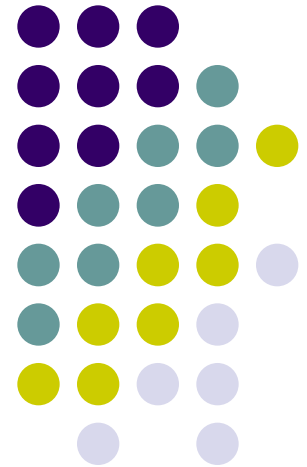
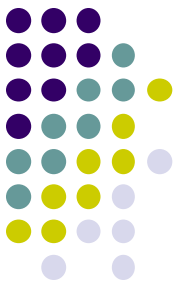


Recruiting for Results: Assessment Skills and the Academic Library Job Market

Megan Oakleaf and Scott Walter
Presented at the Library Assessment
Conference
October 27, 2010
Baltimore, Maryland





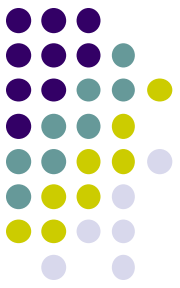
In the Beginning

“Assessment cannot be seen as a separate ‘management activity’ but must be appreciated and valued by all members of the culture and assumed to be part of their regular work.”



Source: Lakos, A., & Phipps, S. (2004). Creating a culture of assessment: A catalyst for organizational change. *portal: Libraries and the Academy*, 4 (3), 345-361.

Building Capacity for the Culture of Assessment



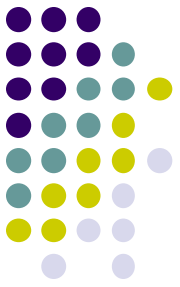
“Library administrations are typically committed to the concept of a culture of assessment . . . but there is a perception that this commitment is not shared by all staff [who] do not have the skills or rewards needed to carry out assessment projects.”



ASSOCIATION
OF RESEARCH
LIBRARIES

Source: Wright, S., & White, L. (2007). *Library assessment* [SPEC Kit 303]. Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries.

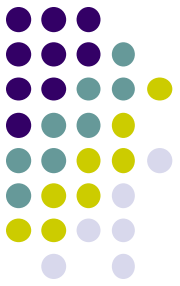
Culture Leaders and Culture Keepers



“The Director of Assessment and Planning provides leadership and vision for the Libraries assessment and planning activities and is responsible for ensuring that assessment, measurement, planning, and analysis are integral parts of Libraries programs and services.”

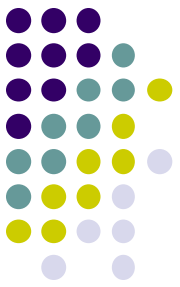
Source: Wright, S., & White, L. (2007). *Library assessment* [SPEC Kit 303]. Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries.

How Healthy is the Culture of Assessment?



- Presence of assessment as an area of concern in LIS education programs?
- Scope of assessment skills among current academic librarians?
- Perceptions of needs for professional development in the area of assessment?
- Recruitment of assessment-savvy professionals into academic libraries?



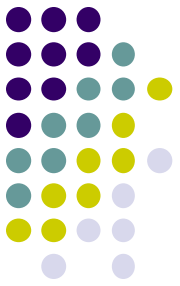


Learning from Instruction

- Instruction in LIS programs (Westbrook, 1999)
- Teaching as a core skill (Lynch & Smith, 2001)
- Instructional leadership (Fowler & Walter, 2003)
- Instructional improvement (Walter & Hinchliffe, 2005)
- Specialized positions (Shank, 2006)
- Standards and guidelines (ACRL, 2007)
- Assessment of student learning (Oakleaf, 2009, 2010)

