

# Engaging the Archives:

*Engaged Learning Pedagogies and Archival  
Instruction*

**What is engaged learning?**

“The human mind has a remarkable capacity to take in information when that information is well structured, personally relevant, and rich in emotional and sensory qualities.”

Carini, Robert M., George D. Kuh and Stephen P. Klein.  
“Student Engagement and Student Learning: Testing the Linkages.” *Research in Higher Education*. 47:1 (February 2006) 1-32.

# What is Engaged Learning

Student engagement represents two critical features of collegiate quality. The first is the amount of time and effort students put into their studies and other educationally purposeful activities. The second is how the institution deploys its resources and organizes the curriculum and other learning opportunities to get students to participate in activities that decades of research studies show are linked to student learning. (NSSE)

# Measures NSSE uses

- Academic challenge,
- Collaborative learning,
- Faculty-student interaction
- Enriching educational experiences
- Institutional support

# Aspects of Engaged Learning

- engagement with the learning process
  - defined: actively participating in learning
- engagement with the subject matter
  - defined: Providing an environment that facilitates engaging in the learning process
- engagement with context of subject matter
  - defined: discussion of complementary disciplines
- engagement with the human condition
  - defined: discussion of the cultural issues and changes

# Different Methods of Instruction

- Reacting to the Past
- Problem Based Learning
- Seven Revolutions
- Service Learning
- etc, etc.

# Effects in Classroom

- Engaged learning has a proven record of improving grades and critical thinking skills.
  - Is Very effective for improving grades of students with low SAT scores
- Problem based learning improves clinical accuracy in doctor training
- Reacting to the past improves student self-esteem
- Service Learning usually directly impacts students and their community



# What is Archival Instruction?

- What is archival instruction at your institution?
  - Features
  - Average Session Length
  - Activities involved

# Archivist Role in Education

- Marcus Robbins and the Archivist as Educator
  - "Because archivists are the guardians of the nuts and bolts of history (primary sources), we are in a terrific position to play an instrumental role in enhancing the education of our young people."
- Do you agree with this?

# Archival Orientation: Basics

- Discussion Goes back to the early days of profession
  - “If a public institution does not build constituencies larger than those of the academic researcher, the institution is doomed.” Elsie Freivogel
- Three Forms of Knowledge
  - Archival Intelligence
  - Artifactual Literacy
  - Subject Knowledge

# Does It Work?

- Sessions can be a turning point for students understanding of archives and research in general (Zhou, Xiaomu)
- But there's very limited data on the impact of the effectiveness of current instructional practice.
- Also some archivist don't see themselves as educators.

# Effects on Library Instruction

- Several small studies suggest that critical thinking and overall learning are improved.
- Most studies show that any form of engaged learning requires deep work with instructors and more than one session.
- Librarians seem to love it!!!

# How Georgia College Special Collections Uses Engaged Learning

- Implementation of Problem Based Learning activities into archival instruction
- Direct support of engaged learning courses
- Creation of activities that encourage engaged learning

# Problem Based Learning and Support

- Created a "problem" for students that allowed them to create a bibliography
- Support of courses included one-on-one reference/research help and instruction/research sessions

# Media Design

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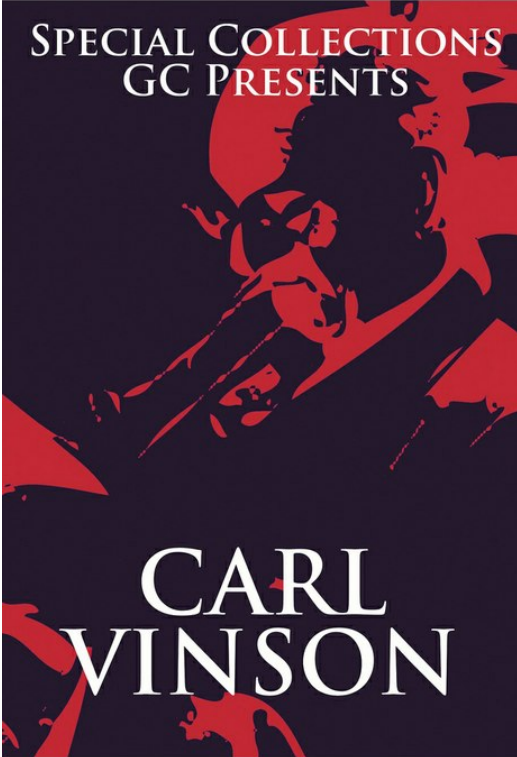


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# Lessons

- Fully implementing a new pedagogy is hard
- Rethinking activities and supporting faculty through engaged learning is much easier approach.

# Moving Forward

- There's a great benefit for archivists to reexamine how we conduct instruction sessions
- Using engaged Learning Pedagogies and activities could be the answer.
- **MORE RESEARCH IS NEEDED**

**Questions, Comments, Experiences**

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