



Developing Disciplinary Expertise



Frame(s): Scholarship as conversation; Information creation as a process	Level: 400
Duration: 75 minutes in class, pre-class assignment in eLearn	Discipline: English

Learning Objective:

Students recognize the discipline-specific resources available in their field and can articulate the factors that influence what scholarship is published and/or valued by the scholarly community.

Learning Outcomes for Lesson:

Students will critically evaluate a source by examining the background of its author and its publication format and tracing its citation history in order to identify how it participates in the scholarly discourse on a particular topic.

LESSON PLAN:

Flipped Model: Prior to the session, students will:

- Watch refresher videos on how to use the MLA International Bibliography and Project Muse
- Read [The MLA's Mission](#) and browse the [Commons Open Repository Exchange \(CORE\)](#).
- Select two items, one located in a Library database and one found publicly available online, and upload links to the items to an eLearn discussion board.

Introduction (5 minutes)

- Class begins with the opportunity for students to ask any questions they had about how to effectively use MLA International Bibliography and Project Muse when conducting their searches
- The librarian will demonstrate how to check citation history in Google Scholar and discuss resources for locating information on an author's scholarly credentials

Identifying disciplinary authority (25 minutes)

- The librarian leads a discussion about what constitutes "disciplinary authority" within Literary studies
 - ⇒ Students break into groups and use the MLA Mission, CORE, and public websites to build a list of criteria for a document to have both authority as a scholarly source and disciplinary expertise as an example of literary scholarship
 - ⇒ Groups make notes about their criteria on their whiteboard
 - ⇒ Librarian leads a discussion of the criteria they've generated, offers suggestions, and shows examples that may or may not meet these criteria
- At the end of the discussion, the class has developed their understanding of what lends a piece disciplinary value and created a starting "checklist"

Challenging disciplinary norms (25 minutes)

- The librarian shares a set of webpages, digital humanities projects, and other resources related to the class topic.
 - ⇒ Students are asked to vote on whether these match the requirements of their initial "checklist"
 - ⇒ Working in small groups, the students research the citation history of these resources, their authorship, publication format and history, and content to determine what they contribute to the field of literary studies
 - ⇒ Students revise their checklist criteria based on these new forms of scholarship
 - ⇒ Groups report-out on their findings



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LESSON PLAN (cont.):

Individual exploration (15 min)

- Using the two items they located prior to the session, students will evaluate them based on the criteria developed by the class
- The Librarian will ask students to share their resource, their evaluation process, and their decision about whether or not the resource “counts” as an example of disciplinary expertise.

Wrap up (5 Minutes)

- Students will share any remaining questions and observations about how literary scholarship is produced and published.
 - ⇒ How do they define disciplinary expertise at the end of this session?
 - ⇒ What is the most important criteria for establishing that a resource has scholarly merit?

Habits addressed by this lesson:

- Look for the aspects of resources that indicate how they were created and published
- Recognize the potential value of information published in new formats (i.e. digital humanities projects)
- Identify how a specific work contributes to the scholarly conversation in that discipline
- Seek help when needed