

Research Instruction Assessment Report

FY 2007-2008

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Continuing the online NSurvey (survey software provided by site license from the university) that was initiated last FY, the Reference Department administered the survey at the close of each RI class. As a backup, it also is able to be printed, for those times when there is not hands-on instruction available. The survey was also administered by the Distance Services Librarian at the Northwest Campus. When those students did not have access to a terminal, the Distance Services Librarian distributed the survey on paper, and then brought them to the main campus for tabulation and storage.

There has been a marked increase. Mirroring the fact that we have had a 33% increase in the number of classes this FY, we have had over a 47% increase in the number of responses; over 1540. We continue to have a wide range of class rank: 30% freshman, 16% senior, etc. What is especially gratifying is that we have had over a 240% increase from graduate students, due in a large part to the efforts of outreach on this campus as well as the Distance Services Librarian. For most of the students surveyed this was their first or second class, and most (63%) self-reported their skills as intermediate.

Responses were not as evenly split as to whether a follow-up class was necessary as we saw last year; 54% would like a follow-up class. It is exactly this sort of information that we are trying to get across to the faculty; we need to do more follow-up instruction. If we attend to the written responses (summarized below) we find that many students appreciated the content, and they either want more of the same or *the* same material again; repetition is often the best tool.

92% felt that the RI occurred at the proper time in the semester; only 8% disagreed; the same rate last year saw 90% and 10% respectively. This is indicative of progress.

When we turn to the written responses, we get more of an insight into what students retained and wish we had taught. A significant number stated that they would like another class on exactly what we went over; they needed another identical session to help have the information stick. For example:

I need to learn more, at a slower pace

Another walk through on cutting and pasting the bibliography and saving the articles. I feel like I understand though and I took notes. This was an excellent class to learn how to use the library

Same topic, just a refresher

All the presentation again

These are all common responses. Again, we saw over and over more help in “*doing general research*,” “*more research skills*,” “*how to actually conduct research*,” “*ways to access more information*,” etc. It would appear that those we reached were hungry for more of the same. The task ahead is to convey that excitement and need to the faculty and have it translate into more classes with us.

Also, we were especially pleased to have an overflow of concrete evidence that they understood and learned from what we presented:

How to email my information

I learned how to research career wages and how to compare salaries from one place to another

The importance of how to find information of all aspects in the career you want to pursue. I feel that the websites are very effective and will make the search for jobs a lot more easier

I learned how to improve my chart making skills

Today I learned how to successfully present data so it looks as if it is not plagiarized

I learned that there are actually four types of citations. I also learned that professors with PhD's usually use a dissertation as a reference for their classes

MLA format is for soft sciences, APA is for hard sciences

Synchronizing references

These are just a sample of the responses we received over the year. This is clear evidence that students left our classes with new information in their heads, and that they feel confident in applying it.