

Entering the Scholarly Conversation in your Discipline

Elizabeth Hollendonner and Matthew Olsen
Millikin University – Staley Library

Course: Interdisciplinary 280 (Writing in the Disciplines), sophomores & juniors

Topic: Entering the Scholarly Conversation in your Discipline

Objectives: Information literacy instruction for the *course* has the following objectives:

- Students will be able to determine standards for expertise in their discipline.
- Students will be able to identify barriers to entering their discipline's scholarly conversation.
- Students will be able to identify key figures and topics in their discipline's scholarly conversation.
- Students will be able to read sources effectively (especially scholarly sources).
- Students will be able to develop strategies for using sources in their writing in ways that are scholarly, authentic, and ethical.

For her instruction and activity, Hollendonner focused on objectives 1, 2 & 4 while Olsen focused on objectives 1, 2 & 3.

Materials:

- Classroom with instructor station and projector
- Paper handouts and student writing materials
- Students need internet connected devices (laptops or tablets)
- Classroom where students can easily work in small groups is ideal

Activities:

Prior to any library instruction, all students in IN 280 watch two approximately 10-minute videos: "Research in the Disciplines" and "Primary & Secondary Sources." Library instruction takes place across two class meetings. The lesson plans and activities below focus on the first instruction session.

Hollendonner activities:

(10 minutes) Conversations

- Break down the parts of a conversation and have the class discuss who has conversations, where they take place, what is discussed, and how to integrate a new person into the conversation.

(15 minutes) Scholarship as conversation

- Discuss as a class who takes part in scholarly conversations, where the conversation is happening, and how to find them.
- Explore different types of experts, their strengths and limitations. Who might be excluded?
- Explore different types of periodicals and how to identify and find them.

(5 minutes) Pass out and explain worksheet.

(20 minutes) Using library resources to enter your discipline's scholarly conversation

- Ask the class where they will start their own research.
- Explore the uses and limitations of Google and Google Scholar when looking for scholarly resources.
- Millikin Library Discovery (PrimoVE)
- Academic Search Complete
- Discuss how to use subject headings in the databases to find other relevant sources.
- Allow the class to direct the search and suggest keywords to use in each database. Then discuss the results and how to improve the search if needed.

(15 minutes) Time for directed, independent work on part two of worksheet

- Part two is a research log and allowed the students to start working on finding relevant sources for their research.

(10 minutes) Assign worksheet parts 3 and 4, Any follow up from independent work questions

Begin second session with a Think-pair-share to discuss how students are feeling about their research so far (successes and frustrations).

Olsen activities:

(10 minutes) Conversations

- Have students start with conversations that are more familiar, namely with a group of friends. Distinguish between the individual conversations that may happen at a meal or at a party and the ongoing conversations that take place over months or even years.
- Discuss as a class – Who's in this conversation? Where and how do you communicate? What do you talk about? How do you bring a new friend into the conversation?

(10 minutes) Scholarship as conversation

- Model what a scholarly conversation looks like using the same questions and librarianship as a discipline. Discuss not only how new professionals enter the conversation, but also folks who may be systematically excluded from the conversation.

(15 minutes) Think-pair-share – Apply these ideas to your discipline – Worksheet, Exercise A

- Who are the experts in your discipline? What qualifications, knowledge, and skills do they possess?
- Where do conversations in your discipline take place?
- Are there folks who are denied authority in your discipline or who are excluded from the scholarly conversation?

(25 minutes) Using library resources to enter your discipline's scholarly conversation

- Credo Reference
- Millikin Library Discovery (PrimoVE)
- Academic Search Complete
- Subject specific databases that are appropriate for the disciplines represented in the class
- Google Scholar

(15 minutes) Assign Worksheet, Exercise B & time for directed, independent work

Begin second session with 10 minute discussion of Worksheet, Exercise B

Assessment:

Hollendonner: Students start a worksheet in class during the first session and then complete it between the two sessions. The second session's discussion is driven by the students' answers. The librarian collects the worksheet during the second session, retains scans of the artifact, and returns it to the student.

Olsen: Students start a worksheet in class during the first session and then complete it between the two sessions. The librarian collects the worksheet during the second session, provides written feedback, and then returns it to the student.

ACRL Information Literacy Framework:

- Authority is Constructed and Contextual
 - Knowledge Practice 1: define different types of authority, such as subject expertise (e.g., scholarship), societal position (e.g., public office or title), or special experience (e.g., participating in a historic event)

- Disposition 2: motivate themselves to find authoritative sources, recognizing that authority may be conferred or manifested in unexpected ways
- Scholarship as Conversation
 - Knowledge Practice 3: identify barriers to entering scholarly conversation via various venues
 - Knowledge Practice 5: identify the contribution that particular articles, books, and other scholarly pieces make to disciplinary knowledge
 - Disposition 2: seek out conversations taking place in their research area
 - Disposition 3: see themselves as contributors to scholarship rather than only consumers of it
 - Disposition 4: recognize that scholarly conversations take place in various venues
- Information Has Value
 - Knowledge Practice 1: give credit to the original ideas of others through proper attribution and citation
 - Knowledge Practice 4: understand how and why some individuals or groups of individuals may be underrepresented or systematically marginalized within the systems that produce and disseminate information
 - Disposition 3: see themselves as contributors to the information marketplace rather than only consumers of it

[Olsen worksheet]

Name: _____ Professor: _____ IN 280 Section #: _____

IN 280: Writing in the Disciplines – Library Worksheet

Exercise A

1. Who are the experts in your discipline? What qualifications, knowledge, and skills do they possess?

2. Where do conversations in your discipline take place?

3. Is anyone denied authority in your discipline or systematically excluded from the scholarly conversation?

Exercise B

#1 Who are a few key people working on your topic? How did you find them?

#2 What are a few key publications/sources on your topic? How did you find them?

Part Three: For our next session, please find 2-3 scholarly sources on your chosen problem or issue. Make sure you print one of them and bring it to class.

Author(s)	Title

--	--

Part Four: What kinds of frustrations did you experience while looking for these scholarly sources? What questions came up? Were you able to find something on your problem/issue? What went well?
