Value of Academic Libraries

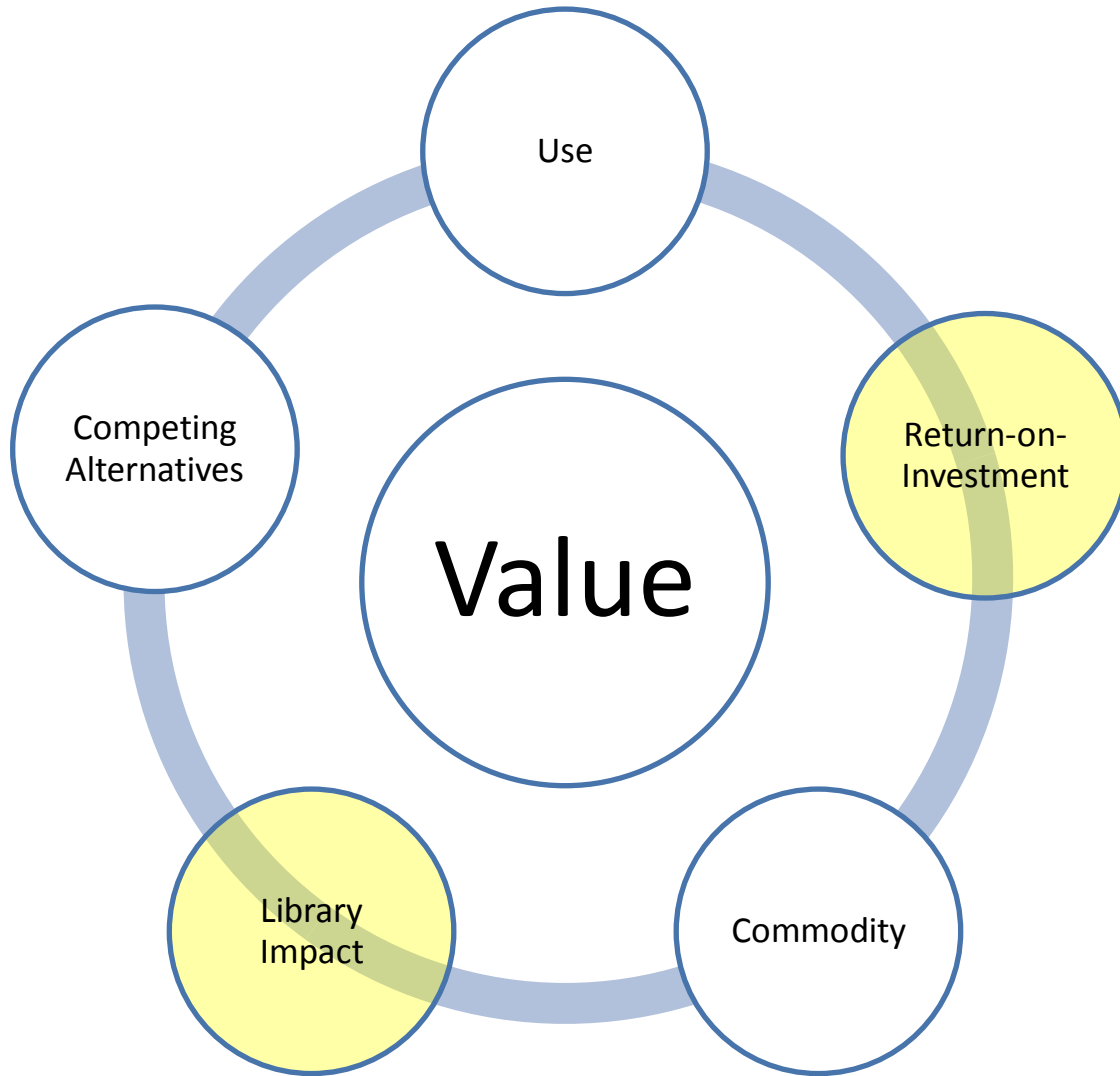CHANGE AHEAD

Mary Ellen Davis

Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe

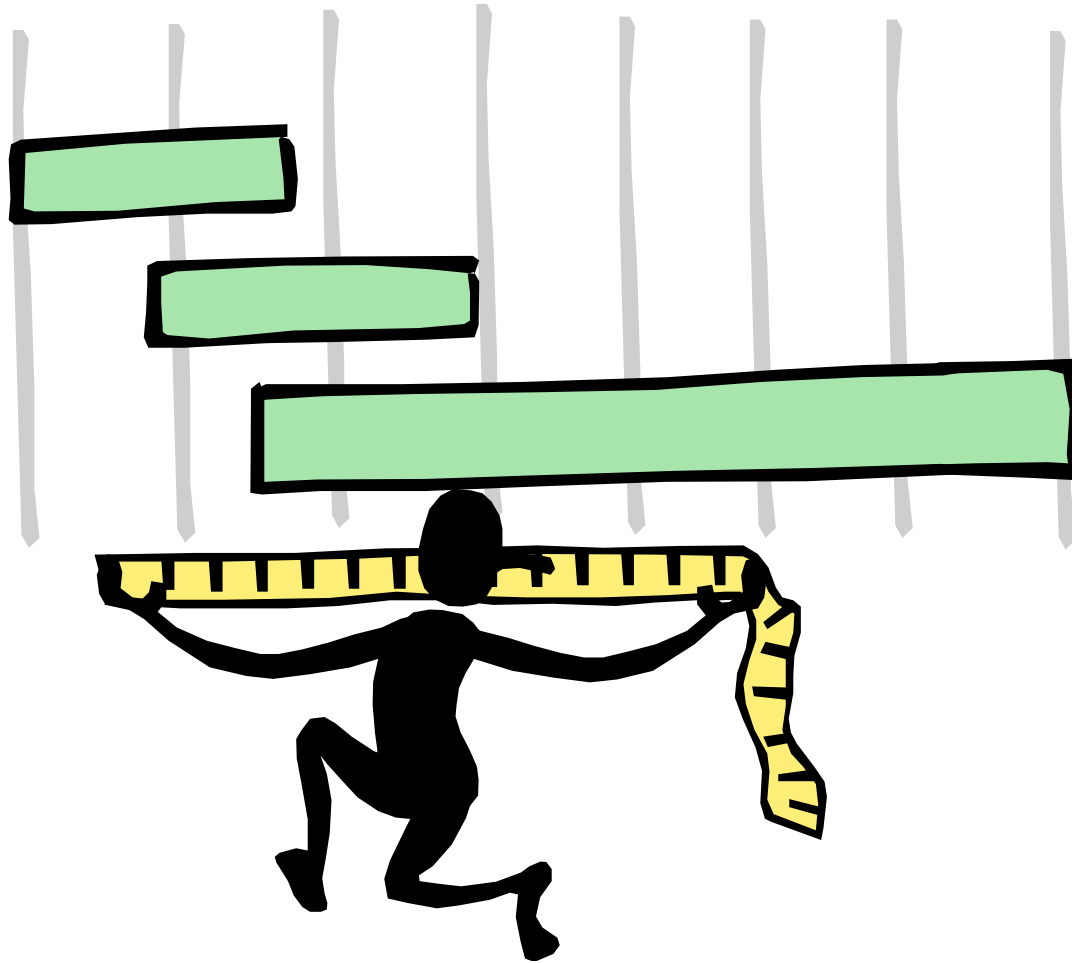Megan Oakleaf

ACRL Conference 2011

Use

Competing
Alternatives

Value

Return-on-
Investment
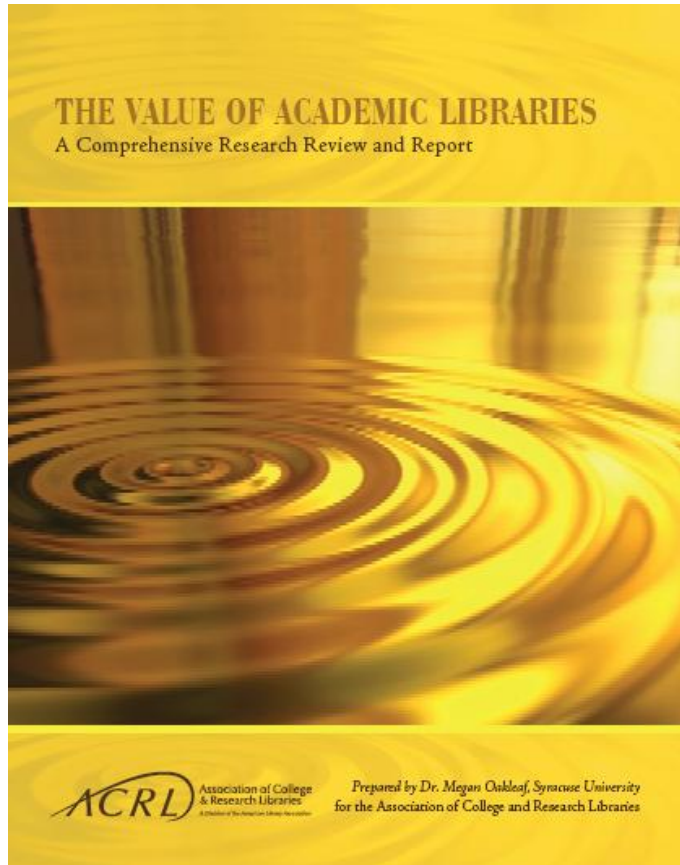
Library
Impact

Commodity

what do
we mean
by value?

What's the Evidence?

The Value of Academic Libraries:
An ACRL Initiative

- Align libraries with institutional outcomes.

- Empower libraries to carry out work locally.

- Create shared knowledge and understanding.

- Contribute to higher education assessment.

http://www.acrl.ala.org/value/

value to overarching institution

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?"

