Overview

I am pleased to report the successful completion of my first year as a member of the Research Skills Development Community of Practice (2014-2015). The RSD CoP provided many opportunities to explore the Research Skills Development Framework, begin cross-disciplinary conversations, and engage in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

I met the required expectations:

- Attended the 1-Day Research Skill Development Workshop Presented by Professor John Willison, The University of Adelaide, Australia: July 2, 2014
- Attended fall and spring meetings (there were occasional conflicts with the Campus Exteriors Development Committee)
- Received IRB approval for RSD Project (January 2015)
- Designed and implemented RSD Project (Spring 2015)
- Presented as a panelist at the OPID Spring Conference: April 16, 2015 “Using the Research Skills Development Framework to Deepen Connections Between Research and Pedagogy”
- Attended the May Celebration 2015 sponsored by the Nakatani Teaching and Learning Center and contributed comments as an audience member

RSD Project

Overview of my project’s goals and the assessment tools for determining student learning outcomes:

**Objectives:**
In keeping in line with the methodology of the Research Skill Development Framework being studied by members of the Nakatani Teaching and Learning Research Skill Development Community of Practice (2014-2015), this project will closely examine the effectiveness of student learning and pedagogy related to one formal writing assignment – in this case, the annotated bibliography as a tool for developing efficient information-gathering strategies and enhancing specific information-related skills. The creation of an annotated bibliography will be assigned spring semester 2015 with two different sections of First-Year English: ENGL 102 and ENGL 113 taught by Joan Navarre.

The specific objectives of the project will include:

- Examining the overall effectiveness of the annotated bibliography in developing efficient information-gathering strategies and enhancing specific information-related skills
- Examining student engagement with the variety of intellectual skills required when creating an annotated bibliography: 1) informed library research, 2) concise exposition, and 3) succinct analysis
- Studying both the short-term and long-term transfers of student learning: from the initial (pre-annotated bibliography) reflection on the purpose and relevance of the annotated bibliography to the application activity to a post-annotated bibliography reflection on the purpose and relevance of the annotated bibliography
- Revising annotated bibliography instruction and application activities based on the results of the study
Significance:

This project is significant for three main reasons. First, it focuses on analyzing the effectiveness of using the annotated bibliography as a tool for developing efficient information-gathering strategies and enhancing specific information-related skills, key components of the First-Year Composition Outcomes (“Students will . . . utilize the appropriate tone, documentation style, grammar, syntax, punctuation, and spelling demanded by specific writing situations.”). More specifically, the project analyzes the effectiveness of the annotated bibliography as an instructional tool in teaching information literacy. For the last 20 years in the field of composition studies, the annotated bibliography has become an unquestioned “best practice” in first-year writing instruction, and yet it is rarely investigated in research studies, particularly in relation to information literacy and to the transfer of learning. Second, the project, through the use of notebook entries and reflective writing, monitors student engagement while creating and revising the annotated bibliography. This focus on student engagement is important because often students find the annotated bibliography to be dry and uninspiring; therefore, they “tune out” during class time. Third, the project studies the transfer of student learning related to the creation of an annotated bibliography. Studying the learning transfer of information gathering strategies and specific information-related skills matters because no matter how proficient students are in creating finding, evaluating and summarizing sources, if they cannot apply efficient information-gathering strategies and skills later on in their own research and writing, then the pedagogy needs to be re-examined.

Detailed Methodology:

1. Pre-annotated bibliography reflection: notebook entry on the purpose and relevance of the annotated bibliography
2. Students will attend a workshop at the UW-Stout Archives: Introduction to Research, with special emphasis on finding primary and secondary sources in the digital age
3. Next, the instructor will assign a formal annotated bibliography and students will demonstrate a variety of intellectual skills: 1) informed library research, 2) concise exposition, and 3) succinct analysis
4. Post-annotated bibliography reflection: notebook entry on the purpose and relevance of the annotated bibliography

5. After the annotated bibliography has been collected, the instructor will compare individual student results on the three forms of assessment collected during the study: the pre-annotated bibliography notebook reflection, the annotated bibliography application activity, and the post-annotated bibliography notebook reflection and revise her assignment based on the student assessment results.

