RESEARCH LIBRARY VIRTUAL RESOURCES & INSTRUCTIONAL INITIATIVES

SUBTOPIC: SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

The Virtual Resources and Instructional Initiatives survey produced 230 instances of special or noteworthy projects being supported in ARL libraries. A comprehensive PDF file of these projects can be found at http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/vriicompletesurvey.pdf, arranged alphabetically by institution.

In order to assist readers with focused interests, 18 "subtopics" have been assigned that group only those survey responses that relate in whole or in part to that topic. This report contains survey responses that touch on the subtopic that is identified above.

For readers who would extract information not covered by the subtopics, key word searching can be applied to the comprehensive list. For instance, there is no subtopic specifically for "Camtasia," instances of which appear across several pre-set searches. A search of the word will reveal all occurrences.

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY, LIBRARY

Library Prize for undergraduate research.

Enriching the ways that students think about research and sharpening their skills to carry it out are major objectives of The Library. The Library Prize for Undergraduate Research recognizes excellence in undergraduate research projects that draw upon University Library collections and demonstrate use of sophisticated information literacy and research skills. Judges consider the product of the research, but focus on the research process: demonstration of library research skills, adept use of library resources, and reflection on the strategies used to investigate a research problem. Along with a research paper written for a course and the instructor's letter of support, the premiere component of the Library Prize application is a research essay in which students describe the research process that enabled them to locate the materials that informed their thinking. This essay provides insights into the undergraduate research process by requiring students to reflect upon their discovery process— gathering, evaluating, and synthesizing information. Many essays include revealing statements about personal setbacks and challenges, false starts, muddled thinking, desperate measures, and despair—all shared student experiences. The faculty who serve as judges for the Prize find the experience rewarding: "I learned a great deal from reading the Library Prize submissions in 2004, not the least of which was that we have the privilege to work with enormously talented students, especially when we encourage them to dig deeper." "The enthusiasm exhibited in the students' reflective essays was infectious. Reading the entries felt like a journey not only into the mind of a particular student but into the various library collections as well." Recent winners of the Library Prize come from many different departments—History, Music, Classics, Architecture, History of Art, and Molecular and Cell Biology— reminding us that library research is not just the domain of certain disciplines. And their research projects are sophisticated: the instructor who oversaw Gary Ku's "The People and Purpose of Trajan's Markets" says that the paper "sheds new light on the field." For his project "Macario Sakay and the Struggle for Kalayaan: Continuity in the Katipuana Guerilla Movement, 1892-1907," Joseph Scalice consulted manuscript collections in the Bancroft Library: "No scholars have ever consulted the Barrows Papers for information on Sakay, and Joseph has made some striking discoveries," says his instructor. This initiative began in 2004 and has served as the model for several other college and research libraries since, as well a been recognized by the Association of College and Research Libraries' Instruction Section as the 2005 Innovation in Instruction Award winner.
http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/researchprize/

Goals:

- Integrating the library into the campus' undergraduate research initiative.
- Acknowledging developmental stages of information literacy.
- Engaging faculty in valuing and assessing information literacy skills.

Assessment:

Although we have not conducted a formal assessment we have some indicators of the benefit of this program.

- We have received 50-120 submissions each year for the Library Prize.
- Faculty who have served as judges in this process routinely comment on the increased awareness they have about the need to focus on this aspect of research assignments; many of these faculty wrote strong letters of support of this program and led to this project receiving the 2006 Educational Initiatives Award on campus.
- The student essays themselves are rich with information about how students approach research; these essays have been instructive to the faculty, librarians, and other students who see the award winning projects spotlighted in exhibits throughout the year.
- Stories about the Library Prize winners are often highlighted in the Library's Fiat Lux publication (http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/give/fiatlux.html) sent to library friends, donors and staff.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE, LIBRARIES

Primary and basic sources tutorials.

