Library Instruction Policy

I. Objectives

The Bibliographic Instruction program is designed to offer instruction for students, faculty and all other library users in all aspects of the library research process. Included is instruction on how to choose, focus and narrow a topic for research, how to plan, organize, and execute research strategy, how to locate and use information resources, and how to evaluate the usefulness and reliability of information resources. Bibliographic instruction is available for both faculty and students, on both the undergraduate and graduate level, for both introductory and advanced level classes. Instruction is also offered on an individual basis.

II. Services

To accomplish these objectives, the library has established a number of programs for the CNR community. The first of these is the introduction to the library that all CNR students are provided as part of the orientation program. Students are given an overview of the services offered by Gill Library, are introduced to the library homepage, and are taken on a tour of the library.

The library conducts bibliographic instruction classes, including general introductory overviews of information resources and full-text online databases. Also included are specialized instruction on print abstracts and online databases in specific subject fields. The new Bibliographic Instruction Room on the main campus is equipped with computer workstations so that students can get hands on experience in searching the various resources and databases that are being presented. This room is equipped for features for future expansion toward distance learning to include the branch campus libraries.

In addition to new student orientation and bibliographic instruction classes, the library provides two other programs to facilitate efficient patron use of the available resources. One of these is the Hands on Help program. Students, faculty and staff can ask to schedule a one-on-one tutorial with a librarian. The patron indicates their specific research needs prior to the session, and the librarian is then able to provide a research strategy tailored to the patron’s individual project.

As a cooperative effort with Learning Support Services and Academic Computing, the Library has for the past two semesters offered a Research Paper Workshop for interested students. This program provides students with a step-by-step description of how to complete a research paper assignment. The Library welcomes suggestions from students, faculty and staff regarding additional workshops that they would like to see offered either at the main campus or at the branch campuses.
The library provides handouts that give detailed instructions on how to search the library's online subscription databases. This information is provided in print form and on the library homepage.