Guide to Library Assignments for Faculty

Information Literacy is the set of skills needed to find, retrieve, analyze, and use information.

--Association of College and Research Libraries

The library faculty is available to help you design research assignments that will build students’ information literacy skills. Even students with great computer skills benefit from information literacy instruction.

Pointers:

• Invite library faculty to teach an information literacy session for your class to support research-based assignments and complement your curriculum. We cover library research, evaluation of internet sources, citations, and how to avoid plagiarism.
• Require the students to use the library to build their skills and confidence as information literate adults.
• Design assignments with our library collections in mind. Your Librarian Department Liaison (LDL) [insert link] can help you identify topics supported by our collections.
• If you are requiring students to use books, allow them to choose from a variety of topics. That way, the earliest students won’t check out all available books needed by the whole class.
• Let us know if you are planning an ambitious new assignment. That way, we can be prepared to offer just the right amount of guidance at the information desk.

Sample research objectives:

• Distinguish between popular and scholarly materials
• Consider the intended audience and the credibility of the source
• Identify author and date of publication
• Synthesize multiple sources into a coherent argument

Sample assignment:

• Select two reference works that discuss your topic and describe three distinct features of each one. What questions would it answer? What makes it different from other sources? How would you cite it in the appropriate citation format?