Boston College Libraries FWS Instruction Goals and Objectives

The First Year Writing Seminars (FWS) Library Instruction is a foundational component of the Boston College Library Instruction Program (see “Instruction Program Mission and Design”). FWS instructional goals focus on introducing core library skills and resources that are directly relevant to introductory undergraduate research, and will serve to support students throughout their academic careers.

General Goals

After participating in FWS Library Instruction, students should:

A. have the skills to find and locate relevant information in the appropriate format for their assignments
B. understand the need for critical thinking skills in assessing information resources
C. know where to go in the library and online to find help with library and information resources

Objectives

The following objectives are intended as an overview for the topics covered in a typical FWS instruction session. Because FWS sessions are customized to meet instructor requests, some of the objectives may not be covered during the instruction session, and may be provided either before or after the session as additional learning materials. While the objectives are separated into three categories, many objectives overlap or will be covered together in the classroom setting.

A. Know how to locate and find resources such as books, journals, magazines, and newspapers, either print or online
   a. Be familiar with the BC library catalog, Holmes
   b. Know how to do a basic and advanced search in Holmes
   c. Know how to identify and use a call number to locate materials in the library or to access online materials through the catalog
   d. Understand what databases are, how they differ from Holmes
   e. Know how to find field-specific databases, either through searching Research Databases or Research Guides
   f. Understand the difference between keyword and controlled vocabulary searching and how that difference affects search results
   g. Know how to distinguish between different types of resources such as peer-reviewed, magazines, encyclopedias, datasets
h. Understand how to read a citation, including the components and formatting  
i. Be familiar with and know how to use FindIt button, in order to find articles through Holmes and our databases  
j. Be able to use search strategies across the variety of database interfaces, understanding that many of their features (e.g. Boolean searches, faceting, etc.) are similar  
k. Know how to adjust search terms and strategies based on the number of results and relevance  
l. Understand that search terms, truncation, Boolean operators, controlled vocabulary, and facets affect search results  

B. Understand how to move through the research process, utilizing critical thinking skills  
a. Understand that different material types are appropriate to different research purposes and stages in the research process, such as encyclopedias, books, journal articles, news sources  
b. Know how to evaluate the quality of a resource  
c. Recognize the value in using citation management tools such as Refworks, Zotero, Endnote to help organize research  
d. Be aware that research is a way to engage in the conversation of scholars  
e. Understand that searching is a recursive process  

C. Be familiar with a variety of library services and resources  
a. Know how to find and navigate the Boston College Libraries website  
b. Know what the BC library Research Guides are and know how to find and use them to help with research  
c. Be familiar with the ways to find help such as visiting the reference desk, scheduling an in person consultation, live 24/7 chat, send email, and text a librarian  
d. Know how to find citation management tools such as Refworks and documentation on various citation styles  
e. Be able to locate a variety of services on the website  
f. Understand how to use course reserves, check out, reserve or request materials from the libraries, or interlibrary loan  

The Boston College Instruction Program follows the guidelines established by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Information Literacy Framework and Boston College’s Instruction Program.