, with 2 of those 4 respondents being actively nervous or intimidated. 2 students responded that they felt more confident or excited to learn more.

Research Methods Spring 2022

- Q1: Before Class: What are some questions you have at the beginning of class?
  - 6 of 10 respondents or 60% did not have questions prior to class. 1 student asked about photo storage, 1 asked about ASC holdings, and 2 asked about research logistics
- Q2: Before Class: Have you used archival material for research or a project before? If so, what were things you liked and what where some challenges?
  - 80% of respondents have never used archival materials before.
- Q3:Primary Source assignment: What did you learn? What was challenging? What was easy?
  - 3 respondents said identifying the audience was a challenge; 2 said answering the activity questions were a challenge (lack of context for the document); 2 said that knowing how to find items and answers were challenging; 1 responded that they had no idea of what was preserved in ASC.

Senior Seminar Fall 2022

- Q3:Before Class: Have you used archival material for research or a project before? If so, what were things you liked and what were some challenges?
  - 2 of 10 respondents or 20% had never used archival materials before. 80% had specifically microfilm. I am assuming that the 80% represent those that have taken HIST 2980 in-person and the 20% took it online (if they took it) during COVID
- Q4: Before Class: How confident are you in researching the course topic?
  - 100% of respondents felt some level of confidence in researching their course topic
- Q9: Database Question: Take three minutes and search for an item about your research topic. Makes a few quick notes about how you are entering the search terms and using the filters. What did you learn about the databases and how you search?
  - 8 of the 11 respondents or 72% said that using Boolean operators was useful to have learned. 1 respondent had a question about the Boolean operator "OR", and 2 noted the nuance of specific vs board keyword searches.

Data and Instructor Feedback example

Excel Pivot Table of Instruction sessions taught 2019F-2022S

Feedback from Intro to Aviation and Aerospace Fall 2022

- Felt the session was very informative and thorough

- A bit overwhelming since it was a "first" for many of them regarding extensive literature search – not sure how it could be broken down further though; I think this would happen regardless given the assignment and information required

- Great pace and instruction

- The environment/room made a difference for most students

- Actual examples (that you went through that were given by the students) were useful and practical

- Differentiation between primary and secondary sources was insightful

- Some mentioned providing a step-by-step reference guide as a tangible to take once the session was over so they could reference on their own (not sure this exist though)

Archives and Special Collections

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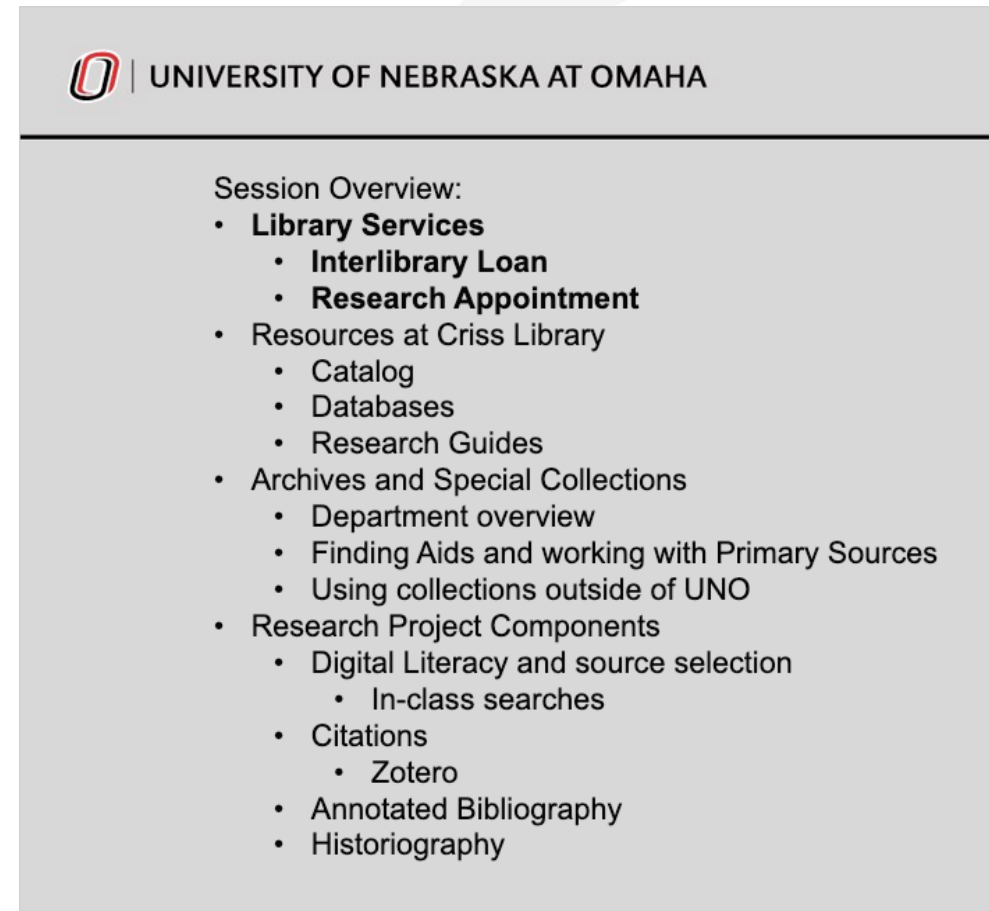
Qualtrics Survey and Modified Instruction slide