Description of RSD Framework-based assignments completed Spring 2015

Students in ENGL 102 and ENGL 113 began with a reflection exercise: define the term “annotated bibliography.” They then discussed the purpose and relevance of the annotated bibliography. After completing the reflection exercise, students attended a workshop at the UW-Stout Archives: Introduction to Research, with special emphasis on finding primary and secondary sources in the digital age. Students then created a formal annotated bibliography and concluded by returning to the reflection: defining the purpose, relevance, and process of creating an annotated bibliography. Attached are the pre and post reflection assignment.

Learning Outcomes

Students were introduced to and practitioners of informed library research, concise exposition and succinct analysis. I am in the process of reading--comparing and contrasting--the reflection exercises. A pattern is emerging: the final reflection was much more detailed and students demonstrated an understanding of definition, purpose, relevance as well as a deeper (i.e., much more detailed) understanding of the research process. In a number of cases, a student went from a nearly blank response/reflection to a full-page and detailed account of the intellectual skills required: informed library research, concise exposition, and succinct analysis.
Reflection about the RSD CoP Project

A Research Question shapes the annotated bibliography. So much depends on the Research Question. This semester we focused on the need (1st facet of RSD Framework) and we explored the formation of the Research Question based on this need. Moreover, we explored the process of summarizing and evaluating sources for the annotated bibliography. The summaries and evaluations reflect an understanding of the research question. If the research question changes, then the summaries and evaluations change as well.

I shared this information at the OPID Spring Conference--Contemplative Pedagogy: A Confluence of Teaching and Learning—in Green Lake, WI (April 16, 2015).

Co-Presenters: Sylvia Tiala, Marya Wilson and Joan Navarre

Category: Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

Panel Title: Using the Research Skills Development Framework to Deepen Connections between Research and Pedagogy

Abstract:

Faced with increasing demands to produce research and provide students with applied learning experiences, teacher-scholars are frequently implored to integrate scholarship into our classroom practices. Yet, discussions surrounding the processes of implementing research into pedagogical practices are rare. For instance, what are the foundational skills students need to conduct research across multiple disciplines? How are research skills and experiences staged, scaffolded, and assessed across the course of an assignment, a course, or a program? We argue the Research Skills Development (RSD) Framework, developed by Dr. John Willison of the University of Adelaide, offers a promising approach for introducing students to the research process and building competencies for conducting scholarship.

The members of this roundtable discussion panel are participants in the University of Wisconsin-Stout’s RSD Community of Practice (CoP). CoP members have engaged in learning and applying the RSD framework to their own courses and programs. Members will briefly discuss their individual projects before
opening up a collaborative dialogue surrounding best practices for using the framework to integrate research experiences and skills into the classroom.

**Personal Insights and Reflections about RSD CoP**

The RSD CoP offered numerous opportunities for cross-departmental collaboration and curricular innovation. Faculty from various departments (require undergraduate to conduct research. The meetings with members of the RSD CoP provided many insights about approaches to teaching the research process. One of the discoveries is that we do not all share the same definition of “research.” I look forward to continuing this discussion and exploration of research using the RSD as a framework for sharing similar terms and definitions.

**RSD CoP Framework at UW-Stout**

The discussion at the May Celebration (May 15, 2015) revealed that many audience members from around campus are interested in learning more about the RSD framework. The audience was wide-ranging and those present recognized that undergraduate research is important. I look forward to continuing the exploration of “best practices” for using the RSD framework in the classroom.

**Conclusion**

The RSD CoP offered a year of exploration and discovery regarding undergraduate research and the RSD framework. I am grateful to Sylvia Tiala, Kitrina Carlson, and Anne Kerber, Co-Leaders. I am also grateful to Renee Howarton and the Nakatani Teaching and Learning Center for the continued support.