The Value of the Library in the Teaching & Learning Process

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Outline

• Maintain focus on the teaching and learning role of the academic library.
• What do we know right now about the impact of academic libraries on teaching and learning?
• How might libraries increase their documentation of that impact?
• Are there ways in which libraries can play an even more valuable part in the teaching and learning missions of their overarching institutions?
What do we mean by the Teaching & Learning Process?

- Student Enrollment
- Faculty Teaching
- Student Experience, Attitude, & Perception of Quality
- Student Learning
- Student Achievement
- Student Retention & Graduation
- Student Success

Student Achievement
Student Enrollment, Retention, & Graduation Rates

What do we know about the library’s impact on these things?

How might we document & increase existing library impact?

Graduation rates
Recommendation of current students
Fall-to-fall retention
Matriculation of admitted students
Recruitment of prospective students
Some studies correlate library use and retention, but no causative links.

One facilities study links libraries to student recruitment.

- Increased librarian-student contacts → increased student retention & graduation
- Partner with student affairs?
- Increase level of interaction in instructional activities?
- Increase expenditures?
- Court best admits → best matrics.
What do we know about the library’s impact on these things?

How might we document & increase existing library impact?

Internship success

Professional/graduate school acceptance

Job placement

Job salaries

Marketable skills
Not many significant studies to date connecting libraries to student success.

Employers want their employees to have the skills librarians teach:

- critical thinking and analytical thinking skills (81% of employers);
- ability to analyze and solve complex problems (75%);
- ability to locate, organize, and evaluate information from multiple sources (68%).

Support job placement?

Investigate potential connections between library activities/attributes & indicators of student success?
Student Achievement & Learning

What do we know about the library’s impact on these things?

GPA

Learning assessments

Professional/educational test scores

Faculty judgments

How might we document & increase existing library impact?
Many, many micro-level studies.

One study – Used control groups to demonstrate that information literacy instruction resulted in higher GPAs, more semester hours completed, and more persistence.

The easy-to-collect data is not revealing enough.

Connect individual student library interactions with increased GPA or test scores?

Conduct test audits?

Employ assessment management systems to “roll up” what students learn by outcome?
Student Experience, Attitude, & Perception of Quality

What do we know about the library’s impact on these things?

How might we document & increase existing library impact?

- Self-report engagement studies
- Help surveys
- Senior/alumni studies
- Alumni donations
Studies have identified “library-related” NSSE & CSEQ items.

- Some majors, demographic groups, and seniors engage in more library-related activities
- Library-related activities “go hand-in-hand” with engagement in other areas
- Academic support expenditures (including library expenditures) tend to correlate with increased engagement
- Greater library resources correlates with critical thinking skills
- Institutional academic challenge correlates with library use

- No obvious causal relationships between libraries & areas of institutional mission/interest.
- Include more library-related items on student experience surveys?
- Conduct “help” studies (i.e., Trinity University study, forthcoming)?
- Investigate variations…95% occurs within institutions, not between them (only 10%)?
Faculty Teaching

Integration of library resources and services into course syllabi, websites, lectures, labs, texts, reserve readings, etc.

Faculty/librarian collaborations; cooperative curriculum, assignment, or assessment design

What do we know about the library’s impact on these things?

How might we document & increase existing library impact?
Paradigm shift from librarians as “service providers” to educators.

In one study, all faculty considered time spent cooperatively planning instruction a “negligible price to pay in light of the benefits they realized” (benefits = new curricula, improved research productivity, saved teaching time).

In another study, nearly half faculty said librarians supported their teaching objectives.

Investigate role of library-provided teaching materials?
- What percent of readings used in course are available/accessed via the library?
- How much do these materials save students?

Increase support of campuswide teaching & learning units?
Some “Next Steps”

VAL Report p 94-101

- Collect new data (including data on individual users).
- Find “new” existing data (i.e., conduct survey & test audits).
- Pair existing data sets (library data & student information systems, locally and nationally).
- Participate in large scale, national assessment efforts.
- Use assessment management systems.
Questions?
Thoughts?
Comments?

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