LIBRARY ANXIETY
PLANNING INSTRUCTION & LEARNING ACTIVITIES

WHAT IS IT?

Students often experience fear or anxiety when they are confronted with having to use the library for a research project (Mellon, 1986; Kulthau, 1991)[1]. They experience feelings of being lost and/or intimidated, which stem from: size of library, location of resources, where to begin, and fear of reaching out.

Library anxiety can impact student success because students may: not attend or learn from library tours or classes; develop poor study habits; be unable to perform library-related tasks; become library and search avoidant; be reluctant to ask library staff for help (Carlile, 2007).

RESEARCH...

Library anxiety can be exacerbated by assumptions faculty have about how undergraduate students approach information research (Leckie, 1996), the design of research-based writing assignments (Head and Eisenberg, 2010), and misperceptions students have about the nature of research (Hinchliffe, Rand & Collier, 2018; Rempel & Deitering, 2017).

DATA ...

75% or more of all undergraduate students express some degree of library anxiety (Abusin & Zainab, 2010; Mellon, 1986)

62.5% of undergraduates feel uncomfortable searching for information (Blundell & Lambert, 2014)

[1] List of all references in the complete JITT Guide.

TEACHING STRATEGIES...

- *Acknowledge library anxiety and encourage your students to seek assistance from the library.*

- *Incorporate relevant library Subject Guides into your research assignment prompts and your Canvas course page.*

- *Consult with a librarian to see how we can help your students develop their information search skills and learn about library resources. We can schedule an instruction or orientation session for your class.*

- *Be explicit with students about your expectations for research assignments. For example, break assignments down into discrete steps; consider the design of your writing assignments; be transparent.*

STUDENTS SAY...

"Friendly and very welcoming staff."

"I am no longer hesitant or intimidated when it comes to the process of information collection for a report. I am also much more knowledgeable in what resources are available to me to make my research truly stand out.''

REFLECTION...

- *What do you assume about how your students approach information research?*

- *What do written assignment instructions in your class communicate to students about their research process?*

- *How can you share examples with your students of times you encountered challenges in your own information research process and how you navigated them?*