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MUS 100, First-semester Undergraduate Music Majors

Topic: An Amazing Library Race for First-Year Music Majors

This presentation describes an activity that was developed to help achieve scaffolded library instruction sessions for music majors throughout their time at the University. Groups of MUS 100 students “compete” in an Amazing-Race-style activity, which the music librarian and music history faculty decided would be an effective way to introduce 90 first-year students to the library and the research process/tools in music. This presentation will give details on creating, administering, and evaluating this scalable activity.

Objectives:

1. Students will engage with different types of resources used in music research
2. Students will be able to locate sources in the library/on the web

Materials:

1. Access to mobile device/desktop computer for each group of students
2. Slips of paper to hand students for each race leg
3. Instructor computer or device that is logged into LibChat

Lesson:

50 minutes

Students work in small groups to complete a task for each of five race legs. Each leg asks students to explore a different type of resource or research support mechanism: library website, encyclopedia article, peer-reviewed article, books and scores, and getting help from a librarian. The task for each leg is described on a slip of paper that the librarian gives to each group. The librarian is based at a central point (reference desk); students check in here at the beginning of class and turn in their completed sheets to receive the next one. The first team to complete the race wins coveted prizes (coffee mug), but every student receives something (dry-erase marker) when they complete the race. Teams may not start the race early, students must work together with teammates to complete each leg, and they can only ask the facilitating librarian questions about the race.

Assessment:

1. The librarian reviews slips of paper students turned in for each leg
2. If there are patterns of confusion, those can be noted and addressed the next year, when the students receive two instruction sessions in their sophomore-level music history course

ACRL Information Literacy Framework:

1. Authority is constructed and contextual, Knowledge practices 2 and 4
2. Research as Inquiry, Knowledge practice 4
3. Searching as strategic exploration, Knowledge practices 4-6