

Introduction

In 2010, the Association of College and Research Libraries published a document entitled, *The Value of Academic Libraries: A Comprehensive Research Review and Report*. This report defined academic library value in the context of overarching higher education institutions, summarized existing literature on library value, recommended “next steps” for libraries seeking to extend and improve their value, and outlined a research agenda for future investigations of library value. Because the report addressed a national academic library audience, it did not provide a single solution for individual libraries seeking to increase their value. Rather, it described a variety of options that libraries may evaluate, select, and adapt to their local contexts and unique needs. Consequently, the task of tailoring general library value concepts to specific libraries initially fell to individual librarians.

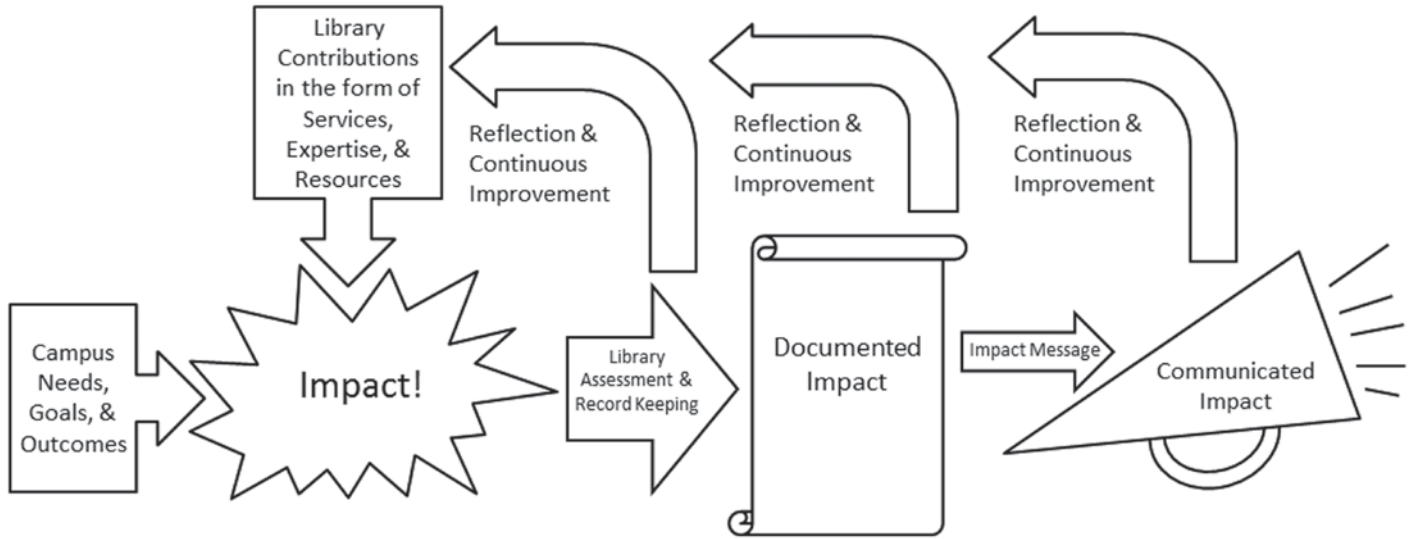
Now, *Academic Library Value: The Impact Starter Kit* provides a series of activities intended to assist librarians as they conceptualize library value, identify existing library value, and increase library value in the context of their institutional missions.

Each activity helps librarians:

- rethink, refine, or redefine the value of their library within their institutional environment,
- identify and listen to institutional stakeholders,
- organize and manage new approaches to addressing library value, or
- take action to assess, expand, and communicate library value in order to position their library as an increasingly valuable asset to their institution.

Four ideas, depicted in the following library impact model, underpin the activities presented in *Academic Library Value: The Impact Starter Kit*.

1. The activities focus primarily on impact as a key facet of academic library value—namely, the difference academic libraries and librarians make in the lives of their stakeholders.
2. The activities emphasize institutional focus areas—the specific needs, goals, and outcomes of individual community colleges, colleges, and universities where library impact is most needed.
3. The activities present libraries as multidimensional organizations that provide valuable services, expertise, and resources and impact institutional focus areas.
4. The activities position the assessment of library impact on institutional focus areas as central to the work of librarians—a professional value aligned with reflective, evidence-based, and pragmatic practice.



Library Impact Model

Adapted from: Oakleaf, Megan. "Are They Learning? Are We? Learning and the Academic Library." *Library Quarterly*. 81(1). 2011. 61-82.

Used in conjunction with *The Value of Academic Libraries: A Comprehensive Research Review and Report*, the activities found in *Academic Library Value: The Impact Starter Kit* offer support and guidance for academic librarians seeking to define the value of their libraries, align library value with stakeholder needs, deploy new strategies to increase and communicate library value, and ensure their library's position as a key contributor to achieving the mission of their institutions, now and in the future.