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Overview

In July 2017, NEFLIN undertook a project to build capacity in NEFLIN academic libraries to conduct assessments and support assessment projects that guide library decision-making and action-taking. To that end, a 6-part assessment professional development program was planned, spread over the course of an academic year. Training was provided in several content areas, as shown below:

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Throughout the program, participants were challenged to both complete the projects at hand as well as build skills to transfer to future projects and to share with colleagues at their home institution.
Initial Steps
At the outset of the program, high expectations were established with a detailed application form including the following questions:

- What problem(s) do you hope to learn more about?
- What question(s) do you hope to answer?
- Who or what do you plan to assess?
- What information, data, or evidence do you imagine will be needed to conduct your assessment?
- When your assessment project is complete, what decisions will you be able to make? What actions will you be able to take?
- What institutional or library goal is your project linked to or aligned with?
- What partners or collaborators might you include in your project?

Through these questions, participants were asked to “pre-think” about their projects. This effort was essential to ensure that actionable, relevant projects were conceptualized from the start.

Instructors

MEGAN OAKLEAF
Megan Oakleaf is an Associate Professor in the iSchool at Syracuse University where she teaches “Reference and Information Literacy Services” and “Planning, Marketing, and Assessing Library Services.” Her research interests include library value and impact, outcomes assessment, evidence-based decision making, information literacy instruction, information services, and digital librarianship. She is the author of the Value of Academic Libraries Comprehensive Report and Review and Academic Library Value: The Impact Starter Kit. She also served on the faculty of the ACRL Immersion Program. Megan has presented at numerous conferences, including ALA, ACRL, AAC&U, and AALHE National Conferences, ARL Library Assessment Conferences, the IUPUI Assessment Institute, the NCSU Undergraduate Assessment Symposium, the Texas A&M Assessment Conference, and EDUCAUSE. Megan won the 2011 Ilene F. Rockman Publication of the Year Award, was named to the LIRT Top 20 Instruction Articles five times, was included on the 2010 Reference Research Review List, and was awarded “Best Paper” at the 2007 EBLIP Conference. She has published articles in JASIST, College & Research Libraries, Journal of Documentation, Communications in Information Literacy, Library Quarterly, and Portal, among other journals. Megan also has a recurring column on library assessment in the Journal of Academic Librarianship and serves on the editorial boards of Library and Information Science Research, Library Quarterly, and Journal of Academic Librarianship. Previously, Megan was the Librarian for Instruction and Undergraduate Research at North Carolina State University. In this role, she designed, implemented, coordinated, and assessed the library instruction program; she also trained fellow librarians in instructional theory and methods. Megan completed her dissertation entitled, “Assessing Information Literacy Skills: A Rubric Approach,” at the School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She earned her MLS from Kent State University and also holds a BA in English and Spanish and a BS in English Education and...
Spanish Education from Miami University. Prior to a career in librarianship, Megan taught language arts and advanced composition in Ohio public schools, grades 8-12.

MARTHA KYRILLIDOU
Martha Kyrillidou consults in management, evaluation, assessment and R&D activities. She helps libraries respond to customer needs through the development of user-focused services and culture that enhance the user-experience. With an understanding of trends in services, collections, facilities, and personnel she can help a library tell their story through narratives, visuals and numbers. Martha can help you with accreditation, grant writing, evaluation plans or serve as your external evaluator and data analyst for your grant and sponsored activities. As the original architect of the StatsQUAL suite of services at the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), Martha is well positioned to consult and help you maximize the benefits you derive from LibQUAL+, ClimateQUAL and MINES for Libraries. She has also worked on digital library as well as special collections assessment and evaluation methods. Her work has defined the growing and dynamic library assessment community of practice across the globe.

KRISTINE BRANCOLINI
Kristine R. Brancolini is Dean of the Library at Loyola Marymount University (LMU) in Los Angeles. She is co-director of the Institute for Research Design in Librarianship, an IMLS-funded program that provides to a selected cohort of academic librarians research methods training and one year of support to complete a research project. Prior to coming to LMU, she was Director of the Digital Library Program at Indiana University. Brancolini has presented and published research in a number of LIS areas, including media librarianship/collection development and digital library development. She is currently studying the factors that influence and increase research productivity among academic librarians. She is co-author of Enhancing Library and Information Research Skills: A Guide for Academic Librarians, with Lili Luo and Marie R. Kennedy (Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2017).