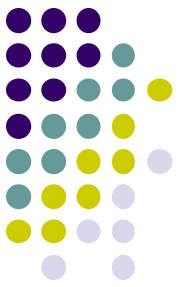


Learning from Instruction



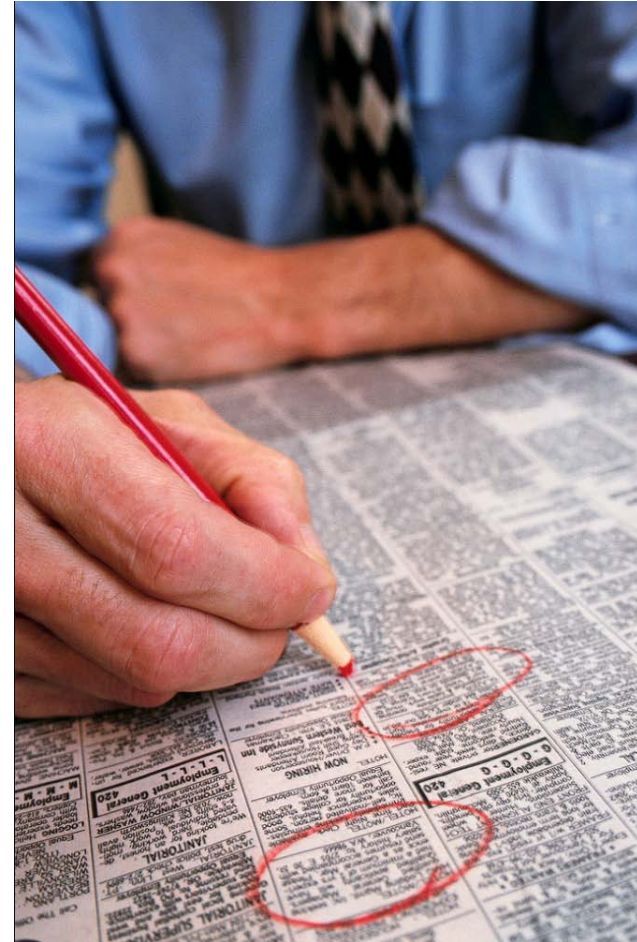
“Candidate will lead development of course-integrated instruction and teach approximately 25 instruction sessions per semester; oversee assessment and evaluation; provide pedagogical support for delivering instruction; promote instruction to campus constituencies”

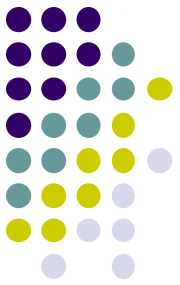
- Requirements include:
 - 5 years experience promoting information literacy
 - Substantive teaching experience
 - Knowledge of instruction theory, practices, and management
 - Experience in instructional design and technology
 - Experience in assessment



The Recruitment Study

- Review of position descriptions posted in *C&RL News* sampled between 2004 – 2009
- 395 positions examined for mention of assessment as a responsibility or as a required or preferred skill
- Are we recruiting for assessment skills, and, if we are, are we doing so in a meaningful way?





The Recruitment Study



LIMITATIONS

UNTIL YOU SPREAD YOUR WINGS,
YOU'LL HAVE NO IDEA HOW FAR YOU CAN WALK.

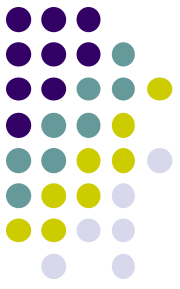
www.despair.com



The Recruitment Study

- 16% of ads (n=65) mention assessment as a job responsibility
- In ads mentioning assessment:
 - 37% mention collection evaluation or use statistics
 - 18.5% mention information literacy
 - 15% mention “assessment of services”
 - 12% mention assessment as a component of strategic planning



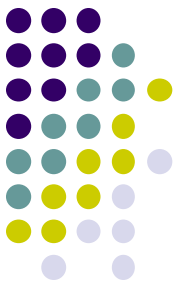


The Recruitment Study

- assessment of library publications
- needs assessment
- assessment of operations
- "assessment strategies"
- "assessing outcomes"
- "oversee assessment and evaluation"



Each of these aspects of assessment earned **one** mention in the 65 positions we identified as mentioning assessment at all.



The Recruitment Study

- “Provide, promote, measure, and assess the delivery of high- quality programs, services, and collections” [subject specialist]
- “Leads planning and assessment efforts” [head of reference]
- “[Provide] leadership in planning, implementing, managing and assessing programs related to serving users . . .” [associate dean]

“All the evolution we know of proceeds from the vague to the definite.”

