

CASE #16

Engaging History Majors in Intensive Archival Research: Assessing Scaffolded Curricula for Teaching Undergraduates Primary Source Literacy Skills

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rwalton@rollins.eduLEARNING OBJECTIVES ENGAGED FROM [GUIDELINES FOR PRIMARY SOURCE LITERACY](#) BY THIS CASE STUDY

- 1.C. Draw on primary sources to generate and refine research questions.
- 2.D. Understand that historical records may never have existed, may not have survived, or may not be collected and/or publicly accessible. Existing records may have been shaped by the selectivity and mediation of individuals such as collectors, archivists, librarians, donors, and/or publishers, potentially limiting the sources available for research.
- 3.B. Identify and communicate information found in primary sources, including summarizing the content of the source and identifying and reporting key components such as how it was created, by whom, when, and what it is.
- 4.F. Demonstrate historical empathy, curiosity about the past, and appreciation for historical sources and historical actors.
- 5.C. Cite sources in accordance with appropriate citation style guidelines or according to repository practice and preferences (when possible).

CASE STUDY LOCATION

Rollins College
Winter Park, Florida
<https://www.rollins.edu/>

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Introduction and Institutional Context

Founded in 1885 by New England Congregationalists who brought liberal arts education to the Florida frontier, Rollins College is the first recognized college in the state. It is a four-year, coeducational institution, with no religious affiliation, located in the scenic lakeside setting of Winter Park, Florida. With about 2,500 undergraduate students and 230 full-time faculty, Rollins College has a mostly residential student body and an intimate campus community where it seems “everybody knows your name.” Like other liberal arts colleges, the average class size is intentionally small (around seventeen students) and the student-faculty ratio hovers around 10:1, making for a highly personal classroom experience.¹ In fact, the College has a deeply rooted historical commitment to personalized and active classroom learning. As early as the 1920s, instruction at Rollins was famously lecture-free; rather, students were encouraged to convene in a more social classroom setting called the “Conference Plan,” wherein students and faculty alike sat around a large oval table to enable free and open discussion. Education expert and well-known philosopher John Dewey led Rollins in a pedagogy conference in 1931, resulting in the adoption of an even more progressive set of applied learning principles, ones that prioritized individualized learning, intellectual curiosity, and personal enthusiasm for the subject matter.² While teaching practices and curricula at Rollins have undergone many changes and revamps since these foundational years, today’s faculty are equally dedicated to innovative pedagogy. In 2019, *U.S. News & World Report* recognized Rollins as “No. 1 for best undergraduate teaching programs,” ranking it above more than 120 other regional colleges and universities in the South in that category.³

The College Archives’ impressive assortment of primary source materials document the entirety of the College’s 165-year history as well as many aspects of local and regional history through the same time period. These collections are regularly used in a variety of undergraduate classroom instruction settings, ranging from more traditional disciplines like history, English, and anthropology to less-expected contexts like foreign language, art, and computer science. Archivists and other Library faculty at Rollins are committed to the model of embedded librarianship wherein they strive to build strong relationships with instructors, partner readily and skillfully on assignment and curriculum design, and co-lead classroom activities and discussions aligned with student learning goals.⁴ The Library and Archives are seen by faculty and students at Rollins as a logical and high-impact teaching and learning partner; collaborations between librarians/archivists and instructors of record are expected, encouraged, and frequent.

This case study focuses on one such collaboration, between Digital Archivist Rachel Walton and History Professor Claire Strom, which began in the context of a 2018–2020 Associated Colleges of the South

¹ “Fast Facts,” <https://www.rollins.edu/admission/fast-facts/>.

² Jack C. Lane, “The Evolution of the Rollins Curriculum, 1885–1985,” <https://blogs.rollins.edu/libraryarchives/2018/12/06/the-evolution-of-the-rollins-curriculum-1885-1985/>.

³ “Rollins Ranked No.1 for Best Undergraduate Teaching Programs,” *Rollins360* (September 9, 2019), <https://360.rollins.edu/college-news/rollins-ranked-no.-1-for-best-undergraduate-teaching-programs>.