Scope

This report does not emphasize measures of internal library processes such as input and output measures, or external perceptions of quality and satisfaction with library services.
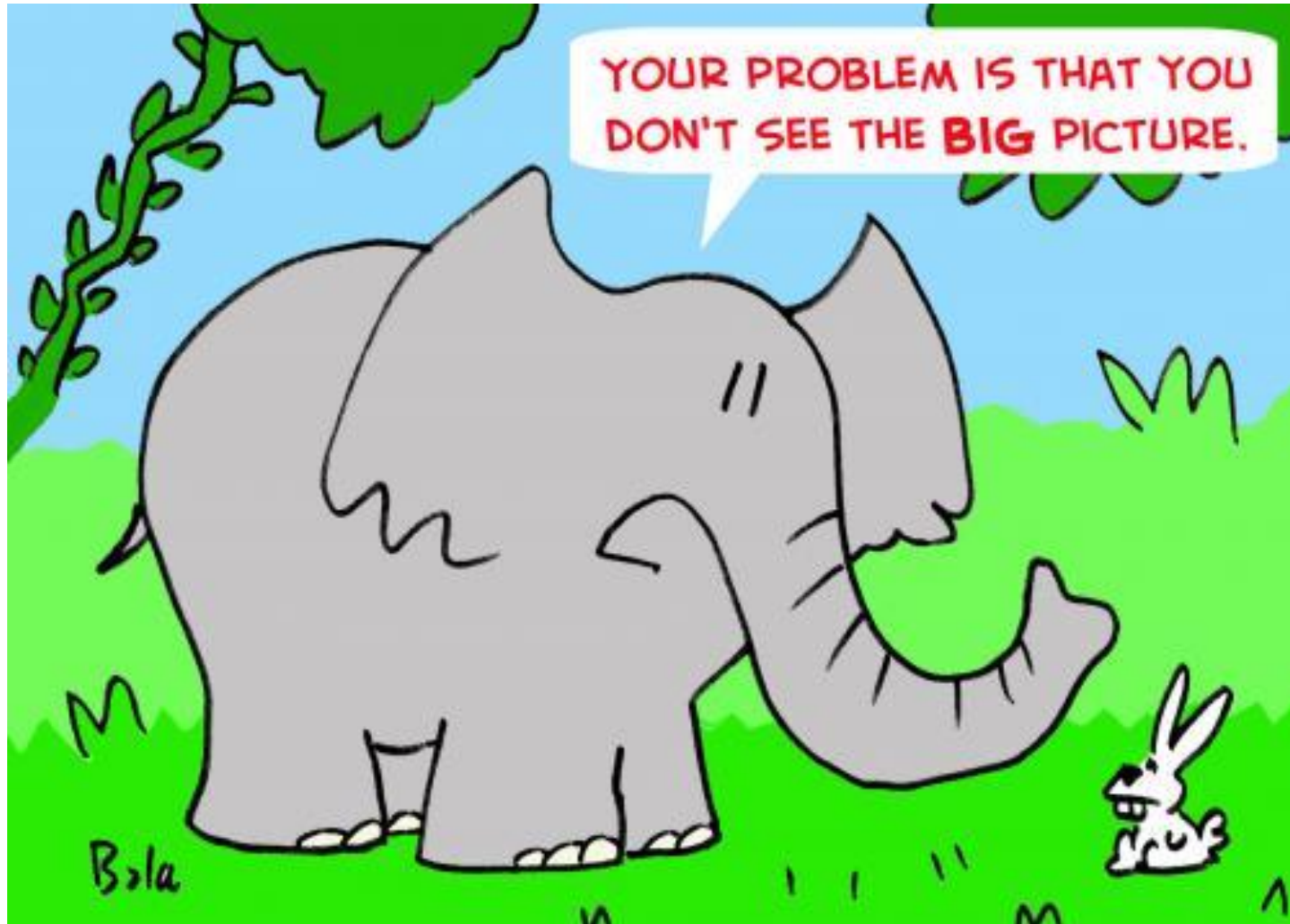
Outside of Scope
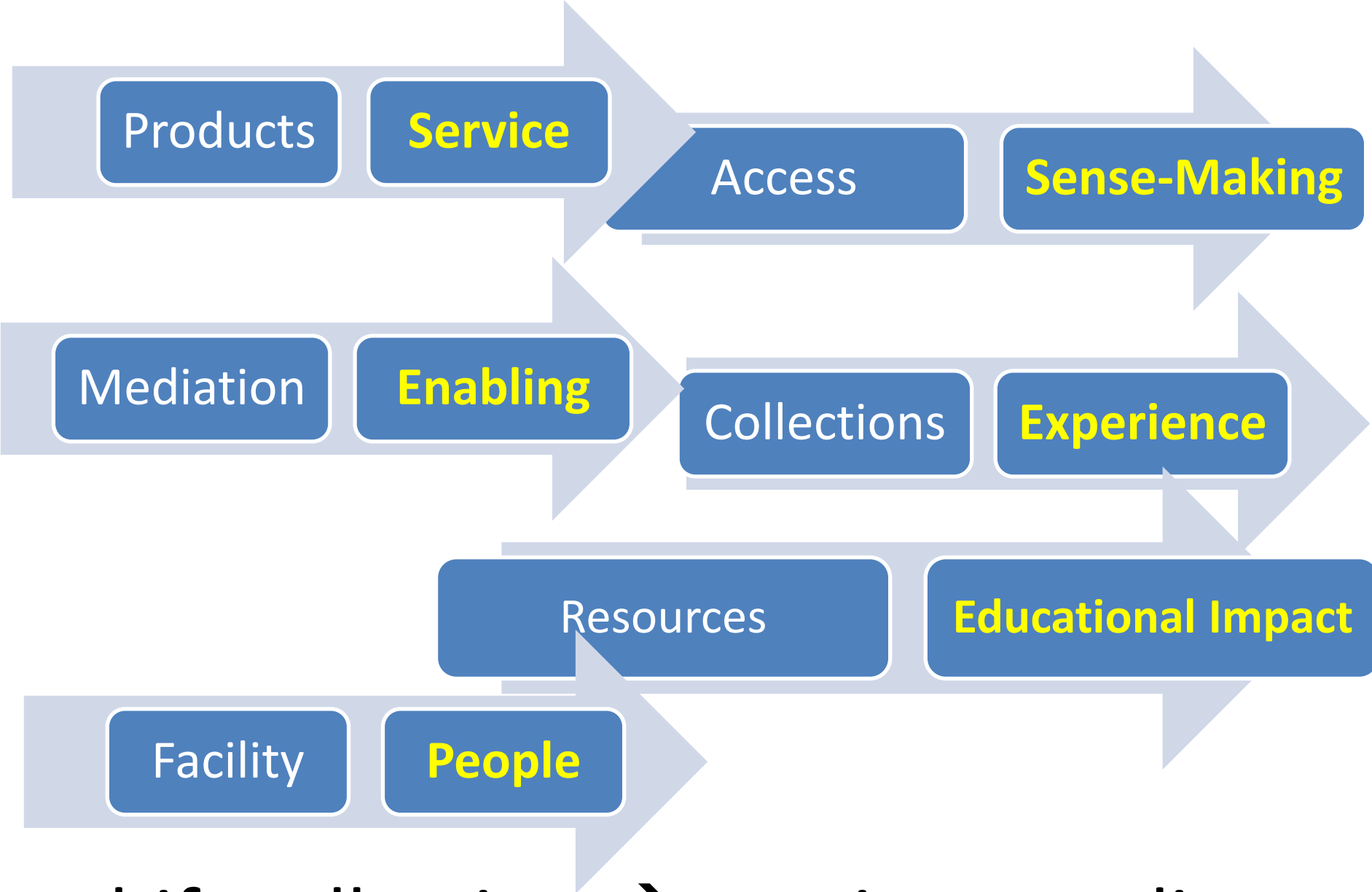
help
we have
undervalued
libraries