The "Primary Sources" tutorial introduces students to the characteristics of a primary source, and methods for locating primary sources in library collections.
http://www.lib.uci.edu/tutorial/

The "Find Science Information" tutorial introduces beginning level science to the ways in which scientific and technical information is created, organized, located, and evaluated.
http://tutorial.lib.uci.edu/index.php?page=find_science_information

Goals / Assessment:

NA

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

History majors critically appraise primary and secondary sources in special collections. (Butler Library)

History Lab is a for-credit class (worth two units) aimed at Columbia junior and senior history majors. History Lab develops student skills in accessing and critically appraising primary and secondary sources used in historical research and argumentation. There are six formal sessions, and one week for individual conferences with the faculty instructor or graduate-student preceptor. Four of the six weekly classes take place at Butler Library, with specialized librarians demonstrating the access and use of resources and providing advice during student hands-on exercises. The four library sessions cover: Secondary Sources; Published Primary Sources; Unpublished Primary Sources—Archival and Manuscript Collections; and Oral History. The introductory and closing session are taught by a History Department faculty member and a graduate student preceptor, each of whom attends all sessions and contributes briefly to the library sessions. Students post their assignments to discussion lists in CourseWorks. In their assignments, the students: propose a research topic; identify secondary and primary sources they would use in exploring it; and describe their experience of the research process. The discussion list postings are monitored by all instructors. The final product is simply a refined research proposal including a bibliographic listing of sources identified as useful, with annotations as needed. This proposal can be formulated in conjunction with an actual history paper that is being done or will be done for another class. History Lab is a for-credit class aimed at junior and senior history majors; and it is worth two units. In the academic year 2007/08 three sections per semester have been taught, with a rough average of 15 students per section.

Goals:

- Students understand how to propose and refine a meaningful topic for historical research.
- Students understand basic processes for identifying, accessing, and assessing the likely relevance of primary and secondary sources.
- Students understand some basic aspects of working with published sources in a special collections environment.

Assessment:

- Students completed detailed evaluations that asked the same set of questions for each week of instruction. Thus we were able to ascertain their response to the specific content offered each week. The evaluations from Fall '07 were used in rethinking the class for the Spring.
- The History Dept. faculty member and graduate preceptor also evaluated the overall progress of the students based on their final assignment, class participation, and their weekly postings on the CourseWorks discussion lists. Faculty member and graduate preceptor discussed their assessments with the librarian coordinating History Lab.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Digitization of special collections materials targets items of high interest.

Integration of special collections into active learning environments where digital representations of otherwise difficult-to-circulate material can be tagged, collected, and annotated. Examples of educational projects fed this way include Havel at Columbia,
http://havel.columbia.edu/
the Harlem Heritage Project,
http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/portfolio/culture_and_society/harlem_heritage.html
and Mapping the African American Past.
http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/portfolio/culture_and_society/maap.html
Delivery of library-curated data, selected by librarians for custom educational environments that allow students to substantiate analysis with data visualization. Example: Sacred Gotham. see below
http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/portfolio/culture_and_society/sacred_gotham.html

Goals / Assessment:

NA

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Carroll Fellows Initiative

At Georgetown University, the Carroll Fellows Initiative encourages a select group of undergraduates to actively engage in research and leadership. Librarians and faculty collaboratively provide an integrated introduction to research methods. In consultation with Reference and Special Collections librarians, each student is given a 19th century letter from our manuscript and archives collections which they transcribe, research, and edit. These letters have not been researched previously, so students must provide context for the letters and discuss their significance. Many students have revealed fascinating details of the people and times covered by the letters, and in some cases led to further in-depth research. This takes advantage of special collections, usually underutilized by undergraduates, and provides a manageable discovery research experience for students. Building on our experience in the Carroll Fellows Initiative, we have created a pilot program that pairs an undergraduate with a graduate student who conduct a similar project to that noted above, but more comprehensive. The graduate student mentors the undergraduate in research methodology and specific questions raised in his/her research, thus creating a research-teaching-learning continuum.

