UW Faculty Perceptions of Undergraduate Research Skills

**What? About UW Libraries**
The University of Washington Libraries is constantly striving to improve its services, collections, and facilities in order to both maintain and extend its reputation as a leading academic library. Through the work of the Teaching and Learning Group, the UW Libraries is regularly implementing and assessing new and improved methods of library instruction.

UW Libraries by the Numbers:
- 17 libraries
- 178 librarians and professional staff
- 157 support staff
- 1,560 workshops, orientations, + consultations reaching 26,000 students each year

**Why? The Research Need**
Results from the 2013 Triennial Survey revealed a slight drop in faculty perception of their students' information literacy skills: to develop and refine research topics, find appropriate and then critically evaluate those information sources. Using the existing research in the field of faculty perceptions of information literacy, we have built upon the current knowledge by focusing our research on faculty members who teach undergraduate students at the University of Washington Seattle campus.

**How? Methods**
This study involved in-person faculty interviews that took place on the University of Washington Seattle campus. To identify faculty members with a potential interest in being interviewed we worked with the Teaching and Learning Group to identify UW liaison librarians who had established working relationships with several faculty members.

We coded the interviews using four different topics:
- Instruction
- Student abilities
- Research assignments and assessment
- Important research skills

**What’s Next? Findings and Recommendations for UW Libraries**

### Instruction
- Partnering with library liaison
- Library orientation

### Assignments & Assessment
- Class size as barrier
- Requirements differ by discipline

### Student Abilities
- Grade motivated
- Lack of creativity
- Fear of research
- Unaware of library resources

### Faculty-Selected Important Research Skills

#### Humanities
- Evaluating available sources
- Understanding use of sources
- Knowing how to formulate a question
- Understanding jargon
- How to manage data
- Critical thinking skills

#### Social Sciences
- Working with data
- Evaluating information
- Understanding the research process

#### Sciences
- Understanding the different definitions of conceptions of ideas
- Finding resources in the research literature
- Knowing how to work with discipline-specific literature

Thank you to our sponsor Dr. Jackie Belanger, UW Libraries Teaching & Learning Group and Assessment & Metrics Team.

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**Who? Faculty Interviews**
- 6 Humanities faculty members
- 5 Social Sciences faculty members
- 2 Sciences faculty members

The faculty participants in our survey were contacted based on lists provided by selected liaison librarians.

Sixteen liaisons provided sixty-five faculty names, thirteen of whom agreed to participate in our survey.

Our faculty interviewees represent the following departments: Astronomy, English, Geography, History, Math, Political Science, Psychology, Slavic Languages, Sociology, and Spanish.