

Government 275
Bush Faculty Development Grant, Area 2c
Progress Report
11/30/05

Within Augustana's curriculum, Government 275, "Politics and Literature," provides students with an opportunity to enhance their understanding of political theory and practice by closely reading works of narrative fiction and drama that address political themes.

As a result of this project, students will demonstrate the ability to research the literary and historical context of one of the assigned readings, delve into the scholarly criticism of that work, assemble an annotated bibliography of at least six reliable scholarly sources, and craft a narrowly focused research paper of 8-10 pages.

To this end, Lisa has given two hour-long presentations to the students of Government 275, one on preparing an annotated bibliography, and one on effectively citing sources. Both were very well received by the students.

During the first of these sessions we administered a pre-test to measure information literacy. There was significant variation among students in their self-reported skills. Some considered themselves skilled at using online databases and search engines, while others confessed a lack of skill. When we asked about preparing an annotated bibliography, half the class considered themselves less than "skilled." We also gathered information about which citation style students preferred, which has helped us advise them as they compose their papers. Our hope is that our post-test, to be administered on Wednesday, December 7, will show significant improvement in many of these categories.

Both Joel and Lisa have advised students in researching and drafting their papers. In addition, Joel has devoted significant class time to discussing how to formulate a research topic and conduct research. The annotated bibliographies, due October 7, though ranging in quality, were for the most part well done. Students are currently peer-reviewing each other's rough drafts. Final drafts of the paper are due on Wednesday, December 7.

Respectfully submitted by:

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