**Course Topic**: The Research Process

**Objectives:**

Students understand research as a non-linear process of exploration

Students acquire strategies for moving through the research process effectively

Students plan for successful completion of research assignments

**ACRL Frameworks**:  Research as Inquiry, Searching as Strategic Exploration

***Research is iterative and depends upon asking increasingly complex or new questions whose answers in turn develop additional questions or lines of inquiry in any field.***

***Searching for information is often nonlinear and iterative, requiring the evaluation of a range of information sources and the mental flexibility to pursue alternate avenues as new understanding develops.***

**Lesson Plan:**

**Research Process**

1. Begin with an opening activity to get students thinking about planning for a research project. Tell students that they have to plan an activity or trip together, and have them brainstorm the steps they would have to take to prepare (if necessary prompt with questions like:  Where you’re going? Who is going with you? What supplies do you need?) As students bring up ideas and suggestions form a rough flow chart of the steps you will go through to plan the activity/trip. Discuss the kinds of problems you would run into if you waited until the last minute (try to spend no more than 5 minutes on this)

2. Pivot to the research process and make the comparison between planning an event and the work of planning and writing a successful research paper. Relate this discussion to these essential Research Questions:

- What do I Know?

- What do I need to know?

- How am I going to find out?

3. Using the rough flow chart you created, examine whether it moves in a linear or circular fashion. Point out the ways in which you made adjustments as you gathered more information. If there is time, show students this video: <https://www.lib.ncsu.edu/tutorials/picking_topic/> Introduce the idea of a “working thesis”.

4. Ask students to create their own representation of the research process. Begin by brainstorming as a group the different steps or phases students go through when writing a research process. Then ask them to create a flow chart that represents these steps and how they might be connected to each other. After students have completed their flow charts, ask for volunteers to share their drawings. Discuss whether they have expressed the research process linearly or circularly. If linearly, ask students to point out areas where the process may repeat or return to a previous point. A similar activity described here: <http://acrlog.org/2015/10/14/being-human-in-the-classroom/> This can be done on paper or using an online tool such as padlet. Examples (Padlet) <https://padlet.com/jh877/ueoy4vagk2m1> (Libguide) <http://cabrini.libguides.com/researchasprocessandconceptmapping>

Class Wrap Up: Ask students to complete a one-minute reflection on their drawings. Ask them to consider what roadblocks or challenges they experience in completing research papers. What (if anything) prevents them from moving through the process as successfully as they could. What goals do they have for the completion of this assignment?

\*\*\* If possible, revisit their flow charts after they have completed their research assignment, asking them to reflect on if they moved through the process as they imagined they would, or if they moved through it differently in reality. Alternatively, have them redraw the research process to reflect their actual experience. Have them reflect on