⁴ For a comprehensive look at “embedded librarianship,” see the *Models of Embedded Librarianship Final Report* from the Special Libraries Association in 2007: https://embeddedlibrarian.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/models-of-embedded-librarianship_finalreportrev.pdf. For an example of how an archivist has implemented an embedded model, see Christy Fic’s recent article, “Working as an Embedded Archivist in an Undergraduate Course: Transforming Students into Scholars through an Archival Workshop Series,” in *American Archivist* 81.2 (2018): 290–309.

(ACS) Grant called “Pathways to Diversity.”⁵ The grant was a multi-institution effort dedicated to uncovering and illuminating the history of integration at southern liberal arts colleges like Rollins. Founded long before the onset of the civil rights movement in the United States, the local experiences and personal stories of African American students, staff, and faculty at Rollins in the twentieth century were not fully examined or preserved in the College Archives. In addition to supporting archival investigations surrounding the critical but under-researched moments of integration, this grant also aimed to provide primary source literacy and student engagement opportunities with archival materials. Together, Walton and Strom incorporated the grant’s larger goals into two, scaffolded history courses offered between Fall 2018 and Spring 2020—Researching American History (a 200-level course taught in Fall 2018) and the major’s capstone (a 400-level course for history majors, which was taught and assessed twice during the course of the grant cycle—once in Spring 2019 and once in Spring 2020). The goals of both courses’ archival projects centered on teaching undergraduate history majors how to effectively incorporate archival work in their research assignments and emphasized a full spectrum of Primary Source Literacy Learning Objectives.⁶

1.C. – Conceptualize: Draw on primary sources to generate and refine research questions.

2.D. – Find and Access: Understand that historical records may never have existed, may not have survived, or may not be collected and/or publicly accessible. Existing records may have been shaped by the selectivity and mediation of individuals such as collectors, archivists, librarians, donors, and/or publishers, potentially limiting the sources available for research.

3.B. – Read, Understand, and Summarize: Identify and communicate information found in primary sources, including summarizing the content of the source and identifying and reporting key components such as how it was created, by whom, when, and what it is.

4.A. – Interpret, Analyze, and Evaluate: Assess the appropriateness of a primary source for meeting the goals of a specific research or creative project.

5.C. – Use and Incorporate: Cite primary sources in accordance with appropriate citation style guidelines or according to repository practice and preferences (when possible).

These learning outcomes mapped logically and easily onto the courses’ extant learning goals, which stressed the ability to identify and find a wide array of appropriate sources for historical research and use them to create a successful evidence-based narrative. Importantly, the archival project in each of the three grant-integrated classes was co-designed, team-taught, and jointly assessed by Strom and Walton. The insights offered here in this case study are based on Strom and Walton’s shared experiences designing and implementing two required courses for undergraduate history majors at two different stages in their academic careers and assessing primary source literacy learning in both courses. The pedagogical question driving this assessment work was, at its core: to what extent does thoughtful

⁵ Strom and Walton would like to thank the Associated Colleges of the South for its generous funding and support of the multi-institution and multidisciplinary “Pathways to Diversity” project, without which these findings would not have been possible. A fuller description of the grant project and a list of its collaborators is available online at <http://colleges.org/grants/grants-database/#5>.

⁶ SAA-ACRL/RBMS Joint Task Force on the Development of Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy, *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy* (Society of American Archivists and Association of College and Research Libraries’ Rare Books and Manuscripts Section, 2018), <https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/GuidelinesForPrimarySourceLiteracy-June2018.pdf>.

integration of different archival experiences at the 200-level and 400-level equip history majors with primary source literacy skills? Strom and Walton wondered if the skills acquired at the 200-level would provide a springboard for the more challenging archival assignment at the 400-level and hoped that assessing student primary source literacy acquisition would aid in future iterations of course design.

