The Value of Academic Libraries

Megan Oakleaf
Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe

Value of Academic Libraries Forum
ALA Midwinter, January 2011
ACRL Value of Academic Libraries

Value of Academic Libraries Report

The ACRL publication Value of Academic Libraries: A Comprehensive Research Review and Report is a review of the quantitative and qualitative literature, methodologies and best practices currently in place for demonstrating the value of academic libraries, developed for ACRL by Megan Oakleaf of the iSchool at Syracuse University. The primary objective of this comprehensive review is to provide...
Context for Value?

Few libraries exist in a vacuum, accountable only to themselves. There is always a larger context for assessing library quality, that is, what and how well does the library contribute to achieving the overall goals of the parent constituencies?

(S. Pritchard 1996)
Prove It!

Not only do stakeholders count on higher education institutions to achieve their missions, they also require them to demonstrate evidence that they have achieved them.

The same is true for academic libraries; they too can provide evidence of their value.
Scope

• Goals
  – a clear view of the current state of the literature on value of libraries within an institutional context,
  – suggestions for immediate Next Steps in the demonstration of academic library value, and
  – a Research Agenda for articulating academic library value. It strives to help librarians understand, based on professional literature, the current answer to the question, How does the library advance the missions of the institution?
Lessons Learned
The Team

Assistant Researchers
• Patricia L. Owen
• Leah Sopchak
• Anna Dahlstein
• Tamika Barnes

Advisory Committee
• Debra Gilchrist
• Bruce Kingma
• Martha Kyrillidou
• George Kuh

© Oakleaf 2011
Define outcomes.
Create or adopt systems for assessment management.

Library Contributions in the form of Resources & Services

Campus Needs, Goals, & Outcomes

Impact!

Library Assessment & Record Keeping

Documented Impact


© Oakleaf 2011
Create or adopt systems for assessment management.

Institution

Arts & Sciences
  Learning Outcomes
    Evaluation of Evidence
  Something Else
  Define Info Need

Library
  Learning Outcomes
    Search
    Evaluate
      Eng 101
      Study Abroad
      Professor Smith
      Professor Jones

Collection Goals

Development Targets

© Oakleaf 2011
Determine what libraries enable students, faculty, student affairs professionals, administrators, and staff to do.
Develop systems to collect data on individual library user behavior, while maintaining privacy.
Use existing data.
Record and increase library impact on student enrollment.

Link libraries to improved student retention and graduation rates.
Enhance library contribution to student job success.
Track library influences on increased student achievement.
Demonstrate and develop library impact on student learning.
Review & determine the impact of course content, readings, reserves, and assignments.
Document and augment library advancement of student experiences, attitudes, and perceptions of quality.
Track and increase library contributions to faculty research productivity.
Continue to investigate library impact on faculty grant proposals and funding, a means of generating institutional income.
Demonstrate and improve library support of faculty teaching.
Record and share library contributions to overall institutional reputation and prestige.
Participate in higher education assessment initiatives...
…including accreditation processes.
Appoint liaison librarians to support senior institutional leadership and/or offices of assessment or institutional research.

I can help! I am a librarian and an expert in finding the information you need to make decisions!
Create library assessment plans.
Promote and participate in professional development.
Mobilize library administrators.
Mobilize library professional associations.
Begin…

by reading the report!

Available at:
www.acrl.ala.org/value

Commissioned by:

© Oakleaf 2011
Use the checklist to get a handle on where you’re at and where you need to go!
Then, help pursue the Research Agenda!

1. student enrollment
2. student retention & graduation
3. student success
4. student achievement
5. student learning
6. student experience
7. faculty research productivity
8. faculty grants
9. faculty teaching
10. institutional reputation
Research Agenda Structure

For each Essential Question…

- Surrogates for Library Impact
- Potential Correlations
- Data Sources

© Oakleaf 2011
Example of Surrogate & Potential Correlations

How does the library contribute to faculty research productivity?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenure/promotion judgments</th>
<th>Are there correlations, relationships or linkages to individual faculty behavior in these areas? Note: These library user interactions must be captured in order to be correlated, related, or linked to surrogates of library value.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Circulation counts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Resources logins, including MyLibrary, MINES data, e-resources, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Resource login/logout surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Self-reported usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Self-reported time saved</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are there correlations, relationships, or linkages to these macro-level areas? Note: Macro-level areas are fertile territory for ROI calculations.

✓ Library expenditures
✓ Collection value
✓ Collection use, physical and online, may divide by subject
Starting points for research…

- Recruitment of prospective students
- Matriculation of admitted students
- Recommendation of current students
- Fall-to-fall retention
- Graduation rates
- Internship success
- Job placement
- Job salaries
- Professional/graduate school acceptance
- Marketable skills
- GPA
- Professional/educational test scores

- Learning assessments
- Faculty judgments
- Self-report engagement studies
- Senior/alumni studies
- Help surveys
- Alumni donations
- Number of publications, number of patents, value of technology transfer
- Tenure/promotion judgments
- Number of grant proposals (funded or unfunded)

- Value of grants funded
- 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
- Faculty recruitment
- Institutional rankings
- Community engagement

© Oakleaf 2011
Questions
Comments
Discussion