

Reflective Essay

Submitted for

Dr. John Archer Library Award

Submitted by: Carrie Kotylak

During the spring semester of 2015 I attended a Library Research Skills Seminar and an APA Style Seminar hosted by the Archer Library in preparation for my 2015 fall semester. Also, during the previous semester one of my professors had Robert Thomas give a personalized seminar to our class concerning research skills, the use of Summon, and more detailed searches. I had an opportunity to speak with Robert following his presentation and learned from him of the various roles of the in-house librarians and the assistance they could provide me. He also supplied me with contact information for several of the research librarians in various fields.

This personal contact with the Archer Library led me to feel comfortable in contacting several of the librarians for research assistance with an upcoming term paper for ECON 341, Canada and the Global Economy. I specifically contacted Michael Shires and then Marilyn Andrews. Their assistance was invaluable to my project.

I travel well over an hour to the University of Regina campus to attend classes, so being present in the library or for meetings outside of class time is often very difficult for me. Both Michael and Marilyn responded to my email requests for assistance immediately and they made our email discussions and meetings very easy for me. They both provided me with sources that I had not previously considered and, in the case of Marilyn, I was given access to statistical data that I would otherwise not have known about. As well, they were both very encouraging to me in my project and with my thesis. They made me feel as though I were asking pertinent questions and that my research held value. This was extremely important for a new student such as myself who is questioning their thought process in an unfamiliar environment.

I feel that due to the knowledge and assistance I received from the Archer Library, I have increased my research efficiency and I have learned to narrow the focus of my enquiry to hone in on the content of my thesis idea. I received a grade of 82% on my term paper entitled, “Saskatchewan’s Cow-Calf Production Sector: The Historical Development Resulting in Current Labour Shortages and Lack of Labour Mobility.” Without the support of the librarians and the immense amount of material that Archer Library is able to supply, I would never have been able to achieve this grade in such a demanding course.

In addition, I would like to say that for several other class projects last semester, the Archer Library was able to provide me with materials from other libraries in a timely manner and that my new found skill with Summon has been critical to my success in several other courses.

As a mature student, I perhaps have less inhibition when it comes to asking questions and requesting assistance and because of this I try to extol upon the resources of the Archer Library and its staff to all of the younger students I develop relationships with. I truly believe that this library’s resources and talents are gold-mines for the success of all University of Regina students.