Narrative

The Department of History at Rollins College designates all its 200-level courses as research-intensive classes. Students are required to take two of these courses focusing on two distinct geographical areas because historical research is often fundamentally different depending on time and place in question. All these courses are structured the same. Focusing on a single thematic and manageable topic—US women in the nineteenth century, Renaissance Europe, China from Opium War to present—students are asked to write three five-page research papers during the semester. The research and writing process is dissected, with students reviewing each other’s outlines, thesis statements, topic sentences, and draft papers before the final papers are submitted. Additionally, the source requirements—both in terms of primary and secondary sources—increase with each paper. So, while the first paper might require eight sources with only one being primary, the third paper will need twenty sources with at least ten being primary. These courses teach research and writing, but they also start to develop students’ ability to create an argument and synthesize a selected grouping of research materials. Finally, these 200-level courses spend considerable time teaching primary source literacy skills. Unlike the department’s other courses, 200-level classes are almost exclusively taken by history majors and are not cross-listed with any other programs of study. They are the building blocks of the history major curriculum and represent a pivotal moment in a Rollins history major’s academic career.

In order to align with the ongoing ACS grant criteria, Strom decided to focus her 200-level Researching American History class in the Fall of 2018 on African American education from the Civil War (1865) to the Civil Rights Era (1965). The first assigned five-page paper asked students to focus their research on some aspect of African American education in the nineteenth century and the second looked at education in the twentieth century during the Jim Crow Era and/or school integration. The third paper was distinct because it moved the class into the College Archives, wherein the students spent six weeks exploring a research question chosen from a list of possible predetermined topics (see Appendix 1) about the experiences of *local* African Americans before, during, and after integration at Rollins. Each of these student scholars worked closely with Walton and Strom to find and interpret relevant primary source materials from existing, but underutilized, archival collections. The end-of-course final product was a 1,500-word paper with at least twenty cited archival sources, a public presentation, and a short online blog post that distilled research findings into easy-to-read summaries.⁷

The 400-level history capstone course is usually completed in the student’s terminal semester. This course has been taught by many history faculty over the years but always consists of four main components that remain the same irrespective of instructor: (1) study of historiography and historical theory; (2) long-term and in-depth research on the historical accuracy of a popular historical movie; (3) a historical autobiography detailing their experiences as a history major at Rollins; (4) and finally, “a practical” or applied history project. These projects in the past have ranged from copyediting academic journal articles to public exhibitions. In this case study’s context, senior history students

⁷ The student blog posts can be found online at <http://blogs.rollins.edu/pathwaytodiversity/>.

were provided an immersive experience in the College Archives with the goal of each senior creating an online exhibit to be added to the Archives' web collections. The theme of their exhibit was up to each student, as long as it featured some aspect of the history of local race relations at the College or in the immediate Winter Park community, in accordance with the focus of the "Pathways to Diversity" ACS Grant.

Both cohorts of senior history majors (a total of seven students) were given a ten-week, multi-step, digitization project assignment requiring them to work with a diversity of primary sources from the College Archives in order to select, describe, and (one day) provide online access to a representative selection of archival materials. The end goal was to be able to tell an important story about the African American historical experience using newly discovered artifacts and records that were not yet available online. Strom and Walton co-led these ten weeks of the course, taking significant time to help students immerse themselves in the collections, look for critical themes, and build a historical narrative from the available archival sources. Capstone students turned in the following deliverables—a digital file of high-quality images featuring each of their chosen artifacts; a metadata spreadsheet with Dublin Core elements and other critical descriptive fields needed for eventual web dissemination; and a short (one-two page) historical narrative explaining the contents and context of the thematically focused online exhibit, written in language that would be accessible to the public.

At the conclusion of the three classes, Walton and Strom assessed all the student work products from the two capstone courses, as well as the 1,500-word papers submitted by each student in the 200-level research course. Using a rubric that included all five primary source literacy learning objectives indicated above, they gave each student work product a score, with a 1 representing inadequate progress toward the learning objective; a 2 representing adequate progress; and a 3 representing good progress (see rubric in Appendix 2). Strom and Walton also surveyed the students at the end of each class, asking them to assess what they had learned in their own words and providing the opportunity for general reflection and open feedback about the archives experience (see survey in Appendix 3).

