

## The Use of NDSU Library Resources in Undergraduate Research

In the fall semester of 2018, I took English 324: Writing in the Sciences taught by Professor Deona McEnery. Part of this course was writing research proposals, status reports, and eventually a final document for research findings. I was in a group that decided we wanted to research NDSU students use of stairs versus their use of elevators in buildings around campus.

Once we had decided on our topic, we had to begin researching so we could write and submit a proposal to the Red River Valley Research Cooperative (RRVRC) for approval. This cooperative was set up by our professor and had put out a call for proposals to simulate a real scenario for the students.

To begin our research, we utilized NDSU Libraries online databases, like EBSCO and PubMed, to see what kind of research had already been done on stair use. From this, we narrowed down our topic and decided that our study would be on if students were influenced to take the stairs with the presence of visual aids.

We used Boolean search methods in the databases to find papers related to stair use, cardiovascular health, and psychology involved with visual aids. We then used this information to help write the abstract, introduction, background, methods, and design sections of our proposal. In fact, all the sources we used to write the proposal were found using NDSU Libraries online databases.

Once our proposal had been approved by the RRVRC, we put a plan in place to collect our own data. During the first week, we split up and went to Sudro Hall, Barry Hall, and the A.G. Hill Center on Tuesday and Thursday from 10 AM to 10:45 AM. We used clicker apps on our phones to keep track of the number of people who took the stairs on Tuesday, and the number of people who took the elevator on Thursday. While counting we did not include anyone who was carrying large or heavy objects, or anyone who was physically unable to take the stairs. We put posters up near the elevator entrances on Thursday after we had counted. For the second week we repeated the same process and took the posters down on Thursday after we had counted.

We also wanted to collect data on the attitudes of students towards stair use. We did this by creating a Qualtrics survey and administering it to the other English 324 students as well as the student organizations we are active in.

Now that we had gathered all the data, we had to individually create an informative public document to display our results and a group presentation for our class seminar. I created a fact sheet about stair use that included some statistics from our survey results. We also created a PowerPoint presentation accompanied by an abstract that was presented during the class seminar.

This project could not have been completed without access to the libraries online databases. This was the first time I have ever had to use online databases in my academic career, but I will definitely use them for future projects. Utilizing Boolean search methods and

having to narrow down sources was a new experience that will be helpful for the rest of my college career and after I graduate.

The library itself is a well-known building on campus and is a favorite study spot for most NDSU students, but I don't think that a lot of students realize the full extent of resources it offers and that are available for student use. The only thing I would change about the library is to inform the students, especially newer students like the freshmen, about all that it offers. I am a junior and this project is the first time I have really utilized the library's resources at my time at NDSU, and before this class I was unaware of them. The library is definitely more than just the building that houses the math emporium or a nice to place to study.