

SLO#2: The Student Identifies, Evaluates, Conducts and Applies Current Research and Thought in Library and Information Studies and in Other Fields

When you think of the library setting, probably one of the first things that come to your mind would be that it is an informational paradise for scholars who spend most of the day doing research. A place where you conduct an investigation into the subject of interest and find innovative ways to both resolve contemporary issues and make it better than what it was before. The library is the focal point where ideas meet, intertwine, and evolve into something that has never been thought of before. For me personally, all of those things are what current research and thought is all about. To learn, master, and apply unique, current research and thought to fields that heavily rely on information services is the challenge that has been put before me in my classes.

Even before I began my adventure in this program, I have done more research assignments than I could count. When it comes to research papers, my usual routine was always identify what subject or audience I want to do my paper on, I go into the library to get at least fifteen books in my big blue sports bag, I come back to my base of operations, and I just write the paper until my heart's content. For the most part, that's pretty much how it has been since my very first research paper. I never really had to apply that research in anything. So when I was given research assignment in some of these graduate classes, they completely took me out of my comfort zone. With some of these papers, I had to interact with the people who were going to be focus of them in some way, shape, or form.

My very first soiree began my first semester into the program with LIS 650 in the form of the needs assessment assignment. It was also where I first experienced working indirectly with a group of my fellow peers. To sum it up, my peers and I had to conduct a needs assessment of an outside library to determine the needs of users. It was through this group that I was able to first interact with the very focus group that the paper was being written on. Albeit my interaction with them was more so through a survey, but I feel that I still indirectly interacted with them. It was some of my group members who physically interacted with them. However, I still felt that I was sort of getting out there in the field and speaking with people that my group and I were doing our research paper on, which I think was the point of this assignment. This needs assessment assignment allowed me to really get familiar with this learning objective as I truly identified, evaluate, and conduct research.

However, I immediately knew that this was only just the beginning. I had only just scratched the surface of what it really means to conduct research as a librarian. The needs assessment is only just one of many cogs in the machine. It is just a tool that all librarians use to help them stay on top user needs. To help them create collections that directly appeals to those users. Collections like the Small School University Library libguide that my peers from LIS 610 – Collection Management and I created. As previously mentioned before, if the needs assessment is a means to discovering a user's needs, then the collection or libguide is the end that was specifically created to meet those needs. In our case, we had to identify specific users from a type of library (academic

library in our case), and create a libguide that contains resources that are relevant to those users. This was a fun and awarding project for me as I felt that I got to actually create a collection of resources that could potentially be used by a global audience. Both of these assignments, which come from classes that appear to be unrelated to one another, come together to demonstrate one of the most important responsibilities that a librarian has to perform on a daily basis.

Lastly, all of these graduate research assignments that I have tackled up to this point would prepare me for my greatest challenge. To see whether or not I truly grasped this learning objective. That challenge would come in the form of my most recent research project that comes from LIS 662 – Information Services for Diverse Client Groups. For this project, I basically had to select a specific group of people, conduct research by interviewing them, and create an information product that caters to them. Hands down, this was the biggest, as well as the most immersive, research assignment that I have ever done in my entire academic career. This took me completely out of my comfort zone by having me go out into the field myself to gather primary, straight from the source, information. No books. No articles. I had to gather the information I need straight from the people I was doing my paper on. To really get to know the clientele that you are creating services for. For me personally, I feel that that is what it truly means to conduct and apply current research and thought in the library field. After all, the point of doing research is to discover things, understand them, and use them in ways that will improve not just the professional field that you work in, but also human society as a whole as well.

Looking back on it now, I believe that I now realize that that is the entire purpose as to why librarians are constantly conducting and applying current research and thought in their respective fields. They use the contemporary knowledge that they have gathered from their studies to collectively improve and maintain a library's services. In return, those services can continue to meet the user's ever-changing needs. Throughout my time spent being an undergraduate, I have always seen books that were written by the professors that were teaching my courses. Doing these assignments, I understand now that those books were the culminations of the research that they have conducted in the field. Providing new applications and understandings to a diverse set of fields and subjects that users have called their second homes. That is something that I am eagerly looking forward to as I will soon conduct and apply my own current research and thought.

Artifacts

LIS 610: – Collection Management – Group Collection and Advocacy Project -
<https://uncg-lis.libguides.com/c.php?g=875089&p=6283354>

LIS 650: Library Administration and Management – Assignment 2 – Needs Assessment

LIS: 662 – Information Services for Diverse Client Groups – Term Project