Results

Overall, Strom and Walton's assessment of student work products show that students in the 400-level exhibited better primary source literacy skills than students in the 200-level course (see Tables 1 and 2). In addition, the four students who took both courses *in sequence* showed improvement in their primary source literacy abilities (see Table 3). These trends are perhaps not surprising given that students in the 400-level course were all further along in their academic career and had taken a significant number of 300-level historical research classes. However, there are some important nuances to this assessment data that reveal both the affordances and limitations of the previously described archival assignments, and these are worth commenting on further here.⁸

⁸ All student names have been changed for the sake of anonymity. The students did give permission for their survey statements to be used, but again, anonymously. Therefore, we use pseudonyms throughout.

Table 1. Combined Scores from the 200-level Class.

[Note: The overall average was 2.33 out of 3.]

Student	Competency 1.C.	Competency 2.D.	Competency 3.B.	Competency 4.A.	Competency 5.C.
Emma	3	2	2	3	2
Aiden	3	2	2	2	2
Josh	3	1	2	2	1
Maria	3	2	3	2	3
Jennifer	3	2	3	3	3
Caroline	1	1	2	2	3
Olivia	3	2	3	3	3
Will	2	2	3	2	2
Taylor	3	2	2	2	3
Nick	2	2	2	2	2
Ryan	3	2	3	2	3
Average	2.64	1.82	2.45	2.27	2.45

Table 2. Combined Scores from the 400-level Classes.

[Note: The overall average was 2.63 out of 3.]

Student	Competency 1.C.	Competency 2.D.	Competency 3.B.	Competency 4.A.	Competency 5.C.
Maria	3	3	3	3	3
Jake	2	2	2	3	2
Caroline	2	2	2	2	2
Will	2	3	2	3	3
Jennifer	3	3	3	3	2
Lauren	3	3	3	3	3
Ryan	3	3	2	3	3
Average	2.57	2.71	2.43	2.86	2.57

First, the students in the 400-level class performed much better than those in the 200-level in competencies 2.D. and 4.A.—finding and accessing the primary sources, and interpreting and evaluating them. The capstone digital archives exhibit projects demonstrated a more sophisticated understanding of how collections were created in terms of what had been collected and donated, and, importantly, what had not. This realization gave students greater insight into the potential biases and silences in their source base, forcing them to identify those weakness and conduct a fuller evaluation. These students grasped how the nature of the collections shaped the written narratives that they were able to craft. Part of this was due to the structure of the assignment. Capstone students were tasked with creating a curated collection of artifacts that supported a constructed historical narrative, so their focus was on finding and analyzing as many potentially relevant primary sources as possible. As they

worked to do their exhaustive investigations, they quickly discovered that many things they hoped to use had never been collected, therein limiting their ability to tell a full story and making them think more critically about the artifacts they did find.

An excellent example of this was Maria's work. In her 200-level project, Maria discussed Rollins' race relations efforts in the local community. She relied heavily on the publications of Rollins' Interfaith and Race Relations Committee during the 1930s and 1940s for evidence without questioning the biases inherent in their information, concluding that "the various efforts made by the Rollins Race Relation Committee allow[ed] the campus and Winter Park community to be a harmonious community." Maria's 400-level project focused on conflicts between the campus and the community, including the arrest for trespassing and subsequent death in a jail fire of a young Black man. Maria searched for a much wider array of sources for this project, detailed the nature of each source she used, and added the keyword "controversies" to the metadata. Her metadata for each artifact also highlighted the authorship of each document in its description—"A report written by Chief of Campus Security," and "a statement written by Rollins President Jack Critchfield." In her summary, she points out that Rollins' internal investigation determined that the college "should opt for the route of 'benign neglect' over addressing any concerns of racial targeting." From one class to the next, Maria gained a nuanced understanding of the biases and constraints of individual sources (2.D.) and showed an evolution in her ability to find and assess sources to create a more detailed and accurate story (4.A.).

