

Library Scholarship Application: John Mailhot

Last year I submitted a research paper that examined the possibility of universal pharmacare in Canada for a social work policy class. It was one of the longer research papers I have had to write in my university career. The process required accessing academic, government and online research articles. While I had had some experience with research at this point, I felt I would need to enhance my skills for this particular paper. I choose to attend a library workshop, which helped me greatly in discovering new resources, how to cite complex references and how to navigate government publications.

During the workshop I was primarily concerned with learning how to find and cite materials. While I had a general understanding of how to find books in the library, I was not aware of how many online resources the library offered. The workshop gave me a strong understanding of how to navigate the online databases and how to find articles that would help build a strong case for universal pharmacare. The librarians at the workshop also explained how to structure a research paper in a way that makes it easy to approach and less time consuming during the research phase. Building a structure for my paper prior to beginning my research really helped me ensure that my time spent researching was not wasted. The final component of the workshop that I found extremely useful was an overview of the libraries services. I knew that the library had a very helpful resource desk but I was not aware of the online video tutorials regarding research, laptop lending and the instant messaging services. I was sure to make use of all these services during the process of writing my paper.

While the workshop had prepared me for quite a bit of what I would encounter in the research process, I still needed assistance in a few areas. Navigating the government publications surrounding healthcare proved to be extremely difficult. I spent more time than I would like to admit spinning the cranks to move the book shelves only to discover that I was not even close to the publications I needed. Luckily one of the librarians noticed me stumbling around the area and came to help. I showed her a list of materials I was looking for and they were all readily acquired. Once my paper was outlined and the research complete I found the actual writing portion of it to be much less stressful than it had been in the past, regardless of it being one of the largest I had written. During the citing process I made use of the online tutorials and at one point had to instant message the library to double check how to reference multiple authors.

In conclusion, writing the policy paper was a great first experience in trying to use all the resources the library has available. The library helped me structure, research and cite my paper, all of which made the process as a whole much simpler than my experiences in the past. Since gaining the new research skills from the library, my papers now take me half as much time to write and the process far less stressful.