Nurturing undergraduate students research skills through Research Skills Development (RSD)

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For students learning through research is about discovery

Why bother with undergraduate research?

- **Student engagement through research activities**
  - Community of scholars
  - Discover and integrate knowledge

- **Academic staff engagement and service**
  - Scholarship of teaching and learning

- **Graduate attributes and student employability**
  - Critical and creative scholars
Levels of Autonomy

- Research tasks/questions may be
  - Closed and highly prescribed by lecturer with low student autonomy (Level 1)
  - Open and unstructured with a high degree of student autonomy (in line with the discipline) (Level 5)
Facets of researching:

1. embark on an inquiry and so determine a need for knowledge/understanding  
   - Affect

2. find/generate needed information using appropriate methodology  
   - Curious

3. critically evaluate information/data and the process to find/generate  
   - Determined

4. organise information collected/generated and manage research processes  
   - Critical

5. synthesise and analyse and apply new knowledge  
   - Organised

6. communicate knowledge and the processes used to generate it, with an awareness of ethical, social and cultural issues.  
   - Creative

(Willison & O’Regan, 2007)
### Research Skill Development Framework

**Level of Student Autonomy**

- **Level I**: Students research at the level of a closed inquiry and require some structure/guidance.
  - Respond to questions/tasks arising explicitly from a closed inquiry.

- **Level II**: Students research at the level of a closed inquiry and require some structure/guidance.
  - Respond to questions/tasks required by and implicit in a closed inquiry.

- **Level III**: Students research independently at the level of a closed inquiry and require some structure/guidance.
  - Respond to questions/tasks generated from a closed inquiry.

- **Level IV**: Students research independently at the level of a closed inquiry within structured guidelines.
  - Generate questions/aims/hypotheses framed within structural guidelines.

- **Level V**: Students research at the level of an open inquiry with self-determined and according with the context.
  - Generate questions/aims/hypotheses based on personal expertise and literature.

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**A. Students embark on Inquiry and so determine a need for knowledge/understanding**

- Collect and record required information/data using a prescribed methodology from a prescribed source in which the information/data is clearly evident.

**B. Students find/generate needed information/data using appropriate methodology**

- Collect and record required information/data from self-selected sources using one of several prescribed methodologies.

**C. Students critically evaluate information/data and the process to find/generate this information/data**

- Collect and record self-determined information/data from self-selected sources, choosing an appropriate methodology based on structural guidelines.

**D. Students organise information collected/generated**

- Collect and record self-determined information/data from self-selected sources, choosing or devising an appropriate methodology based on structural guidelines.

**E. Students synthesise and analyse and apply new knowledge**

- Organise information/data using a simple prescribed structure and process.

**F. Students communicate knowledge and the processes used to generate it, with awareness of ethical, social and cultural issues**

- Organise information/data using a recommended structure and process.

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**Facet of Inquiry**

- Synthesise and analyse information/data to reproduce existing knowledge in prescribed formats.
  - Ask questions of clarification/curiosity.

- Synthesise and analyse information/data to reorganise existing knowledge in standard formats.
  - Ask relevant, researchable questions.

- Use mainly lay language and prescribed genre to demonstrate required knowledge and understanding for lecturer/teacher to the audience.

- Use some discipline-specific language and prescribed genre to demonstrate self-selected knowledge and understanding from a stated perspective for a specified audience.

- Use mostly discipline-specific language and appropriate genre to demonstrate knowledge and understanding within a field from a scholarly perspective and for a specified audience.

- Use the language of the discipline and appropriate genre to address knowledge and understanding gaps from several perspectives for a self-selected audience.
MGF 2661 Human Resource Management: Guided Tutorial Reading Assignment & Essay:

• I wanted to help students…..
  – Become “curious” (as opposed to resigned learners)
  – Develop their own knowledge (“determined”) and understanding of the subject (“critical, creative and persuasive”)

• And give them the skills to do the above
Guided reading assignment

- Worksheet designed to assist reader identify key information

- Students asked to compose a question to bring to class

- Weekly readings provide preliminary lit. review for essay assignment due in week 6.

Reference: [http://www.brockport.edu/sociology/journal.html](http://www.brockport.edu/sociology/journal.html) accessed 26 February 2009 11.10am
Essay Assignment

• Critically evaluate the following statement:

“Human Resource Management (HRM) has come a long way from personnel management to the contemporary models of human resource management (HRM) discussed in the literature and your textbook. Moreover, it is argued by HRM scholars that HRM can be used as a vital strategic tool for organisations who want to develop and sustain competitive advantage. This is particularly important in the face of the unpredictable external environments faced by organisations brought about by the global economic crisis.”
**RSD rubric used to mark essay assignment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT NAME</th>
<th>N = FAIL</th>
<th>PASS – CREDIT</th>
<th>DISTINCTION – HIGH DISTINCTION</th>
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</thead>
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| Demonstrated understanding of the essay question and requirements.  
- Discussion and explanation of the evolution of HRM  
- Compare and contrast definitions of HRM and SHRM  
- Identify underlying theory to explain the contribution of HRM to competitive advantage  
- Discuss hard and soft HRM  
- Discuss influence of external environment on HRM | ✓ The student has not adequately responded to the basic requirements of the essay question as per Unit Outline and this marking guide. | ✓ The student has generally responded to the basic requirements of the essay question although there may be some gaps or confusions in providing key definitions of HRM and SHRM and explaining evolution of HRM  
- Has generally identified, defined and discussed underlying theory eg RBV and/or strategic management, concepts of integration to explain the contribution of HRM to competitive advantage.  
- Provides a generally clear and concise discussion of hard and soft HRM  
- Provides a discussion and description of influence of the external environment on HRM (this may be inferred from the discussion of theoretical models of HRM) | ✓ The student has responded clearly and systematically to the basic requirements of the essay question  
- They have provided a comprehensive explanation of the evolution of HRM and clearly identified similarities and differences in the definitions of HRM and SHRM  
- They have clearly and systematically identified and discussed underlying theory eg RBV and/or strategic management, concepts of integration to explain the contribution of HRM to competitive advantage.  
- Provides a generally clear and concise discussion of hard and soft HRM  
- Explicitly and clearly discusses the influence of the external environment on HRM. |
Issues and outcomes

• It takes time and effort to develop the rubrics

• But it does make you think more carefully about learning outcomes and how to achieve them

• Makes marking a breeze
(Good things) the students said......

- “The required reading/literature review task where we summarised and referenced journal articles was extremely helpful in all of the major assignments, group assignment and exam preparation.”

- “My ability to go through the steps of summarising a research paper has allowed me to understand the context [of HRM] more.”

- “The format of how to critically analyse a journal article has helped.”