Much of the students' informal feedback in the end-of-class surveys reflected the students' growth in these areas. Jennifer lamented, "The hardest part about working in the archive is that sometimes it's incomplete," and Caroline explained that she "was surprised with how hard it could be to get an exact date" from some sources. Likewise, Maria speculated that some historical silences could even have been purposeful: "the most shocking thing was the lack of documentation . . . in some of the controversial stories I researched. For example, in the [investigation] involving two young black men thought to be robbers on Rollins campus there was an incredible lack of [archival] records. . . . This could be due in part to the [police] department not wanting to provide information to the media." And a senior, Lauren, even admitted: "It was my first time [working] with archival materials, and I was unaware of the frustration of when you really want a source to exist so you can learn from it, but it's just not around anymore." These reflections hint at some of the "ah ha" moments Strom and Walton witnessed with students in class.

Second, students in the senior capstone course actually did slightly worse with competency 1.C.—conceptualizing their research project. Upon critical reflection, Walton and Strom concur that this is probably due to the very different nature of the assignments. With the 200-level papers, Walton and Strom provided the students with a list of known possible topics that the collections in the archives could feasibly support (again, see Appendix 1). This gave them a considerable advantage in their conceptualization work and helped them develop strong, thesis-driven arguments. For the 400-level courses, Strom and Walton tasked the students with browsing through any and all archival collections to find potentially fruitful project topics; a much more difficult and amorphous task, but far better suited to the more rigorous senior capstone experience. So, for example, senior Jake decided to look at the acceptance of Black educators by Rollins College in the mid-twentieth century. Not finding much information, he focused on the relationship between Mary McLeod Bethune, a leader in Black education before integration, and Rollins College President Hamilton Holt. His final project summary lacked a strong thesis and extrapolated larger racial generalities from a single, specific relationship. Some feedback from a senior classmate, Ryan, seems to confirm this theory that the 400-level students found it harder to conceptualize their projects: "I had more difficulty than I expected trying to

understand the archival sources and how they made sense all together.” The mental work needed to pull together everything available in the archives for a given topic *and* integrate it into a single well-crafted argument may have been overwhelming, even for these accomplished seniors.

Third, the 400-level students performed slightly worse in competency 3.B. than the 200-level students—reading and summarizing primary source information. This was probably because the 400-level assignment required students to summarize primary source information in a completely new way. In the 200-level course, the students were using primary sources in traditional ways in their writing, as they had done for other research papers both in this class and across the history department’s curriculum. Thus, they were adept at identifying the author and the nature of the source in their essays. On the other hand, the 400-level students’ task was to identify and summarize their artifacts as Dublin Core metadata—a new concept for most—to ensure searchability of the final digital collection. This new format and practice presented a major learning curve for most of these seniors and this likely accounts for the small decline in that outcome. Will, for example, discussed the nature of his sources in his 200-level paper, saying things like, “A map of Winter Park in 1884, which was used as marketing material to attract northern settlers.” This demonstrated his understanding of the bias inherent in primary sources. However, his metadata for his curated artifacts lacked detail, including dates and useful keywords to facilitate searching for other researchers.

Furthermore, the senior cohort performed only slightly better than their peers at the 200-level in competency 5.C.—using and incorporating primary sources and citing them correctly. Again, given the very different nature of the assignment, this is not surprising. These students were learning a new citation “system” in terms of creating standardized metadata categories (like Library of Congress Subject Headings) for their digital projects; they were not being assessed on the more traditional (and practiced) Chicago-style footnoting of standard research papers, which they were far more familiar with as history majors. To further support senior history majors with big-picture conceptualization strategies (1.C.) and to provide more opportunities for proper citation practice and metadata development (3.B., 5.C.), Strom and Walton plan to take a more active “workshopping” approach for future capstone classes, wherein students work in pairs throughout the semester to evaluate and collaborate at various stages on their metadata fields and narrative statements. The co-instructors feel that this pedagogical adjustment will better help students make the transition from analyzing sources, a foundational skill for history students, to providing the information necessary for others to do the same in an online environment, a far more specialized and higher-level skillset.

As mentioned, four students took both the 200-level course and the 400-level course offering *in sequence*. The fact that this data set is so small meant that the instructors could not realistically assess whether the primary source literacy skills acquired at the 200-level truly served as a springboard for their learning in the later capstone course. However, comparing their earlier scores to their later scores shows a direct reflection of learning and achievement as a result of these two archives-heavy assignments.