AMANDA ALBERT
Amanda Albert is the Information Literacy Coordinator at Washington University in St. Louis. Amanda graduated with her MSLIS from the iSchool at Syracuse University in 2014. Prior to her position at WUSTL, she served as the Instructional Services Librarian at Saint Louis University. Amanda’s current research interests include information literacy instruction, instructional design, assessment, and communicating library value. She has presented on these and other topics at numerous professional conferences including ACRL, the Distance Library Services Conference (DLS), the Library Assessment Conference (LAC), LOEX, NISO Virtual Conference, and the Southeast Library Assessment Conference (SELAC). Amanda is published in Journal of Academic Librarianship and the Journal of Library & Information Services in Distance Learning.

Key Outcomes
The NEFLIN project was intended to achieve two outcomes:

1. To build capacity in NEFLIN academic libraries to conduct assessments.
2. To support assessment projects that guide library decision-making and action-taking.

These outcomes were shared with participants at the outset of the program and reinforced throughout. The successful completion of participants’ projects demonstrates achievement of both outcomes. Participants planned, deployed, analyzed, and communicated about their projects and stand ready to work alongside their colleagues on future projects. The also demonstrated their ability to use assessment to make decisions and take actions through their final project reports; each report summarizes the project findings and describes how those findings will be utilized. All but two participants completed the program; these two have remained in touch with the program instructors and are pursuing their assessment project separately. Several completed projects have also been the subject of current or future presentations and posters at professional conferences, furthering the reach of the capacity building nature of this assessment program.

In a post-survey, participants were asked whether the program “helped me build skills to conduct assessments.” 100% of survey respondents marked “strongly agree” or “agree.” To the statement, “The NEFLIN Assessment Program helped me develop an assessment that will result in enabling actions to be taken or decisions to be made,” 100% of survey respondents registered “strongly agree” or “agree.” responded Y. Participants also offered the following comments about the program:

- “I appreciated the attention the instructors gave to our projects. They helped me narrow mine down to something very useful. I also enjoyed the camaraderie among the participants.”
- “Fantastic to work with national experts and only for the cost of travel!”
- “I really appreciated the team of faculty, all of whom are respected professionals. They were incredibly giving in the time they spent with us and the feedback/coaching provided. This has been a great opportunity for my own professional development and truly appreciated.”
- “What a great experience! One of the most valuable aspects was being able to discuss with a group of peers who are also working on assessments. It also helped to have hard deadlines so that I would not procrastinate and actually make progress.”

Assessment Overview Workshop (Megan Oakleaf)
This introductory workshop was designed to clarify the trajectory and outcomes of the assessment program as well as enable participants to envision their projects and formulate an initial plan of work and a draft assessment plan to guide their engagement throughout the program. The content of the workshop focused on writing assessment project outcomes and research questions, considering their assessment method choices, anticipating data and evidence analysis, and imagining possible assessment result scenarios.

Goals:
Participants will articulate the goals and outcomes of the NEFLIN Assessment Program.

Participants will envision and describe a defined assessment project.

Participants will formulate outcomes or research questions on which to base their assessment project.

Participants will describe the advantages and disadvantages of various assessment methods in the context of their project.

Participants will anticipate the data and/or evidence their planned project will produce and imagine ways in which the data/evidence can be analyzed and deployed to effect change.

Highlighted Activities:
- Thinking through the Basics
- Defining Outcomes
- Formulating Research Questions
- Selecting Assessment Tools
- Assessment Plan Outline
- Planning Timeline
- Closing the Loop

Assessment Method Workshop (Martha Kyrillidou)
This workshop introduced formulating research questions, matching them to appropriate methods, and identifying the most appropriate method for a given project. Participants learned basic approaches to quantitative and qualitative research methods and philosophies and applied them, as needed, to their assessment project. The workshop provided an introduction to key terms including evaluation, research, assessment, purpose of the study, audience, methods, analysis, representation, and advocacy. Participants examined useful assumptions in quantitative and qualitative research methods and discussed how their projects can deploy different methods. Participants presented their ideas and refined them through group discussion.

