What I’ve Learned from Four Years of Teaching a Three-Credit Entrepreneurship Research Class

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Slides posted at https://liaisonlife.wordpress.com/ALSE
Origins

• Have been co-teaching ENT 300: *Feasibility Analysis: From Idea to Opportunity* with Professor Dianne Welsh

• Recruited by Dr. Welsh in summer 2013 to serve as a Coleman Fellow and create a cross-listed entrepreneurship class

• Class proposal:
  - Focus on research skills
  - 500-level (graduate, juniors, seniors)
  - Cross-list with Geography and Library Science [Marketing asked to be added later]
  - Offer each spring semester

http://bryan.uncg.edu/ecdp/about-us/director/
http://www.colemanfoundation.org/
http://bryan.uncg.edu/ecdp/about-us/coleman-entrepreneurship-fellows/
Curriculum Committees:
Aug-Dec. 2013

- GEO
- LIS
- MEHT
  - Business School
  - Graduate Studies Committee
  - Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
  - Registrar
ENT/GEO/LIS/MKT 530

• “Researching Opportunities in Entrepreneurship & Economic Development”

• T/TH 2-3:15, in a computer classroom

• Learning outcomes:
  o Evaluate self-employment opportunities.
  o Analyze research needs in order to effectively and efficiently conduct business research.
  o Employ a wide variety of business information sources and strategies.
  o Demonstrate intermediate-level concepts of statistical literacy through efficient searching of data sets and meaningful application of data toward making entrepreneurial and economic development decisions.

More background at https://liaisonlife.wordpress.com/2013/08/20/ent530/
Syllabus at http://uncg.libguides.com/ent530
Sources studied (emphasis on local data)

Government:
• Business Patterns
• Nonemployer Statistics
• Economic Census
• American Community Survey
• Consumer Expenditure Survey
• Occupational Employment Statistics
• IRS 990 forms
• Trade Stats Express

NCLIVE:
• ReferenceUSA
• SimplyMap
• ABI-INFORM

Others:
• BizMiner
• RMA
• IBIS
• Mintel
• DemographicsNow
• PrivCo
http://uncg.libguides.com/ent530 (we also use Canvas)
Guest teachers

• Steven Swartz, SimplyMap
• David Turner, ReferenceUSA
• Lynda Kellam, UNCG Data Services Librarian
• Noah Reynolds, UNCG Entrepreneur in Residence (and another Coleman Fellow)
The students

• 6-15 each year
• Juniors through PhD students (and a sophomore)
• Majors represented so far:
  o Entrepreneurship
  o Marketing
  o Library Science
  o Geography
  o Political Science
  o Public Policy
  o Accounting
What I have learned from teaching this class
About teaching:

1. You don’t need to know *everything* about business research to teach it. (You know much more than your students!)

2. It’s easier to teach data sources than it is to teach how to *apply* the data to make better decisions.
About research:

1. Increasing importance of \textit{proxy data} to measure innovative ideas (industries or markets)

2. \textbf{App} “industry” remains a challenge:
   - Combining data from NAICS 511210 with the industry of the app’s purpose
   - Local v. national v. international market
About students:

1. Benefit of teaching a 3-credit elective: the students are **eager** to learn this stuff

   "I had no idea you could get information like this!"

2. Not usually scared off by data sources (which surprised me)

3. Their lives can be difficult
About my role as librarian:

1. Increased recognition from faculty and campus leaders
2. Workload issues
   • Prioritize
   • Don’t be afraid to say “no”
   • But always easier said than done