

Case study

Course-specific methods lists at Nova Southeastern University



Supplementing the Course Textbook

The Methods Lists feature is used to create course-specific supplemental reading lists to post in the Learning Management System

“Lists were convenient for me to gather the resources I was finding. I upload specific chapters or articles that I want my students to access to my list, and I give [them] the link to the list. It is a reliable way of providing my students with access to electronic resources.”

*—Urszula Strawinska-Zanko, PhD,
Assistant Professor, Nova
Southeastern University*

Executive summary

Urszula Strawinska-Zanko, PhD, Assistant Professor of Conflict Resolution at Nova Southeastern University uses the Methods List feature on *SAGE Research Methods* to curate supplemental reading lists for her courses, which are conducted almost entirely online.

Challenges

Strawinska-Zanko teaches Quantitative Methods online to mid-career professionals enrolled in Nova Southeastern’s PhD program in Conflict Resolution Studies. She supplements the course textbook, Andy Field’s *Discovering Statistics*, with additional book chapters and articles sourced through the library’s online resources. Before discovering the Methods Lists feature on *SAGE Research Methods*, students had trouble accessing the resources Strawinska-Zanko posted in Blackboard.

Because they were accessing the library resources from offsite, students often hit a paywall. She had many messages from students asking if they were required to pay for a subscription to the content. Or, once they logged in to the library system with username and password, they were no longer at the specific article and would have to search for it or navigate their way back to the content that was assigned. She heard from many students who were frustrated at the process.

How *SAGE Research Methods* helped

Once Strawinska-Zanko discovered the Methods Lists feature, which allows users to create custom reading lists and either keep them private or post them publicly for other users, she started creating lists for each course she teaches and setting them to public.

She posts the link to her list on the course Blackboard site, and because the lists reside outside the paywall on the platform, students are easily able to keep track of the content they need to access.

“It seems to be working,” she says. **“I no longer hear complaints from my students.”**

Results

For each course, Strawinska-Zanko creates a mixed list of full books, single chapters, and case studies. *“I use these resources to illustrate the theoretical concepts I use in class,”* she says.

She relies heavily on the case studies found in *SAGE Research Methods Cases*.

She will assign case studies as required reading, then center discussions around them during their weekly live online discussion sessions. They discuss how the researcher in the case study approached each step of the research process, followed by how it applies to designing their own research to complete their dissertation.

Through Strawinska-Zanko’s use of Methods Lists to direct her students to the resources in *SAGE Research Methods*, they also gain familiarity with the resource and start creating their own Methods Lists to help with their individual research. They develop a solid understanding of the research process itself and the experience to find the resources they need to start gathering and analyzing their own data.

“My students are getting their PhD in conflict resolution—very multidisciplinary. In that sense, *SAGE Research Methods* is very helpful for me, because I can pull resources from a variety of fields.”

Nova Southeastern is a non-profit, independent university in Florida, US. It was classified as a research university with “high research activity” by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and is one of 37 universities nationwide also to be awarded Carnegie’s Community Engagement Classification.

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