

Instructional Unit Plan

Alyse Minter, Research and Instruction Librarian

Ashley Todd-Diaz, Head of Special Collections and University Archives

Dr. La Shonda Mims, Lecturer, History

Towson University

Course Title: TSEM 102 America in the 1960s: Decade of Conflict and Change

Course Instructor: Dr. La Shonda Mims

Course Description: An introduction to the cultural, political, social conflicts of the 1960s in America, with emphasis on development of research and critical thinking skills. Through their study of major figures, movements and events of this period, as well as through guided study of research methodology, students will become acquainted with historical ways of thinking and writing.

(Selected) Course Learning Outcomes:

- Formulate a research question
- Gather and use academic resources effectively and according to the rules of academic integrity in formulating and presenting analysis and evidence regarding a problem or issue
- Connect concepts and evidence in logically coherent, valid, and compelling ways

Final Assignment(s): 2500-3000 word research paper incorporating secondary and primary sources; Oral Presentation: discussion of research process, topic, and findings

TSEM Course Objective: SWBAT research a topic, develop an argument and organize supporting details.

Format: Five library/archives instruction sessions conducted roughly bi-weekly

Purpose:

- Increase students' knowledge of research competencies associated with primary and secondary source use
- Equip students to be able to find, analyze, organize, and use a variety of information resources to support research and study of American history

ACRL Framework Connections:

- Authority Is Constructed and Contextual
- Information Creation as a Process
- Information Has Value
- Research as Inquiry



Sessions:

Session 1: Library | Academic Research with Secondary Sources

1 hour, 15min

Objective(s):

- SWBAT investigate big ideas and key vocabulary related to initial research topic
- SWBAT identify research problem and stakeholders
- SWBAT articulate research question and break it down into appropriate keyword families
- SWBAT choose a relevant article based on their research needs

Activities:

- Understanding the Problem Pt. I
 - Split into pairs/small groups
 - Explore background sources via pre-research using assigned topics and encyclopedias from GALE Virtual Ref Library
 - Identify keyword(s) from research topic and brainstorm synonyms/related terms
 - Create a logical search strategy
 - Perform search in America History & Life, choose one relevant article
 - Cite article in Chicago Style: author-date (time permitting)

Assessment:

- Observation, engaging and questioning
- “Understanding the Problem Pt. 1” Worksheet

Session 2: Archives | Working with Primary Source Documents 101

1 hour, 30min

Objective(s):

- SWBAT conduct basic analysis of primary source documents (i.e. type, purpose, creator, date, apparent bias)
- SWBAT apply discipline knowledge to explain importance of using primary source documents

Activities

- Pre-knowledge assessment (K/W) – Alyse
- Intro to archives presentation – Ashley
- Station rotations (7min/ea)
- Whole group discussion/post-learning assessment (L)

Assessment

- Questions worksheet for rotations
- K-W-L query

Session 3: Library | Critical Analysis of Primary Source Documents Pt. I

1 hour, 15min

Objective(s):

- SWBAT analyze primary source documents for bias
- SWBAT infer meaning from documents given context and part-to-whole relationships

Activities:

- “What’s Race Got to Do With It?” or “Towson: Past in Present, Present in Past” case study
- Discussion
- Understanding the Problem Pt. II
 - In small groups, examine selected primary source docs from 1st archives session
 - Analyze and critique for bias/perspective, given discussions from case studies

Assessment

- Observation, questioning, discussion
- “Understanding the Problem Pt. 2” worksheet

Session 4: Archives | Critical Analysis of Primary Source Documents Pt. II

1 hour, 30min

Objective(s):

- SWBAT analyze primary source documents to gain understanding of historic events
- SWBAT assess representation of voice/exclusion/bias in primary source documents
- SWBAT synthesize historical information to create summary of events
- SWBAT develop timeline of events based on collective document analysis

Activities

- “BSU Formation at TU” case study
 - Intro to BUS history & review of primary vs. secondary sources - Ashley
 - Small group analysis of primary sources & create summaries as visual posters on white boards
 - Whole group – Students create timeline w/ posters (rolling white boards)
 - Whole group – Discussion of importance of context, how primary sources don’t exist in isolation & importance of representation/multiple voices

Assessment

- Poster – students create visual summary of information inferred from primary source analysis

Session 5: Library | Review Research with Secondary Sources, Citations, & Open Lab

1 hour, 15min

Objective(s):

- SWBAT identify research problem and stakeholders
- SWBAT articulate research question and break it down into appropriate keyword families
- SWBAT choose a relevant article based on their research needs
- SWBAT apply rules of attribution in order to create accurate citations

Activities:

- Review academic research (brainstorming keywords, creating search strategies, searching in appropriate databases, selecting relevant articles) and researching with primary sources
- Review/reintroduce citing with Chicago style: notes & bibliography
- Open lab – research/write individual papers with support from librarian, teaching faculty, and student assistant (A-LIST student or Writing Center fellow)

Assessment:

- Observation, engaging & questioning
- Feedback sheet (exit ticket)

Unit Assessment

- Feedback sheet (at conclusion of final library session)