Research Competencies for First-Year Undergraduates

The UALR Ottenheimer Library, as part of the Collections and Archives division, supports the first-year experience (FYE) and composition program curriculum through research instruction. Instruction is provided in a number of ways to support traditional, blended, and online courses. Examples of instruction include, but are not limited to, in-person sessions, research workdays, online research guides, and embedding in Blackboard. This instruction is designed to provide a foundation from which the student can anticipate success in upper-level courses.

By the end of their first year, students will have achieved the following learning outcomes outlined by the UALR Council on Core Curriculum and Policies:

- Locate, evaluate, organize, and use research materials from electronic sources. (*Information Technology*)
- Understand and implement methods for finding, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing primary and secondary sources. (*Critical thinking*)
- Adhere to ethical uses of sources. (*Ethical behavior*)
- Practice appropriate documentation of research. (*Ethical behavior*)
  - Cite basic sources such as books, magazines, and websites according to a specific style (for example, MLA).

In addition, first year students will have attained these competencies:

- Awareness of Ottenheimer Library’s in-person and online resources.
- Familiarity with librarians and their role in student research and confidence to seek assistance.
- Understand the research process.
- Know that various types of information sources exist (books, magazines, government publications/information, etc.) and that not all sources are freely accessible online.
- Grasp the essentials of searching effectively and efficiently.
  - Develop a research topic/question that is manageable.
  - Identify search terms (keywords and synonyms).
  - Assess the quantity, quality, and relevance of search results.
- Examine and compare information from magazines, newspapers, and Internet sources (websites, blogs, Wikipedia) in order to determine reliability, validity, accuracy, authority, timeliness, and point of view or bias.