Student work from BES301 was gathered from Fall 2013 through Spring 2014. One hundred and thirteen (113) samples were collected from across four sections of BES 301. Artifacts collected from the course were worksheets completed by individual students during a class instruction session. Worksheets were revised in Spring quarter to reflect initial assessment of student performance, and information was collected from the students about their majors in order to investigate potential differences in performance based on program. Librarians, the Director of the UWB Teaching and Learning Center, and faculty members from IAS reviewed a randomly selected set of 25 samples from the course in July 2014.

The rubric for BES 301 focused on students’ abilities to search a subject database (Web of Science) effectively and to select and summarize information related directly to a research question.

Key Results:

- The majority of students achieved a benchmark level of 2 or 3 (‘Developing’ or ‘Accomplished’) for all performance categories: develops & revises search strategies; uses search tool effectively; selects and summarizes relevant sources. See Appendix for results charts.
- There was a higher percentage of students performing at the Beginning level in terms of developing and revising search strategies than in other categories, indicating a possible area of attention.
- Student performed best in the category “selects and summarizes relevant sources” (with 28% of students reaching the ‘Accomplished’ level). Raters noted that the best answers to these questions looked beyond the basic topic of the article and displayed a nuanced understanding of how an article might be relevant for their research.
- There were consistent differences between the scores given by the course faculty member, the subject librarian and the non-subject specialist raters (librarians and faculty). For all three categories, the librarian scored students higher than the other raters, while the faculty member scored students lower than both the subject librarian and the other non-subject specialist raters.

Key Recommendations:

- Consider supplementing in-class worksheets with tutorials or other pre-session homework in order to help students develop search skills.
- Provide more specific guidelines/questions to help students better explore relevance of an article for their research.
- Establish librarian-faculty shared outcomes and expectations for student performance in order to communicate a consistent message to students about what success looks like for this activity.
- Continue to assess student learning for this class, and further investigate differences in students based on program/majors.
Appendix: Student Rubric Scores for BES301

BES301: Science Methods and Practice

Performance Level Criteria

Comparision of faculty, course librarian, and all raters (mean scores)

Performance Level Criteria