Table 3. Scores of Students Who Took Both 200- and 400-Level Courses in Sequence

Student	1.C.	2.D.	3.B.	4.A.	5.C.	Total
Maria (200-Level)	3	2	3	2	3	13
Maria (400-Level)	3	3	3	3	3	15
Will (200-Level)	2	2	3	2	2	11
Will (400-Level)	2	3	2	3	3	13
Caroline (200-Level)	1	1	2	2	3	9
Caroline (400-Level)	2	2	2	2	2	10
Jennifer (200-Level)	3	2	3	3	3	14
Jennifer (400-Level)	3	3	3	3	2	14
Ryan (200-Level)	3	2	3	2	3	13
Ryan (400-Level)	3	3	2	3	3	14

Although some students did worse in a single category in the 400-level course, the overall trajectory of all but one student—and she remained constant—was upward. As a group, these students improved an average of 1.5 total points between courses (representing a 10% improvement, on average). And when considering individual competencies, two students improved in two categories, and two students improved in one category. While the above table represents a small sample size, the assessment data collected suggests that the 200-level class provided a good foundation for the more advanced assignment of the capstone courses; the seniors were clearly prepared to take on the more comprehensive and rigorous archives research assignment after engaging in their 200-level archives-intensive coursework. Of course, it is likely that some of this preparation could have come from other classes on the major map, such as the 300-level research-intensive courses.

Lessons Learned

As a reminder, the pedagogical question driving this assessment work was: to what extent does thoughtful integration of different archival experiences at the 200-level and 400-level equip history majors with primary source literacy skills? Furthermore, do the competencies acquired at the 200-level provide the toolkit needed for the more challenging archival assignment at the 400-level? The answers to these questions provided insight to Strom and Walton about possibilities and future directions for their teaching and curriculum design.

At the culmination of these archives-classroom experiences and after the assessment of student learning, Walton and Strom believe that their integration of different archival experiences effectively equipped students with a range of critical primary source literacy skills. It is clear that students in the 400-level courses performed better in most primary source literacy competency areas than those at the 200-level, and the finished products from both course offerings were of a generally high caliber. In the case of the capstone course, the high quality of the students' work enabled the building of public collections; Walton is currently working with the rest of the archives

team to build several online exhibits from the materials submitted by the capstone students, all of which will be accessible on the Archives' digital collections website.⁹

Strom and Walton's second question was about whether the lower level course provided students with the primary source literacy toolkit needed to tackle the more rigorous 400-level archives assignment. The fact that only four students took both classes made it hard to evaluate the extent to which learning at the 200-level directly influenced performance at the 400-level. Additionally, looking back, it is clear that a major difficulty in assessing the learning outcomes between the two courses was the very different nature of the assignments. The 200-level class wrote a standard research paper using primary sources, while the 400-level classes curated a digital collection. Though this made the comparison more difficult, Strom and Walton believe that it is a pedagogically sound approach, regardless. Asking seniors to write a five-page research paper for their capstone makes little sense as part of a culminating experience. And, importantly, Walton and Strom were interested in the adaptability of the students' skills at the 400 level to different modes and contexts, not simply their acquisition. In other words, they wanted to determine if students were able to take concepts that they had learned in a more traditional assignment and apply them to a more hands-on and practical research project. The assessment data presented here, though definitely limited, suggests that these seniors succeeded.

Looking ahead, Walton and Strom will be leveraging the support of another ACS grant entitled "Before #MeToo: How Women Historically Navigated Higher Education" to teach a similar configuration of classes with an analogous set of assignments. This new grant initiative sets out to explore a different historical perspective—the often-overlooked experiences of women at southern liberal arts colleges—but will utilize many of the same approaches discussed here in terms of classroom-archives integration. The instructors are excited about the possibility of improving the archival experience for students in the next iteration of these courses through just a few small pedagogical tweaks. Planned improvements include more emphasis and class time spent on the narrative assignment for the capstone's digital exhibit project in an effort to coach students through the heavier conceptualization work (1.C.). And, as previously mentioned, Strom and Walton intend to take a peer-review approach to teaching metadata creation, in the hopes of providing more purposeful scaffolding and opportunities for practice with the new skillset (5.C.). Further, the instructors will focus their future assessment work exclusively on the 200-level Researching American History course. They plan to chart and compare gains in primary source literacy competencies within a 15-week period by evaluating each of the student's three, five-page research papers (assigned in sequential intervals throughout the semester) against a similar rubric. They hope that this will shed light on the development of primary source literacy skills in the span of a single semester.

