

As seniors in the occupational therapy (OT) program, we were surprised at the number of semester-long, group projects that we were expected to complete. Even more surprising was the degree to which we relied upon the Weinberg Memorial Library (WML) databases for these assignments, as this semester would have been literally impossible without WML resources. Our evidence-based research project required us to pick a topic; construct an answerable question with our desired population, intervention, and outcomes; and find every relevant article published within at least a 10-year timeframe. We were told to leave no stone unturned in our searches, and initially this seemed like an impossible task that we were embarking on, as we had limited knowledge of how to conduct research efficiently and effectively.

Early in the semester, our class met with Bonnie Oldham, and immediately she made the impossible seem attainable. She educated us on the tools necessary to find an abundance of research articles through the library's resources and databases. After attending a class led by her in the library, we had a better understanding of how to utilize each different database to its maximum potential and had acquired tricks to format search terms to locate all relevant articles. One of the most useful things we learned this semester was how to manipulate the "AND" and "OR" features in search terms to make one comprehensive sweep of each database; we never expected to enjoy playing around in databases, but found ourselves ecstatically chaining 15 search terms together to initiate broad searches. Even when we thought we had exhausted all of the articles on our topic, this search strategy proved to be beneficial in locating additional articles that we never would have stumbled upon, but ended up being essential to our project. Bonnie showed us databases such as OT Search, CINAHL, ProQuest Central, SpringerLink, ERIC, PubMed, and Science Direct; these databases helped us locate approximately 50 relevant articles from 22 different journals, an impressive feat considering our topic has not been heavily researched to begin with.

Upon Bonnie's suggestion, we began looking at references from articles that were particularly useful to find more articles that may have been relevant to our topic. We became frustrated when our searches were halted by an inability to obtain some of the articles we had discovered, as we were only able to locate the abstracts for articles after exhausting every search trick we knew. We remember approaching the Reference desk in the library—hopeful but not sure it would be beneficial—and asking them questions about citations and locating articles. At this point, one of the librarians at the Reference desk changed our semester for the better by introducing us to Interlibrary Loan—something that we are still convinced is one of WML's best-kept secrets. Luckily, we were shown how to place requests through this loan system, and the hard part was out of our hands. This resource enhanced our research by locating nearly all of the articles requested from different libraries around the area, thus supplying us with a plethora of much-needed information. Interlibrary Loan ultimately pieced together the missing links in our research that enabled us to synthesize our data in a coherent manner, and potentially make a contribution to the profession of OT with our findings.

As if the WML electronic and personnel resources were not helpful enough, the physical resources offered by the WML were more beneficial than we can communicate. The newly designed space incorporates technology that helped us work simultaneously, and the numerous study rooms in the library proved to be a great environment conducive to research and productivity.

As our profession moves towards evidence-based practice, we are making the commitment to become lifelong learners and researchers. Although the task seems daunting, we are significantly more confident in our abilities to effectively and thoroughly research whatever topics or areas we encounter in the future. The staff and resources from the WML not only made research a possibility, but they turned it into a generalizable, enjoyable experience.