Goals:
- Participants will present their research idea and discuss what methods are most appropriate.
- Participants will be able to articulate the concepts that are important in conducting their assessment or research project.
- Participants will be able to incorporate input and refine their project further based on what they learn about the advantages and disadvantages of the different assessment methods.
- Participants will be able to learn from each other’s projects.

Highlighted Activities:
- Defining Outcomes Assessment
- Defining Culture of Assessment
- Presenting their project ideas and initial outcomes.
- Identifying pros and cons for:
  o Surveys
Interviews/focus groups
Observational/ethnographic studies
Usability and User Centered Design
Usage Data/Data Mining

Assessment “Test Run” Workshop (Martha Kyrillidou)
In preparation for this workshop, participants started their research project and conducted a small pilot or started implementation. This session, the third in the NEFLIN Assessment Project Workshop series, focused on refining projects based on the knowledge gained regarding methods through the implementation of participants’ projects. During the workshop, participants presented their projects and engaged in a detailed discussion on the methods and refinements taking place. Participants shared project drafts before the workshop detailing their progress, including instruments when such tools were developed. The workshop reviewed concepts from the previous event and discussed in more detail survey methods and observation studies since these approaches are among the most popular ones in libraries.

Goals:
- Participants will present their projects and refine them based on feedback.
- Participants will be able to articulate if their project qualifies as a quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods project.
- Participants will be able to learn from each other’s projects.

Highlighted Activities:
- Project drafts
- Project presentations
- Feedback for improvements

Assessment in the Field Workshop (Kristine Brancolini)
This workshop covered developing assessment instruments including a discussion of variables, conducting peer checks and initiating pilot testing, as well as a discussion of reliability and validity.

Goals:
- Participants will build a sense of community in order to provide them with peer support during their research projects.
- Participants will understand the process of peer checks prior to initiating pilot assessments.
- Participants will initiate pilot tests for their assessment projects.

Highlighted Activities:
- Updated project presentations
- Peer checks
Results Workshop (Megan Oakleaf)
This penultimate workshop helped participants take stock of the progress they made thus far in the program, reflect on the results of their assessment, and formulate a plan for “closing the loop,” and reporting on their results. Participants engaged in a series of reflective exercises gauging where their assessment projects were in the context of their overall plans made earlier in the program.

Goals:
• Participants will benchmark their progress toward the goals of their assessment project.
• Participants will reflect on the degree to which their results answer their initial or revised research questions.
• Participants will acknowledge and share how they overcame assessment obstacles.
• Participants will formulate a plan for using their results to make decisions and take actions.
• Participants will anticipate reporting challenges and goals.

Highlighted Activities:
• Reflecting on Project Aspirations/Goals/Purposes
• Checking in with Your Assessment Plan & Beginning with the End in Mind Document
• Overcoming Obstacles
• Articulating & Using Results
• Reflecting, Deciding, Acting, Sharing
• Closing the Loop Action Plan
• Anticipating Reporting

Communication and Dissemination Workshop (Amanda Albert)
This final workshop was dedicated to communicating about assessment evidence and data. Participants focused on the concept of communicating library value and be able to apply it to their assessment project. The workshop covered topics such as the strategic evaluation of stakeholders, assessing their assessment data, and crafting targeted messages to artfully articulate their value story. Participants left the workshop with a communication plan in hand.

Goals:
• Participants will create a plan in order to communicate the value of their library.
• Participants will articulate the concept of communicating library value in order to apply it to their assessment project.
• Participants will analyze their unique stakeholders in order to be able to communicate with them effectively.
• Participants will evaluate their assessment data in order to use it tell their library value story.
• Participants will identify gaps in their assessment and marketing practices in order to understand how to create a fuller picture of their libraries’ value.
• Participants will experiment with various marketing strategies in order to choose the strategies that work best for their institutions.

