

Sharing My Research Experience: How Conducting Research Has Transformed My Teaching

Lisa Becksford, Virginia Tech

My Research Project

Becoming a Researcher

- Wanted to study instruction librarians' teacher identity
- Attended Institute for Research Design in Librarianship (IRDL) in June 2019 and have continued to work on research project since then
 - Conducted survey and analyzed data
- First major research project done on my own since becoming a librarian

My Context

My Teaching and Scholarship

- Focus on online and graduate learning, liaison to School of Education and Engineering Education program
- Predominantly graduate students, particularly doctoral students
- Teaching database searching and citation managers, but encountering questions about literature reviews, data analysis, research tools, and research methods
- On continued-appointment (tenure equivalent) track

Bringing My Researcher Self into My Teaching

An Accidental Addition

- Asked to teach a session for a literature review class in School of Education in fall 2019
- Needed an example topic
- Wanted to show the connection between database searching and literature reviews, and how a narrative literature review develops
- Realized that my research could be an example, so used my real-life process and topic
- Students responded really well; have continued to bring my research as an example into teaching and consultations

The Benefits

- Deepened my understanding of students' research experiences
 - I used my library's resources as a researcher, not just as a librarian
 - Used not only databases, but also other research support
- Increased my empathy for students
 - Required new set of skills beyond database research
 - I didn't really know what I was doing either, especially at beginning
 - Remembered what it's like to be a beginner, which is easy to forget
 - Navigating scholarly publishing landscape (selecting a journal, peer review, revisions, etc.)

The Benefits, cont.

— — —

- Enabled me to better connect with them
 - Librarian as researcher
 - Had to take my own advice
 - Can speak with authority about tips and tricks that I share because I have now tried them myself (and in some cases adjusted how I teach)
 - Can show my real citation manager library and give real-life examples
 - Bring another aspect of myself to the teaching context
- Provided an authentic teaching example
 - Helpful to show connection between database searching and rest of research project

Takeaways

- If you're already a researcher, bring that experience into your teaching!
- If not, but you're interested, consider how conducting research could impact your teaching
 - Could act as a “bargaining chip” to convince administration of relevance of research to your job

— — —

Thank you!

lisab5@vt.edu