use is not enough

recognize our focus on outcomes

shift collection → service paradigm

ask & answer:

what do libraries enable people to do?

what do they use the information for?

what do individual users do? and what impact does that have?

Recommendations

- Define outcomes
- Create or adopt systems for assessment management
- Determine what libraries enables students, faculty, student affairs professionals, administrators and staff to do.
- Develop systems to collect data on individual library user behavior, while maintaining privacy.
- Record and increase library impact on student enrollment.
- Link libraries to improved student retention and graduation rates.
- Review 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.
- Contribute to investigate library impact on faculty grant proposals and funding, a means of generating institutional income.
- Demonstrate and improve library support of faculty teaching.
- Create library assessment plans.
- Promote and participate in professional development.
- Mobilize library administrators.
- Leverage library professional associations.

define
outcomes

ABC

use existing data

develop systems
to collect data on individual
library user behavior, while
maintaining privacy

generate data that plays well with

assessment management

systems

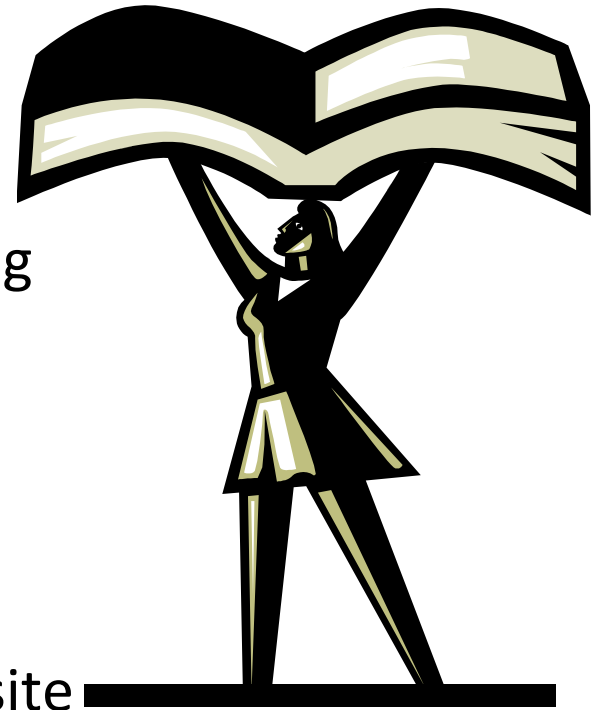# Research Agenda:

The Library contributes to ...

– student enrollment

– student retention and graduation rates

– student success

– student achievement

– student learning

– student experience

– faculty research productivity

– faculty grant proposals and funding

– faculty teaching

– overall institutional reputation or prestige

What Can
Library Administrators Do?