Highlighted Activities:
• Defining communicating library value
• Creating a Communication Plan including:
  o Building stakeholder profiles
  o Writing communication outcomes
  o Crafting a targeted message
  o Evaluating Budget for time, money, and human resources
  o Evaluating communication strategies
  o Drafting a mockup and presenting it to the group

Project List

Here follows a selection of projects from the Assessment Program including participants, project focus, and a sample of their results taken from their final reports.

Karen Kaufmann and Peggy Nuhn
ROLE OF LIBRARY INSTRUCTION AT TWO-YEAR COLLEGES IN HELPING STUDENTS SUCCESSFULLY TRANSFER TO THE UNIVERSITY

Based on UCF librarian pilot survey results and SSC librarian survey results, elements of information literacy instruction were identified and then aligned with elements of instruction to the ACRL Framework Comparing these findings then identifies potential gaps in information literacy instruction between the two institutions.

Early observations from the Partner College survey are that majority of respondents have been employed as academic librarians in their current positions for ten years or more and that 53.3 percent of the librarians who responded to the Partner College Survey are not embedded in any online classes. Admittedly, this is a small sample, but it reflects half of those surveyed, and our survey group for this aspect of our research was not a large one.

There is a likely correlation between the length of librarian tenure and reliance on F2F information literacy instruction.

Next potential step is to survey Seminole State College faculty to learn how they would prioritize and rank by importance elements of information literacy. Practical Implications/Value: 1) Provide empirical data to inform the gaps that are evidenced in information literacy instruction for transfer students. 2) Use data from this study to identify how to prepare universities and two-year college institutions on ways to coordinate and facilitate transfer student information literacy preparedness.

We have shared our research and results at the 2018 Florida Library Association Annual Conference and the 2018 American Library Association Annual Conference. For the ALA Conference, we were accompanied by Morgan Tracy, Director of Libraries, Seminole State College who spoke on the administrator’s need for this information, and by Rachel
Mulvihill, Head of Teaching and Engagement, UCF Libraries, who shared how this research will inform their development of updated (Framework specific) modules. Next week we will inform UCF Instructional Librarians of our project and results at their monthly meeting.

We have also been in touch with representatives from the Florida Academic Library Services Cooperative (FALSC) for development of a statewide forum for sharing this information with our colleagues. In addition, we were recently contacted by Jessica Gribble, Senior Acquisitions Editor for ABC-CLIO to discuss our authorship of a book that could be helpful to other college/university librarians in articulation agreement relationships.

Paul Mosely and Lisandra Carmichael
IMPACT OF LIBRARY FACILITY USE ON STUDENT SUCCESS

As we originally postulated, a positive correlation exists between FTIC library use and GPA and retention. Those students who visited the library regularly posted an average GPA of 3.0 or better, regardless of discipline. Those who visited at least 20 times per semester were more likely to have a 3.0 GPA. Those who visited even more frequently posted an average GPA of 3.5 or better. FTIC students were also more likely to re-enroll if they visited the library at least once during the semester. For every unique visit a student made to the library, the student was 1.03 times more likely to re-enroll. When we examined the data, we found that students who visited the library at least once were 2.65 times more likely to re-enroll.

While our study was primarily geared toward analyzing library use and its impact on FTIC students, our data also revealed information on both undergraduate and graduate students regardless of their progress toward earning a degree. We learned that fully 80% of all students regardless of academic level visited the library, an encouraging statistic that suggests the importance of the library to students attending the university. Of the various groups of students included in the data gathered, student athletes were the group posting the highest likelihood of visiting the library – 98% visited. By discipline, 91% of all Biology, Electrical Engineering, Physical Therapy, and Music majors visited the library.

Regardless of the number of visits a student makes to the library, the impact on GPA is positive. We did find that the magic number of visits seems to be 20 visits per semester. Regardless of discipline, FTIC students visit the library an average of 21 times per semester while sophomores, juniors, and seniors visit an average of 15 times. While visiting the library and GPA are positively correlated, that correlation doesn’t change when testing for any number of visits under 20. For FTIC students, 20 visits per semester is where GPA hits 3.0. GPA slopes off outside of 20 visits.