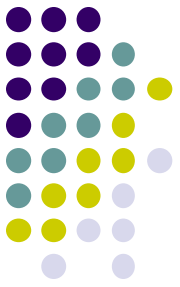
Charles Sanders Peirce
(1898)

The Recruitment Study



“The position’s primary responsibility will be to plan, develop, market, and evaluate instruction activities offered by the Libraries and to contribute to building an environment that firmly places the Libraries at the center of student learning on campus The Head of Instruction will also provide leadership for the Libraries’ participation in campus education initiatives to ensure that the Libraries are partners in the ongoing development of programs and services, such as the assessment of student learning (e.g., iSkills)”

Recruiting for Results: A Common Concern

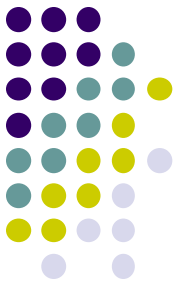


“Staff members articulated that expectations related to their involvement in . . . assessment activities were informally as opposed to formally communicated could not definitely claim whether assessment activities were evaluated during formal annual review processes [or] recall whether assessment activities were included in staff job descriptions.”

A flyer for Student Affairs Day with a yellow border. The title "Student Affairs Day" is in a large, bubbly yellow font. Below it, the text "Learn about the Student Affairs field - it may be the career for you!" is in a smaller, black font. A dark blue horizontal band contains several questions in white text: "Are you active in the Residence Halls?", "Interested in Student Conduct?", "Love the Greek system?", "Interested in helping others with their career path?", "Enjoy exploring issues of diversity and student identity?", and "Have a passion for advising/assisting others navigate the college terrain?". Below this band, the text "Your Dean of Students Jonathan Poullard and other UC Berkeley Student Affairs practitioners will provide insight and offer guidance in the field!" is in a black font. The date "April 12, 2010" is in a large, bubbly yellow font, followed by "102 Sproul Hall" and "6pm-8pm" in a smaller, bubbly yellow font. A white box with a blue border and a blue shadow contains the text "Questions? Concerns?" and "RSVP: deanofstudentsliaison@gmail.com" in a blue font.

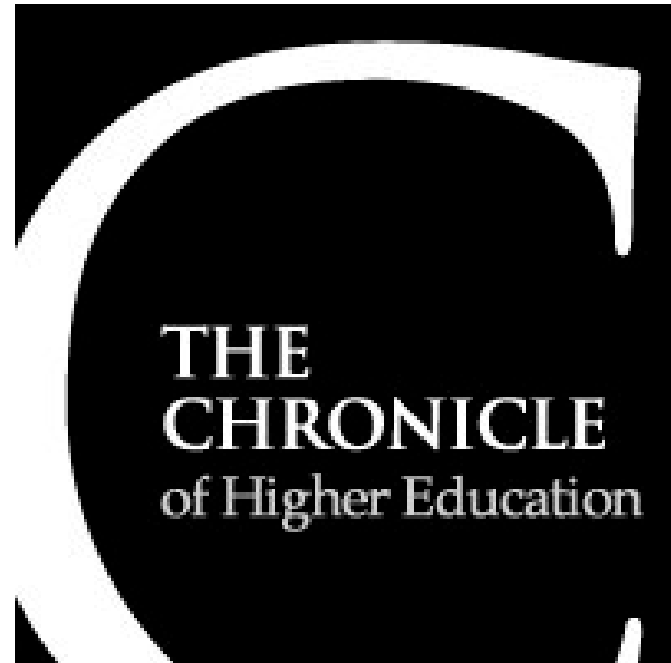
Student Affairs Day
Learn about the Student Affairs field - it may be the career for you!
Are you active in the Residence Halls?
Interested in Student Conduct?
Love the Greek system?
Interested in helping others with their career path?
Enjoy exploring issues of diversity and student identity?
Have a passion for advising/assisting others navigate the college terrain?
Your Dean of Students Jonathan Poullard and other UC Berkeley
Student Affairs practitioners will provide insight and offer guidance in the field!
April 12, 2010
102 Sproul Hall
6pm-8pm
Questions? Concerns?
RSVP: deanofstudentsliaison@gmail.com

Source: Seagraves, B., & Dean, L. A. (2010). Conditions supporting a culture of assessment in student affairs divisions at small colleges and universities. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 47 (3), 307-324.



