

Concordia University Library Resources

The Library has databases, guides, technology, study spaces, and other resources to support you as a teaching assistant and enrich your students' learning. Access everything through the Library's website: library.concordia.ca.



What your students may already know about the Library

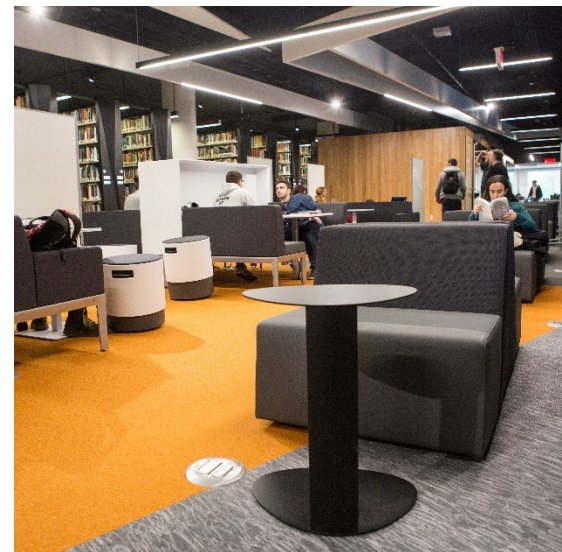
Library and research instruction is integrated into many courses at Concordia, so some of your students might already be familiar with the Library. These are the most important resources to explore if you're new to Concordia:

- **Library locations** – There are three library locations: Webster Library and the Grey Nuns Reading Room on the Sir George Williams campus, and Vanier Library on the Loyola campus.
- **Sofia Discovery Tool** – A search platform for finding anything in the Library's collection of 1.7 million titles. Search for physical and digital items such as articles, books, journals, visual resources, theses, videos, data, music recordings, and more.
- **Requesting in Sofia** – Students at all levels can use Sofia to request materials to borrow from other libraries in Québec and worldwide.
- **Course Reserves** – We have copies of required undergraduate textbooks in the Course Reserve room on the campus where the course is taught. Students can borrow most items for three hours. We also provide digital materials through Course Reserves online.
- **[Library guide for new students](#)** – A brief introduction to services, facilities, and collections with videos and links.

Library services for you and your students

The Library has many services that you can direct your students to if they have questions or need support:

- **[Ask a Librarian](#)** – Use the Live Chat feature on our website or stop by the *Ask Us!* desk (Webster) or the Reference desk (Vanier) to get in-person help.
- **[Library Research Skills Tutorial](#)** – Learn how to evaluate and analyze information sources, practice advanced searching, and improve your critical thinking skills with this online tutorial.
- **[Help & How-to](#)** – You can access citation style guides, tools to help you format and manage citations and avoid plagiarism, and information about copyright.
- **[Subjects guides](#)** – Our subject librarians create and maintain discipline-specific guides where you can find recommended databases, article search tools, how-to guides, websites, and more.
- **[Workshops](#)** – We host events at both campus libraries and online where students can learn how to use a variety of tools and technologies. We have sessions on research and citation skills, Zotero, 3D modeling, virtual reality, and much more.



- [Copyright Guide](#) – Learn about your rights and responsibilities when using copyrighted materials in teaching materials and in assignments.
- **Subject Librarians** – Each department at Concordia is supported by a Subject Librarian who can respond to subject-specific reference questions from TAs or their students. Your subject librarian is [Éthel Gamache](#).

Supporting students with assignments

As a TA, it's important to keep in mind that undergraduate students often have difficulties with assignments because they are still in the early stages of **developing mental models** of the subject matter they're studying. In other words, they are still becoming familiar with their field and with academic research.

While graduate students and faculty have experience finding and using literature, formulating questions and research topics, and navigating their discipline, undergraduate students are likely still figuring out what academic work looks like and what steps they should take. They may face **challenges** in choosing and scoping a topic for assignments, finding relevant sources and background information, making sense of the literature they find, and knowing when to stop looking for outside sources. Terminology that you may take for granted (e.g., peer-reviewed articles, primary and secondary sources) can be confusing to newer students.



While university courses often focus primarily on the **cognitive** aspects of assignments (i.e., the “thinking”), students also need support in the **actions** needed to carry out an assignment (e.g., reading efficiently, scoping out a research topic, knowing when to stop reading), as well as the **emotions** like anxiety and frustration that come up throughout the process.

It is important for students to get **support** through their instructor, TA, or other professional like a librarian during the **stages of an assignment where uncertainty is highest**. As a TA, you don't need to have all the answers. Feel free to refer students to resources like the **Library Research Skills Tutorial** (which is designed to help students get started) as well as the **Ask a Librarian** service for one-on-one advice.

Some helpful resources

If you want to learn more about pedagogy and teaching practices, you can use Sofia to find books and articles on the scholarship of teaching and learning. Here are a couple resources to help you get started:

Armstrong, K. L., Genova, L. A. Greenlee, J. W., & Samuel, D. S. (2021). [Teaching gradually: Practical pedagogy and classroom strategies for graduate students by graduate students](#). Sterling, Virginia: Stylus Publishing.

Bain, K. (2004). [What the best college teachers do](#). Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.