As the result of this study, the library is able to demonstrate statistically it has a positive impact on both student success and retention. This has far-reaching implications for the library in its promotion of the use of the library facility and its numerous services and for its planning for future use of space and expansion of services. As the university examines data to determine pathways toward better student success, the library is now able to
contribute meaningfully to that examination and demonstrate that it plays an integral role in student success and retention.

This study represents a first step toward quantifying impacts that the library has on the university’s students. As we go forward, we might also look at specific library services and try to correlate their impact with student success. For example, are we able to demonstrate that the library instruction program contributes to student success? And further, can we determine if the provision of interlibrary loan services plays a positive role in increasing student performance on academic projects? Numerous future analyses suggest themselves now that we have taken these first steps at more deeply analyzing and understanding student use of the library. As a result of this study, the library has a deeper understanding of the relationship between library facility usage and its impact on FTIC student GPA and retention.

Nance Lempinen-Leedy
ASSESSMENT OF LIBRARY INSTRUCTION

The library assessment team developed a rubric to evaluate the research papers and bibliographies from the identified courses to determine if the information literacy session met the stated outcomes. Teaching faculty loaded student papers into their course using the college’s learning management system, Canvas, and added the Assessment Project Coordinator into their course. The coordinator downloaded student papers and made the papers available to the assessment team in a common drive. The assessment team used the rubric to evaluate twenty-seven research papers. An outcome has been met when a student achieves a score of 80% (14.5/18) or above on the evaluation rubric.

After library instruction, the student will be able to collect information relevant to their research need.

- Did the student collect a minimum of two research sources from authoritative resources?
- Did the student use library resources?
- Did the student select research sources that provide sufficient coverage of the subject matter?

After library instruction, the student will be able to document sources following a system of citation appropriate to the discipline.

- Are the research sources incorporated into the narrative?
- Are the research sources relevant to the topic?
Additionally, the pilot assessment project demonstrated to the Assessment Team that this system of assessment is sustainable as a method for future assessment of library instruction. With the pre-instruction survey and evaluation rubric in place, the staff time to evaluate the evidence is negligible.

Trina McCowan and Victoria McGlone
MEASUREMENT OF THE IMPACT OF LIBRARY INSTRUCTION ON STUDENT SUCCESS

Conclusions about student satisfaction were easy to draw. Students were overwhelmingly positive in their reviews of their interactions with FSCJ librarians. Roughly 80% of survey respondents believed the quality of their instruction was excellent. Additionally, we were able to identify ENC 1101 and ENC 1102 students as the population most likely to use our services. This information will be valuable as we try to target specific faculty groups for outreach.

The need to modify the survey and to be intentional in its placement on the LLC website also became apparent at the conclusion of the pilot. A student ID number field was suggested as an easy addition to the survey, which will assist the research team with connecting library instruction with student success. Similarly, a field for subject and a drop down menu for the type of service received (reference interview or classroom orientation) can also be added to make the survey more useful. Also, in a wrap up conversation, most librarians expressed the belief that students are not able to easily navigate to the current survey link, which will impact the number and perhaps the tone of responses.

In conclusion, there is still much work to do. However, the length of our pilot allowed us to identify issues and make the appropriate course corrections before presenting incomplete or meaningless data to college administrators.

Madeline Sims
IMPROVEMENT OF ACQUISITION WORKFLOW

The main workflow inefficiency I observed was the acquisition workflow and the very lengthy process it took to get a book selected, ordered, shipped and received at the
A workflow chart was completed and later a time to shelf study was conducted of 70 orders across three separate fiscal years. Through my collaboration with Lisa Tatum at Florida Academic Library Services Cooperative (FALSC), I was given contact information for technical services staff at similar sized institutions. A benchmarking survey was drafted, reviewed, and distributed to these individuals and results were later analyzed. Upcoming work to be completed is to send out a second survey specifically addressing how other colleges manage the approval process for ordering library materials and comparing it to our workflow. This was an aspect I did not specifically address in the first survey, so I will send out a second survey to get these answers. This survey, however, will be distributed to an Acquisitions listserv through FLVC to garner more responses.