Qualtrics Survey, 2023

Instruction Powerpoint slide, 2023

Confidence in Finding Primary Sources

Prior to Instruction, HIST2980, 2023F
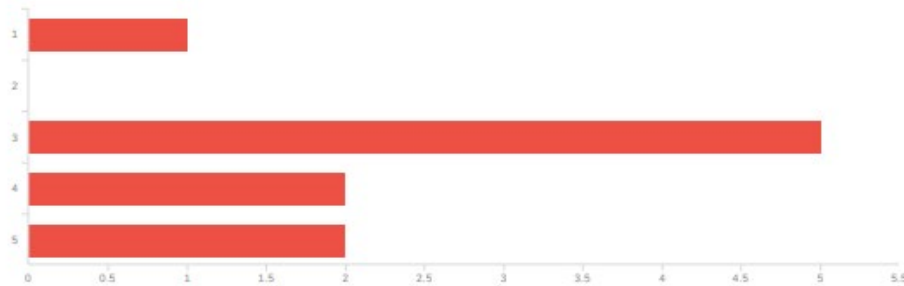
Post Instruction, HIST2980, 2023F

Confidence in Finding Secondary Sources

Prior to Instruction, HIST2980, 2023F

Q6 - How confident are you in finding and using secondary sources in an assignment?
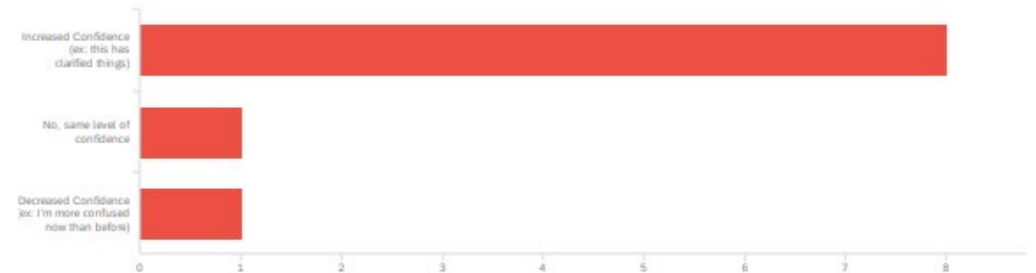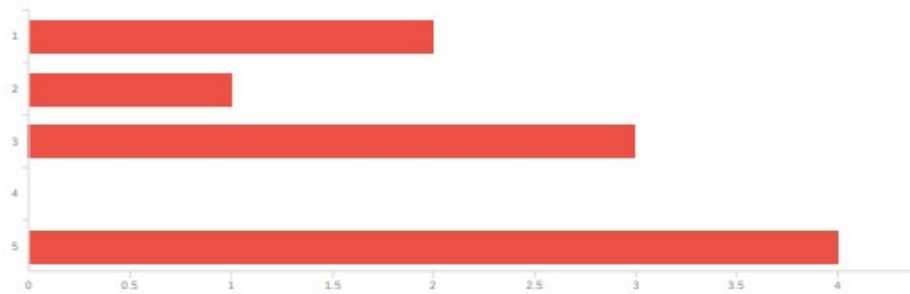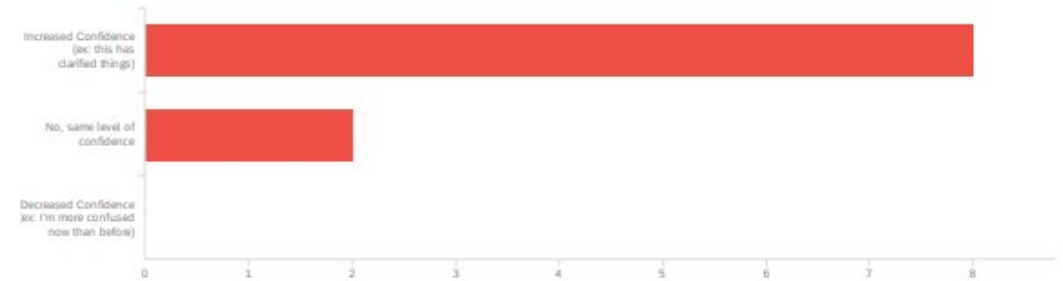
1=not confident, 5=very confident

#	Field		
1	1	20.00%	2
2	2	10.00%	1
3	3	30.00%	3
4	4	0.00%	0
5	5	40.00%	4
			10

Showing rows 1 - 6 of 6

Post Instruction, HIST2980, 2023F

Q12 - Has your confidence in finding Secondary Sources changed?

#	Field		
1	Increased Confidence (ex: this has clarified things)	80.00%	8
