Instructor’s Guide

ACTIVITY SEVEN

Undergraduate Supervised Entry

**Target Audience:**
- Undergraduate students (not recommended for first year students)
- Junior graduate students (for PhD students, see Activity Eight: Guided Graduate Entry)
- Appropriate for all courses examining the history of religious groups and practices.

**Activity Type:**
- In-depth class project – recommended to complete over the length of the term
- Digital activity
- Critical thinking

**Activity Goals:**
- Provide students with hands-on experience working with a professional database
- Improve students’ digital data literacy skills
- Encourage guided group cooperation

**SUMMARY**

This activity allows students to work together to complete a database entry based on secondary sources and what they have learned in class. The instructor acts as the editor to organize and oversee the work of the students. There is an option to publish the completed entry on the database – for this option, please also see the document, “Ethics for Student Entries”. Through the supervised entries, the students get hands-on experience working on a professional digital project while continuing to work in their field of interest. This will help students understand the relevancy of their work while learning both digital skills and gaining research experience in their field.

The student activity sheet provides guidelines on how to sign up to be an expert, and answer questions. They will need additional guidance from the instructor on which questions their group will be assigned. We also recommend that instructors provide a list of scholarly resources to help students begin their research.

*Note: if at any time you need assistance, feel free to contact your editor or email: [project.manager@religiondatabase.org](mailto:project.manager@religiondatabase.org)*

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INSTRUCTIONS

1. Sign up as an expert:
   • In order to begin a supervised entry, the instructor will need to be registered as an expert for the database. To begin, contact the appropriate editor to let them know you will be signing up. You can find a list of editors and their region of expertise here: https://religiondatabase.org/landing/about/people/editors
   • Once you have notified the editor, you can sign up to be an expert for the database here: https://religiondatabase.org/accounts/signup/
   • Note – if you plan on publishing the entry, be sure to mention this to the editor so that you can work together to choose an appropriate topic. To publish the entry, you will also be required to complete the ethics agreement.

2. Set up the entry:
   • To set up the entry, once you have been approved by the editor, sign in to the database and click on the “Contribute” button at the top of the page. The following steps can be done to set up the main entry without students, and can be edited later, or you can work through these steps as a class; however, this must be done from the supervisor’s account only.
   • "Step 1":
     - Entry Source – select “Supervised entry”
     - Data Source – select “Database of religion history (DRH)”
     - Name – this is the title of your entry – if you plan to publish the entry, work with your editor to decide on the topic and title.
     - Description – this is the introduction to your entry, and should consist of 200-300 words. You will be able to edit this later, so feel free to add in some placeholder text for now.
     - Default year covered – enter the time period covered by your entry.
     - Poll – select the type of poll you are completing – your editor can help with this.
     - Status of Participants – this refers to the status of the individuals that participate in the religious group, place, or text covered by your entry. This can be changed per answer by the students later.
   • "Step 2":
     - These tags help to organize entries and allow other users to find your data.
     - Select the type of Religious Group your entry will discuss. If it is not in the list, you can add a new tag – select as many tags as are applicable. Again, you will be able to edit this again later if necessary.
   • "Step 3":
     - In step three, add in the geographic reference map for your region. You can create one yourself using the polygon tool to outline your region on the map. You can also see if an appropriate map exists by clicking, "Select Existing”
     - You should also select the location tags that describe your region. Again, you can create new tags if necessary.
     - Once you save your changes to step three, the setup for your entry will be complete.
3. Fill in the entry with your students.
   • It is best to begin by dividing up the entry into sections that you will assign to groups of students. We recommend groups of 2-3 students for each section. Take a look at the different questions and the sub-questions within each section. If there are questions your students will have trouble answering, you may want to answer these yourself instead. Keep in mind that the answers to some questions might be “no” in which case no sub-questions would follow, so based on the particular entry in question some sections might be longer or shorter depending on the data.

   • Once you know how many groups will be working on the entry, you can begin to invite the students to join.

   • Each group will need their own expert account. Students can sign up as experts through the original portal: https://religiondatabase.org/accounts/signup/
      ° They will have to agree on a single email address to use to sign in, but they will not require regular access to the email account to complete the entry.
      ° Make sure to send your regional editor the list of the names on the accounts.

   • Once the students have their accounts, you can add them as collaborators.
      ° Log in to your account, and go to your “Dashboard” (the link can be found in the menu bar at the top of the screen)
         ▪ You will find the entry you have set up under “My Polls”
         ▪ Go to your entry
         ▪ At the top of your entry, you will see the button “+Invite a collaborator”
            ° Click the button, and add the email address associated with each group’s account.
      ° Ask the students to sign in to their account. They should find an invitation to collaborate (they can also find this in their account email).
      ° Once they have accepted the invitation, the poll will show up on their dashboard as well.

   • Once all the students have been added as collaborators, assign them their sections.
      ° The students can then begin to add in answers.
      ° Using their sign in, they can work on the answers from any internet location. Make sure to remind the students to save their work as they go. Also – when they save, it will overwrite any previous work. It is therefore recommended that they work on answers on an external document (perhaps through Google Docs), and then have one person copy the comments into the answer notes. If there are two people working on the same account at the same time, they could accidentally save over each other’s work.
         ° You can explain any expectations you have for the length of question answers. A short paragraph or a few sentences is usually sufficient for each question.

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• Each expert will only be able to see the work that is saved on their account. To view the group’s progress, click on the “Preview Entry” button at the top of the entry page. The group name will be attached to each answer that they have added.

• Students should enter any sources they use to answer questions into the “Sources” section. If you plan on publishing the entry, we ask that students use published sources, as opposed to citing inaccessible course material, for instance.

• Once all the sections have been answered, and the entry is complete, you can preview the entry to mark it as an assignment, or see where students may need to make changes.

• When you feel that the entry is ready for publication, contact the editor and let them know. They may request additional changes, which you can communicate to your students. Once the editor gives approval, you and your students can publish all your sections of the entry. Once it is published, the entry, and the students’ names, will be accessible to the public.

Sample Grading Rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A 80-100%</th>
<th>B 68-79%</th>
<th>C 54-67%</th>
<th>D 50-54% / F 49% &amp; below</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All assigned questions answered</td>
<td>All assigned questions answered</td>
<td>Most assigned questions answered</td>
<td>Some or no assigned questions answered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substantive, clear coding justifications provided in comment boxes, with challenges in assigning Yes/No/Field Doesn’t Know explained, or reflections of limitations of the questions themselves.</td>
<td>Substantive coding justifications provided for each answer, some reflection on challenges involved in making categorical answers.</td>
<td>Coding justifications provided for only some answers, some not substantive or relevant</td>
<td>Few if any coding justifications, unclear how coding decisions were arrived at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of extensive independent research, using high-quality and relevant scholarly sources</td>
<td>Evidence of independent research, using scholarly sources</td>
<td>Some evidence of independent research, but often relying on non-scholarly sources</td>
<td>Little or no evidence of independent research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate, relevant sources cited, with page numbers</td>
<td>Mostly appropriate citations, but may have missing page numbers, dates, or small formatting errors</td>
<td>Weak attempt to support decisions with citations, missing information, inconsistent formatting</td>
<td>Few to no attempts at citation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>