Below is a timeline of steps that have been completed since the assessment project began in September 2017:

- November 2017 – Reviewed and analyzed acquisition workflow at FSCJ: see FSCJ Library Acquisition Workflow Chart A (Book Vendor) on pages 2-3 of this document.
- November 2017 - Identified peer colleges for FSCJ to benchmark Acquisitions workflow
- December 2017-January 2018 – Gathered acquisition data from the Aleph ILS as well as the book vendor’s website to chart the time it takes for orders to be selected, approved, ordered and arrive on the shelf.
- January-February 2018: Created, reviewed and finalized survey data to send to the Technical Services staff at the similar sized state colleges.
- February 2018: Reviewed existing literature of acquisition workflow in libraries (references listed on page 4 are a starting point).
- March 2018-May 2018: Contacted the Technical Services staff at similar sized colleges and compiled their responses.

I will soon meet with one of the campuses (by their request) to discuss their acquisition process and how to improve it. I will also meet with the Dean of Library Services soon to go over final results. The goal is to improve workflow processes, have materials arrive on the shelf faster, and have budget monies spent evenly throughout the year.

Anne Casey
INVESTIGATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS AND CONTRIBUTION OF LIBRARY MODULES TO STUDENT SUCCESS

The results of the pre- and posttests indicate that most students, who were not already familiar with the Hunt Library website, seemed to acquire the requisite knowledge. In addition, a small number indicated they would rely less on search engines as the first place to go.

This was a good learning experience in regard to the presentation of the library module by UNIV 101 instructors. In a meeting with the instructors, they were informed to make no changes to their presentation of the module other than to ask students to take the pre- and posttests. As a result of their following these instructions, we learned that there is room for improvement in the way the library module is presented.
Phase one of this project was designed to set a baseline and test the instrument. The Hunt Library and First Year Programs (FYP) staff had already agreed that the library module needed to be revised. The library liaison to FYP has been working on a revision that will be complete and ready to be tested in the Summer B term. The pre- and posttests seem to work well and will be used in the next phases of this project.

**Julie Evener**  
**EVALUATION OF LIBRARY INSTRUCTION**

As a result of the evaluation, I found that students overwhelmingly report learning something new and useful in library instruction sessions (96% of 774 students). Also, what students report learning in the later parts of their program are more advanced skills than what they report learning in early parts of their program, showing progression of skills over time. I also found that students generally do well on assignments that are tied to library instruction (based on over 1700 students over 5 trimesters). Finally, the library reaches more students when library instruction is a required part of a course than when it is voluntary.

These data and findings can support our librarians when we talk to administrators and faculty members about including library instruction in courses as a part of required coursework. The evaluation also gives us a framework to use to continue to monitor and analyze the success of our library instruction offerings.

**TERESA FAUST**  
**IDENTIFICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF BEST PRACTICES IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF SUBJECT LIBGUIDES**

A literature review was conducted to see what usability studies and librarian surveys determined were best practices. Among the findings: navigation links in a sidebar on the left side were more visible to users than tabs running along the top; brief descriptions of the relevancy of particular databases were preferred over lengthy descriptions; databases should be listed in order of relevancy instead of alphabetically; most libraries saw consistency as a plus and created LibGuide templates to be followed in varying degrees. All CF librarians were asked to explore LibGuides from other libraries and share those they found appealing, along with an explanation of the appeal. Use of graphics was a consistent theme.

As this project was under way, a college-wide effort to improve the accessibility of online resources was emphasized. One librarian was asked to draft a set of accessibility guidelines for LibGuides. Another librarian was asked to draft a set of LibGuide guidelines based on the literature review and librarian exploration of other institutions. These drafts have been completed.

It was noted that both sets of guidelines deal with the look of the LibGuide, not the content. Further exploration of content guidelines is warranted. Also to be determined is if all drafted guidelines will be merged into one set of guidelines for CF LibGuides.