

11/15/05

Music 214  
Bush Faculty Development Grant 2c  
Midterm Report

Music 214, Music History and Literature of the Non-western World, explores the music history and literature of nine major cultural areas of the world. Recently set up as a W component course, there was much work to be done in the planning phase, to incorporate the writing experience and assessment through writing into the course. Students are required to write two essays, one a position paper and the other a descriptive essay, and a major research paper which they will also present as a class lecture.

Students in this class have had very little experience researching and writing for music classes, and it is obvious that they have had little knowledge and experience in using the Chicago Style Manual and its format for documentation. Students have struggled with footnotes and bibliographies on all the papers handed in so far. Bev Gibson, the principle instructor, has been flexible in allowing extra time for Judith Howard to come in to class to answer questions about research and the documentation process as the need became obvious.

Judith has demonstrated the principle databases used for music research and how to do effective searching in each. Students were given time to do hands-on guided research in class while Judith and Bev were available to answer questions. Evaluating and thinking critically about web resources was emphasized, and students learned the importance of, and practiced formulating, strong thesis statements. Students have been encouraged to seek help from Judith or another librarian when having difficulties with research or writing. Some have chosen to take advantage of this help already, and it is expected that more will do so as the due date for the final paper approaches.

This class provides an opportunity to introduce those who might be planning to attend graduate school, to the world of research and writing. For those whose formal education will end with the Bachelor's degree, it introduces skills necessary to becoming lifelong learners and critical thinkers.

Submitted by:  
Beverly Gibson  
Judith Howard