Library Undergraduate Research Award 2026 Rubric

Rubric adapted with permission and gratitude from rubrics developed by Penn State University Libraries and University of Washington Libraries.

Project submission			
	Beginning/Developing (6 points or less)	**Competent (7-8 points)**	**Accomplished (9-10 points)**
Clarity and organization	Writing lacks clarity; research evidence and related writing does not support or justify project argument and/or thesis. Inconsistent or ineffective organization of ideas; argument is lost or obscured throughout the project.	Writing occasionally lacks clarity; research evidence and related writing adequately supports and justifies project argument and/or thesis. Ideas are presented and organized clearly and consistently; attempts made to maintain an argument throughout the project.	Well-written; research evidence and related writing clearly supports and justifies project argument and/or thesis. Excellent organization of ideas; argument is maintained and supported throughout the entirety of the project.
Evidence supporting claim(s)	Most claims or assertions are lacking sufficient in-text references/citations.	Some claims or assertions lack in-text references/citations.	All claims and assertions have in-text references/citations.
Integration of ideas and viewpoints	Poor selection and integration of quotes and acquired ideas. Selected sources address a minimal (or no) range of viewpoints and perspectives appropriate to the project.	Quotes and acquired ideas are adequately selected; some misuse of quotes or lack of integration within argument. Selected sources address a satisfactory range of viewpoints and perspectives appropriate to the project.	Quotes and acquired ideas well selected and integrated conceptually within argument. Selected sources address a wide range of viewpoints and perspectives appropriate to the project.

	Prior knowledge is solely opinion (bias).	Personal bias may interfere with ability to balance opinion with findings of selected sources.	Personal bias acknowledged and balanced with knowledge gained from sources.
Points:			
Notes:			

Subject area			
	Beginning/Developing (6 points or less)	**Competent (7-8 points)**	**Accomplished (9-10 points)**
Relevance of project to scholarship topic(s)	Project demonstrates limited relevance to topics outlined in scholarship application	Project demonstrates effectively demonstrates relevance to topics outlined in scholarship application	Project meaningfully demonstrates relevance to topics outlined in scholarship application

Potential impact of project in scholarship subject area(s)	Project is entirely theoretical in nature or does not have the potential to positively impact the world in ways related to the scholarship subject areas	Project has limited application potential for improving/addressing issues related to the scholarship subject areas	Project has strong applications or implications for improving/addressing issues related to the scholarship subject areas
Points:			
Notes:			

Reflection			
	Beginning/Developing (6 points or less)	**Competent (7-8 points)**	**Accomplished (9-10 points)**
Process	Fails to explain or reconstruct the search process. Does not offer insights on how the project contributed to student's overall growth as a scholar.	Explains or reconstructs the search process in vague terms. Offers limited insights on how the project contributed to student's overall growth as a scholar.	Explains or reconstructs the search process with clear detail. Offers in-depth insights on how the project contributed to student's overall growth as a scholar.
Search strategy	Search strategies not described. Does not demonstrate ability to adjust search strategy when an obstacle is encountered. Does not demonstrate ability to address unmet challenges and	Search strategies described in vague or general terms. Demonstrates limited ability to adjust search strategy when an obstacle is encountered.	Search strategy explicitly described. Demonstrates ability to adjust search strategy when an obstacle is encountered.

	information gaps, and/or to respond to failure. No evidence of use of basic search techniques. Lacks use of flexible and creative approaches to search language Selected sources display little awareness of the need for in-depth digging for research materials throughout the research process.	Demonstrates limited ability to address unmet challenges and information gaps, and/or to respond to failure. Evidence of use of basic search techniques. Demonstrates limited use of flexible and creative approaches to search language (e.g., controlled vocabulary terms, subject headings, keywords, etc.) Selected sources display some awareness of the need for in-depth digging for research materials throughout the research process.	Ability to address unmet challenges and information gaps, and/or to respond to failure. Evidence of use of advanced search techniques. Demonstrates flexible and creative approach to search language (e.g., controlled vocabulary terms, subject headings, keywords, etc.) Selected sources display awareness of the need for in-depth digging for research materials throughout the research process.
Resource use	Does not display awareness of resources appropriate to the project (e.g., research guides, databases, monographs, media, archives, reference and consultation services, interlibrary loan, etc.). Lacks criteria for evaluation of sources.	Displays awareness of some resources and services appropriate to the project (e.g., research guides, databases, monographs, media, archives, reference and consultation services, interlibrary loan, etc.). Criteria for evaluation of sources is incomplete or unclear (e.g., currency, relevance, accuracy, scope).	Displays awareness of resources and services appropriate to the project (e.g., research guides, databases, monographs, media, archives, reference and consultation services, interlibrary loan, etc.). Displays clear criteria for evaluation of sources selected (e.g., currency, relevance, accuracy, scope).

Points:			
Notes:			

Bibliography			
	Beginning/Developing (6 points or less)	**Competent (7-8 points)**	**Accomplished (9-10 points)**
Reference style & formatting	Lacks attributions or reference for sources and visual elements.	Some sources and visual elements are given attribution but are not consistent and some are missing entirely.	All sources and visual elements are cited in a consistent format and are complete throughout.
Source type	Over-reliance on web-only resources; demonstrates little or no evidence of library use.	Sources are from a limited range of content or format types, depth of library use is questionable.	Sources are from a variety of content and format types appropriate to the project, and are reflective of expert library use.
Source use	Few or none of the sources are directly cited in the project.	Some of the project's in-text citations are cited correctly and have a corresponding bibliography reference.	Every in-text citation in the project is cited correctly and has a corresponding bibliography reference.
Points:			
Notes:			