Finally, and most critically, it is clear that the archives setting for both course offerings provided an advantageous but unintended consequence—sheer excitement and enthusiasm from the student researchers. Having worked in archives for decades, neither Strom nor Walton was prepared for the increased interest the assignments generated and the industry that the students invested in these long-term archival research projects. The student survey responses told a similar story. Caroline said, "I had to come to the archives on my own multiple times [for this project] but did not mind because I loved what I was researching. . . . Actually, I loved the entire class!" And a freshman,

⁹ The online collection will be available via the Rollins College Archives website at <https://archives.rollins.edu/digital/collection/diversity>.

Taylor, who was new to archives work and the history major commented: “Working with [archival] sources is incredibly neat. . . . I haven’t had access to materials like that when doing my research [in the past].”

The students’ academic achievements reflected their added investment in the coursework. For example, many of them started to effectively place their own microhistories and local discoveries within the broader regional and national histories of race relations and higher education in the United States. One underclassman, Aiden, in the 200-level research course explained in their end-of-course reflection:

I think that African Americans in Winter Park faced the same amount of prejudice and racism that other African Americans faced in different places [in the United States]. Yet, I think at least some of the residents of Rollins community were willing to have an open dialogue about race. . . . A good example of this is the research I did about [African American playwright] Zora Neale Hurston and her performances [on campus in the 1930s]. Even though she was not allowed [to perform] in the Annie Russell [Theatre] she was still well received by the students and faculty of Rollins, and the Winter Park community.

Another classmate, Caroline, revealed a similar conclusion after their time researching in the Archives: “Rollins was a surprisingly liberal private college in the South, [even] though violence against blacks seemed to be everywhere during those years” leading up to integration. Furthermore, these classes generated several high-quality student papers that went on to be presented at professional conferences and/or student research symposiums. One student even continued her archival investigations alongside Strom in a formal and prestigious Student-Faculty Collaborative Summer Research Program in summer of 2019; their collaboration is ongoing and has resulted in two published digital maps with a research paper in process.¹⁰

¹⁰ See the following published digital maps: “Historical Map of Hannibal Square, 1930,” RICHES, April 2020, <https://richesmi.cah.ucf.edu/hsmaps/>, and “Historical Map of Hannibal Square, 1940,” RICHES, April 2020, <https://richesmi.cah.ucf.edu/hsmaps/>.

Appendix 1

Research Topics for 200-level Researching American History Class

Course Focus: African American Education from the Civil War (1865) to the Civil Rights Era (1965)

Topics Paper 1—up to 1900

Educating Blacks after the Civil War

- What were the achievements of the Freedmen’s Bureau in creating schools for African Americans?
- What challenges did the Freedmen’s Bureau face in creating schools for African Americans?
- What were the achievements of the Freedmen’s Bureau in creating colleges for African Americans?
- What challenges did the Freedmen’s Bureau face in creating colleges for African Americans?
- What was the role of Northern philanthropy in creating colleges for African Americans?
- What was Booker T. Washington’s educational philosophy?
- What role did W. E. B. DuBois see for education?
- What were George Washington Carver’s main educational achievements?
- How was George Washington Carver’s education extraordinary for African Americans?
- What was the role of churches in the push for African American education after the Civil War?
- Discuss the achievements of and challenges faced by Fanny Coppin.
- What precedents were set by the case *Roberts v. City of Boston*?