Goals:

- Increase use of unique, primary research collections.
- Create research opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students.
- Integrate librarians and library research into courses.

Assessment:

Librarians have reviewed, with faculty, the results of student research projects to assess student understanding of research methodologies and subject expertise.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND LIBRARIES

Digital collections repository based on Fedora.

The Office of Digital Collections and Research (DCR) of the University of Maryland Libraries supports the teaching and research mission of the university by facilitating access to digital collections, information, and knowledge. This is accomplished through enhancing access to selected library resources through the development, maintenance, and preservation of digital collections; by serving as a knowledge resource within the university for digital library issues and development; by participating in national and international initiatives which further the development of new forms of scholarly communication, tools, standards, and applications; and by providing training and support in digital library standards and formats. The UM Libraries' Office of Digital Collections and Research began digitizing and building a digital repository based on the Fedora platform in January 2005. Best practice guidelines for creating digital collections have been created. The University of Maryland Libraries, like many academic libraries, include not only the familiar books and journals of the general collections, but many rare and unique materials. The digital collections available here are a part of the University of Maryland Libraries' efforts to make many of our holdings more ubiquitously available in digital form.
http://www.lib.umd.edu/digital/about.jsp

Goals:

See above

Assessment:

NA

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL LIBRARIES

Stories of the American South.

This is a series of learning objects developed in collaboration with our digital publishing unit. They are intended to capture the interest of undergraduates and introduce them to the rich primary resources available on campus. By presenting students with primary source materials, like manuscripts and oral histories, they have the opportunity to think deeply about a topic, think critically, and come to their own conclusions about history.
http://www.lib.unc.edu/stories/

Goals:

- Gain an understanding and appreciation for the power of primary source material in the study of history.
- Begin to use primary source materials in their own academic work.
- Develop critical thinking skills.

Assessment:

In 2007, we conducted a series of tests around the "Stories of the American South" and found students had a better understanding of North Carolina history and were more apt to find and use primary source materials in future assignments.

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY

Curriculum guides (pathfinders) on popular topics in Special Collections.

During the summer of 2007, we hired an intern to create some curriculum guides for our instruction program. He was a student from Haverford College between his junior and senior years. He worked to make "pathfinders" on various topics such as Thomas Jefferson and Architecture, Civil Rights Movement and Integration, Revolutionary War period. These are topics that we are frequently asked to teach classes on. Having a list of interesting documents to show and some pertinent information about each item is very helpful for staff having to teach classes on these subjects.

Goal:

- To make instruction on a variety of topics easier to pull together.

Assessment:

NA

YALE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Mandatory infolit instruction for Architecture, History of Art, English, and History.

As part of the School of Architecture's General Requirements, the Arts Library Research Methods Session is required of all incoming students. In this hour-and-a-half session, discussion covers various strategies to answer research questions pertaining to course curricula and topics by using tools such as the Yale University online catalog, architecture databases, image resources, print resources, and archival resources.

This session is also mandatory for all History of Art seniors writing their senior essay.

The History department requires two mandatory classes for majors:

- An orientation class focused on two skill sets essential for historians: performing literature reviews of secondary sources and finding primary source collections for original research. The history department requires students to complete this requirement by the third week of their junior year and/or before they can pre-register for a junior seminar.
- The Senior Essay Library colloquium is arranged chronologically and topically, for history senior essay writers. Within these general areas, the focus is on individual paper topics and finding primary source materials for students' projects, both in the Yale collections and beyond. Students' statements of intent serve as guides in designing the content of these classes, and instructors often bring specific resources and tools for individuals to these sessions. Follow up often includes e-mail, telephone calls, and personal appointments. Classes are offered in late September and early October of each year and participation in at least one colloquium is mandatory.

- A similar program is place for English majors.

Goals / Assessment:

NA