

# Teaching UNV 101 at Miami University

I recently had the pleasure of teaching a one credit Introduction to university resources course to incoming first year and transfer students, called UNV 101 at Miami University. The course introduced students to resources available to help them succeed in college and beyond including academic advising, tutoring, library tools, and more. We also discussed potentially uncomfortable or divisive topics such as diversity and inclusion throughout the course. Teaching this course afforded me the opportunity to not only teach students about campus resources such as the library, but also gave me the chance to build meaningful connections with incoming students—both of which contribute to student retention and success.

Teaching UNV 101 gave me an opportunity to do more than is typically possible during the one-shot library instruction session. Thomas Atwood spoke on the importance of librarians actively engaging to assist transfer students acclimation to their new environment. We can actively participate in campus wide efforts aimed at student retention and success through engagement efforts (2017). I strongly agree and suggest librarians consider focusing more engagement efforts on teaching full semester courses such as the UNV 101 course.

In the past, I enjoyed connecting with students in the classroom environment as an adjunct psychology professor. It was a pleasure to see my students' eyes light up when they developed new insight into complex issues or concepts. My goal was simple: help students develop an intrinsic interest in learning so they would intentionally choose to evaluate information to make responsible decisions.

Teaching the UNV 101 course was an invaluable opportunity to build meaningful connections with the students. Courses in which librarians can interact with students on a weekly basis are integral to building real connections with the student body. Further, librarians specialize in assessing information for quality, accuracy and bias. When we step outside of the role of providing information on library resources only and lead safe, balanced discussions on issues that students are deeply concerned about, we increase our opportunity to develop student–librarian rapport.

I am grateful to Lindsay Miller, the coordinator of Miami University Libraries' involvement in the UNV 101 course for having made my participation in in UNV 101 possible. My belief is that the connections I formed with students during this course will in turn increase the likelihood that students will feel comfortable approaching librarians in the future. A librarian teaching a course such as this helps the students develop an appreciation for the librarian as a resource in and of herself. Students will be confident that not only will librarians provide them with help in accessing information, but also that they will be treated with respect and understanding.

References

Atwood, T. (2017, October) *From Invisible to Just Within Our Sights: Constructing Pedagogical Supports for Transfer Students in Academic Libraries*. Paper presented at Academic Library Association of Ohio. Columbus, Ohio.

-Anna Liss Jacobsen, Miami University