Topics Paper 2—1900 to 1960

Educating Blacks after Plessy v. Ferguson

- How did the NAACP fight for educational equality in the early 20th century?
- What role did Charles Hamilton Houston play in the fight for educational equality in the early 20th century?
- What role did Thurgood Marshall play in the fight for educational equality in the early 20th century?
- What was the NAACP’s policy of establishing legal precedents to further African American education?
- What were the arguments and results in the case *Briggs v. Elliott*?
- Discuss the experiments of Kenneth Clark on Black school children and the results of those experiments on opinions regarding segregation.
- What were the arguments and results in the case *Brown et al. v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*?
- What were the arguments and results in the case *Davis v. School Board of Prince Edward County*?
- What were the arguments and results in the cases *Bulah v. Gebhart* and *Belton v. Gebhart*?

- What were the arguments and results in the case *Bolling v. Sharpe*?
- Discuss the Supreme Court’s discussion and ruling on school segregation.
- What were the roles and successes of Black fraternities and sororities?

Topics Paper 3—1885 to present

Bringing it Home, the Rollins Connection

- What was the experience (profession, education, living situation, community life) of African Americans in the early days of Winter Park when Rollins was founded?
- What role did Rollins play in the doctrine of “separate but equal” as it was enacted and experienced in the Winter Park community in the years before integration?
- What was famous African American author and anthropologist Zora Neal Hurston’s connection/relationship to Rollins?
- What was Rollins’ relationship with nearby institutions of higher education for African Americans, like the Hungerford School and Bethune Cookman?
- What was the experience of African American staff at Rollins in the first half of the 20th century?
- What was the conflict with the 1947 Rollins vs. Ohio Wesleyan Football game about, and how was it resolved?
- What was the work and charge of the Rollins Interracial Committee (later renamed the Race Relations Committee)?
- What were the perspectives of Rollins administrators on race and education during the years before integration on campus?
- What were the perspectives of Rollins faculty on race and education during the years before integration on campus?
- What were the experiences of Rollins’ first African American faculty?
- What were the experiences of Rollins’ first African American students?
- What was the perspective and goal of Rollins’ Black Student Union?
- What was “Africana Fest” and why was it created at Rollins in the early 1990s?
- What role did Rollins have in the process of gentrification experienced over the last three decades by the historically Black community of West Winter Park?

Appendix 2

Assessment Rubric

Scoring	Conceptualize	Find and Access	Read, Understand, and Summarize	Interpret, Analyze, and Evaluate	Use and Incorporate
	Draw on primary sources to generate and refine research questions 1.C.	Understand the constraints created by primary sources—what remains, who created them. 2.D.	Identify and communicate information found in primary sources, including summarizing the content of the source and identifying and reporting key components such as how it was created, by whom, when, and what it is. 3.B.	Assess the appropriateness of a primary source for meeting the goals of a specific research project. 4.A.	Cite primary sources in accordance with appropriate citation style guidelines or according to repository practice and preferences (when possible). 5.C.
Insufficient (1)	Shows little understanding of how primary sources affect research	Has limited understanding of primary sources	Does not understand how to identify or summarize information in primary sources	Does not effectively evaluate primary sources in their research process	Does not know how or why to cite primary sources
Adequate (2)	Incorporates some primary sources into research	Some understanding of the constraints of primary sources	Communicates some information regarding primary sources	Shows some ability to evaluate primary sources in their research process	Shows some ability to cite primary sources
Good (3)	Uses extensive primary sources proficiently to drive research question	Sophisticated understanding of the nature of primary sources, fully aware of how primary sources shape the historical narrative	Competent in identifying and describing primary sources	Competently evaluates primary sources in their research process.	Fully competent in citing primary sources in a consistent and appropriate manner

Appendix 3

Student Survey

Question #1:

- a) Based on your research, what do you think life in Winter Park was like during the Civil Rights Era (1954–1971)?
- b) How do you think the experience of integration at Rollins differed from institutions in other parts of the country?

Question #2:

- a) Which archival sources best helped you understand the history of integration at Rollins?
- b) How did you decide which sources to use during your research and writing?

Question #3:

- a) Looking back, what surprised you about primary source research using archival materials?
- b) Did you experience any unforeseen roadblocks or setbacks?