

Making the Implicit, Explicit: Seeing Assignments from a Student Perspective



Differences between faculty and student understandings and approaches to library research and related assignments often create frustration both for the students and ultimately the faculty who must evaluate the product. Below are a few examples of those differences.

General Characteristics & Assumptions

Faculty	Students:
Expert learners & researchers	Novices learning how to learn & to research
Specialized field of interest/research	Taking courses in a broad range of subject areas Learning the tools in their major field
Large vocabulary especially in their field and know synonyms and related concepts	Learning terminology and often don't know which concepts are related
Generally use one computer platform and specific desktop or laptop	May need to use a variety of computers with different software, setup, etc. – Maybe especially true for CAPS/GS
Assume students learned a great deal of research skills in College Writing, ILA, or in another class in their program	College Writing classes vary a great deal. Instruction for the cohort may have been months or even a year ago. Students don't remember from 1 experience.

Assignments & Responses Librarians Hear

Include 3 scholarly journals in your bibliography.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes it scholarly? • What's the difference between scholarly, trade, and popular periodicals? • Actually, what's a periodical?
You may have only 25% of your sources from the web.	I found all these articles in Academic Search Premier so I have enough information for my paper, but I have to have something that isn't on the web.
Research the "learning styles of teenagers."	There was only one article in Academic Search Premier <i>Possible questions from librarians:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Did you try teen* or adolescen* or high school student**?</i> • <i>Did you try cognitive style*?</i> • <i>Did you try ERIC or PsycINFO?</i>
Print all your graphs in color	Color? Every color copy costs me 9 pages!
Create your bibliography in an appropriate format	How should I format my references???