- communicate assessment needs and results to library stakeholders

- use evidence-based decision making

- create confidence in library assessment efforts

- dedicate assessment personnel and training

- foster environments that encourage creativity and risk taking

- integrate library assessment within library planning, budget, and reward structures

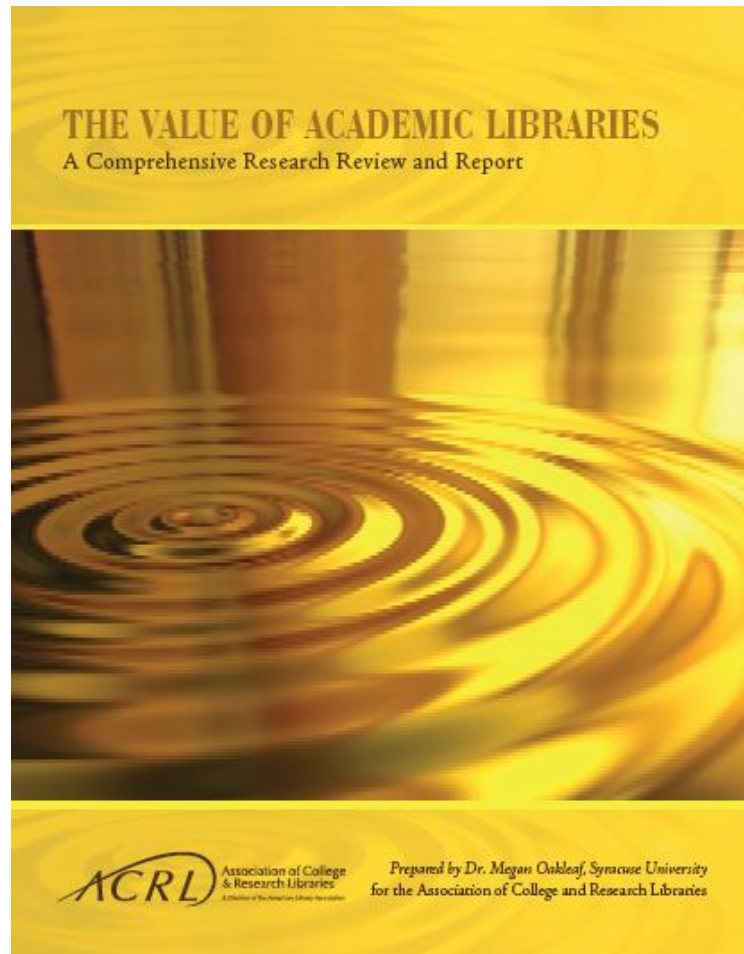- ensure that assessment efforts have requisite resources

What Can Professional Associations Do?

- create online support resources and communities to serve as a nexus of value demonstration activities

- serve a "pulse taking" role, learning how member libraries are showing value and communicating this information to the membership

- orchestrate an "all hands on deck" approach to assessment, helping librarians determine which part of the Research Agenda might be best suited to their institutions and ensuring that the agenda is covered

- encourage library-centric publications and conferences to index their work in library and education literature databases

- identify expert researchers and grant funding opportunities that can partner with librarians to take on the most challenging aspects of the Research Agenda

What Comes After the Report?

Freely available online: http://www.acrl.ala.org/value/

Report complemented by …

- *Futures Thinking for Academic Librarians: Higher Education in 2025* (June 2010) –
  http://www.acrl.org/futures

- *Top Ten Trends in Academic Libraries* (June 2010) -
  http://crln.acrl.org/content/71/6/286.full

- *Environmental Scan* (session at this conference!)

FUTURES THINKING FOR ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS:
HIGHER EDUCATION IN 2025

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ACRL Association of College & Research Libraries
A Division of the American Library Association

Next Steps for ACRL

- Professional Development
  - Past and Upcoming Presentations
    (http://www.acrl.ala.org/value/?page_id=39Publications)
- Publications
  - Toolkit
    (http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/issues/value/valueofacademiclibrariestoolkit.cfm)
  - Revised *Standards for Academic Libraries in Higher Education* (in process – hearing tomorrow!)
- Research and Data Analysis
- Member Services

questions, comments,
& more!