

Designing your effective library resources assignment

The following suggestions can ensure that students select better quality content for your term paper or other written assignment.

1. Clarify which skills you want your student to learn

Stating the purpose of your research paper, including the specific activities you want students to perform, helps students understand why you are requiring certain types of resources.

2. Require students to use library databases in their search for information, and tell them why

Mandating use of [library databases](#) guides students to higher quality content than they typically find with a Google search, where it is more challenging for students to evaluate quality and differentiate among publication types.

3. Get feedback from your students as they proceed with their research

What are students finding difficult about the research process? Check in with them and you may find that skills you expected them to possess are entirely new for them.

4. Request assistance from a librarian

Instead of resorting to the most common assignment: the scavenger hunt, [request a research consultation](#) with one of us to work on your assignment design and even present to your class. If you find that it's just one or two students who need assistance, encourage them to [make their own appointment with a librarian](#) to work on the assignment.

5. Allow students to use printed and electronic sources

Requiring that students use only printed resources and not electronic ones is generally not advised. In many cases, the best books or journals will be online only, and limiting allowed sources only to printed books on a topic may mean the student is using outdated information.

6. Warn us if you're using an e-book as your course text

It's a very good idea to forewarn the library so that the book doesn't suddenly disappear! Because of our varied subscription models, publishers and vendors sometimes

pull e-books from the system without advance warning. If we know that a class is using it, we can sometimes obtain a purchased copy ahead of time to prevent sudden disaster.

Contact Karen Jensen at kljensen@alaska.edu for more information.