2	No, same level of confidence	20.00%	2
3	Decreased Confidence (ex: I'm more confused now than before)	0.00%	0
			10

Showing rows 1 - 4 of 4

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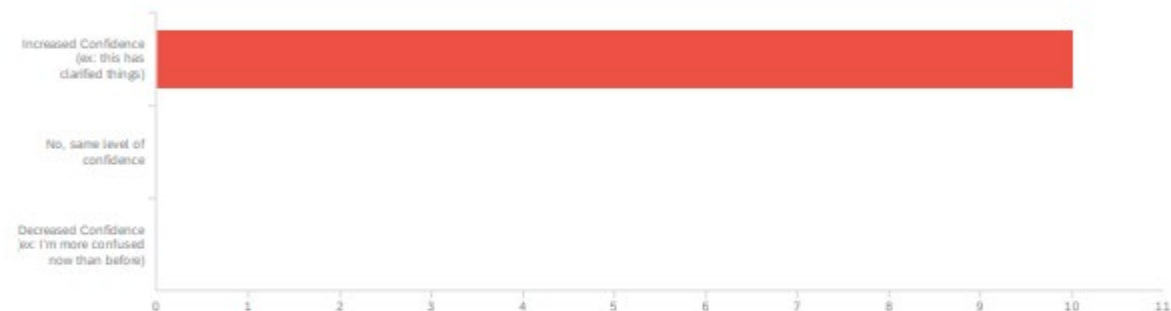
Final Thoughts

Post Instruction, HIST2980, 2023F

Q24 - Has your confidence in conducting historical research changed?

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Has your confidence in conducting historical research changed?	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	10

#	Field		Choice Count
1	Increased Confidence (ex: this has clarified things)	100.00%	10
2	No, same level of confidence	0.00%	0
3	Decreased Confidence (ex: I'm more confused now than before)	0.00%	0
			10

Showing rows 1 - 4 of 4

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