Improving Our Efforts

- Focused review of assessment positions outside of academic libraries
- “Snapshot” of positions advertised in the Chronicle of Higher Education during Aug-Sept 2010
- 10 relevant job descriptions

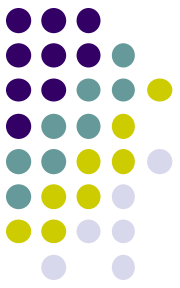




Targeting Core Skills

- Define & refine outcomes
- Create an assessment plan
- Identify data needs
- Develop studies to respond to data needs
- Select appropriate assessment measures
- Analyze & interpret assessment results
- Communicate & report assessment results
- Demonstrate excellent skills in data analysis, presentation, & organization
- Prepare data for decision-making processes





Identifying Advanced Skills

- Develop, implement, and manage assessment program to support mission, values, and strategic initiatives
- Consult with units and departments; work with academic and administrative leaders to develop, maintain, and conduct assessment activities
- Monitor assessment activities across the university
- Train faculty and staff in assessment skills
- Provide technical expertise in selection of assessment measures
- Develop, implement, and maintain systems for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting assessment data
- Employ assessment management methodologies and applications
- Prepare data for decision-making processes, communication with external stakeholders, and accreditation purposes

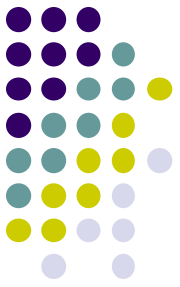
Improving Position Descriptions



- Identify importance of assessment in organizational description
- Be specific in identifying assessment responsibilities in position
- Identify specific assessment skills relevant to responsibilities
- Map qualifications to skills required to successfully meet responsibilities
- Establish connections between responsibilities and the broader environment for assessment in libraries and on campus



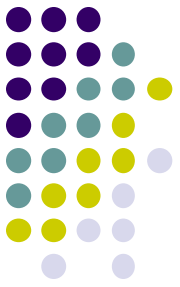
Subject Specialist – Assessment Aware



“The Social Sciences Librarian will build and promote a program of library services and collections in all formats which connects scholars, content and emerging technologies to meet the needs of social sciences will be a member of the social sciences team and participate in social science projects, assessment, and represent the team on collaborative digital initiatives for social science disciplines.”

- Requirements include:
 - Advanced degree in the social sciences
 - Interest/Expertise in digital initiatives as applied to the social sciences, e.g., data curation
 - Awareness of technologies/tool/data resources in the social sciences
 - Ability to plan, design, implement, and assess library programs and services, including collections, instruction, and consultation

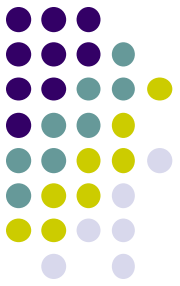
Reference Librarian – Assessment Enhanced



“The Reference Librarian will design and promote a program of reference services, instructional offerings, and collection services will deliver and assess reference, instruction, and collection effectiveness by identifying relevant outcomes, participating in the development of an assessment plan, and analyzing data...will communicate assessment results to interested stakeholders and use them for continuous improvement.”

- Requirements include:
 - Background or experience in evaluation and assessment
 - Familiarity with assessment planning and data systems
 - Awareness of institutional assessment and accreditation activities
 - Ability to plan, design, implement, and assess library programs and services, including collections and instruction.
 - Familiarity with reference service assessment tools and techniques, e.g., READ Scale

Contact



Scott Walter

Associate University
Librarian for Services
and Associate Dean of
Libraries

University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign
swalter@illinois.edu

Megan Oakleaf

Assistant Professor
iSchool
Syracuse University
moakleaf@syr.edu