CONNECT, COLLABORATE, AND COMMUNICATE

A Report from the Value of Academic Libraries Summits

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About the Authors

Karen Brown is an associate professor at Dominican University (River Forest, IL) in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science and teaches in the areas of collection management, foundations of the profession, and literacy and learning. Prior to joining Dominican University's faculty in 2000, she developed and coordinated continuing education programs for the Chicago Library System, one of Illinois's former regional library systems. She has also held positions focusing on collection development, reference, and instruction at the University of Wisconsin, University of Maryland, Columbia University, and Bard College. She holds a PhD in media studies from New York University and master's degrees in library science and adult education from the University of Wisconsin.

Kara J. Malenfant is a senior staff member at ACRL, where she coordinates government relations advocacy and scholarly communication activities and is the lead staff member on the Value of Academic Libraries initiative. She provides consulting services on organizational development and use of ACRL's standards for libraries in higher education. Kara began her position at ACRL in fall of 2005, after working for six years at DePaul University Libraries in Chicago. She holds a PhD in leadership and change from Antioch University and an MS in library science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

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Horizon Report, EDUCAUSE notes the increased focus on individual students through use of learning analytics, which are early intervention systems that gather a wide range of data produced by students to assess academic progress. As the report notes, "Learning analytics responds to calls for accountability on campuses and aims to leverage the vast amount of data produced by students in academic activities."[3] Moreover, the Gates Foundation is currently funding a broad-based data mining research initiative focused on increasing higher education's understanding of factors leading to student success.[4]

ACRL has long been concerned with accountability, assessment, and student learning. In the early 1980s, ACRL led the way with a publication on assessment to "stimulate librarians' interest in performance meas

Value of Academic Libraries report, facilitated the summit activities. (For roster of participants, see Appendix A).

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contributions to addressing these needs (for Summit Two agenda, see Appendix C). The work was carried out largely in guided small group deliberations, followed by full group reactions. These deliberations were stimulated and informed by the experiences of a panel of librarians who have implemented different approaches for demonstrating library value on their campuses. Participants considered various dimensions of student learning and success in addition to sources and types of data that have the potential to demonstrate library impact. In addition, the librarians generated ideas and suggestions for professional development opportunities that will advance librarians' competencies to implement and promote library value initiatives on their campuses.

Mapping the Territory

Broad themes about the dynamic nature of higher education assessment emerged from the discussions and collaborative work at each summit. To capture these themes, summit organizers relied on detailed field notes, flip charts created during the events, recorded interviews during the summits, written participant comments gathered from a recording tool used by librarians and facilitators (see Appendix D), a summit reflection form completed by academic administrators and institutional researchers (see Appendix E), and an online survey administered after the summit, asking participants to evaluate the experience (see report in Appendix F). These themes, discussed below, provide the context for the recommendations and action steps outlined in this report.

Accountability drives higher education discussions.

Issues of accountability are in the spotlight for postsecondary institutions, particularly in relation to concerns about the quality of higher education, its affordability, career preparedness, the value of a college degree, and higher education's contribution to workforce development. There is increased pressure to open up the accrediting process to public scrutiny, and these pressures

Student learning and success are the primary focus of higher education assessment.

Throughout the summits, speakers and participants emphasized the importance of documenting

opportunities for quality interactions through such activities as reference exchanges, instructional sessions, and student employment.

- Learning outside the classroom Gra3(ou)-10()nal

Academic librarians need to be cognizant of these multiple standards in relation to potential areas for contributing library data and impact statements.

- Existing data, new data. Higher education institutions often find themselves swimming in data and need to differentiate when existing data streams can be used and when new data are needed. First and foremost, librarians should identify what data are needed to advance the institution's mission and strategic goals before determining whether existing data or collect new data. The library, for example, may already have data that contribute to the assessment of student learning and success. Common sources of library data include reference and research consultations, circulation counts, database usage statistics, and the number and types of instruction sessions. Collaboration with institutional research staff will help to determine the best way to leverage library data with other campus data sets or how to shape the data to communicate library value. For campuses that have institutional researchers, librarians can partner with them for their expertise in research question design, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques
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Research on student retention, for example, reveals the importance of academic intimacy in the student's academic experience. Instructors and coaches are often cited as examples of adults who contribute to academic intimacy. Librarians have frequent one-on-one exchanges with students, and possible correlations between this type of contact and student learning deserves further exploration. Some assessment efforts will require data about individuals, while other assessment work can rely on aggregate data. Additional assessment strategies that demonstrate the influence of library information literacy programs on aspects of student learning also need consideration and articulation.

Actions for the profession, based on recommendation 1:

1.1. Develop a research agenda that considers key questions raised by Megan Oakleaf at the summits: How can we increase library impact? How can we document this impact? How can we partner to increase and document impact?

1.2. Review accreditation standards to determine the extent to which information literacy competencies are represented

1.3. Continue development of information literacy rubrics that address the unique content areas and knowledge domains of different disciplines

1.4. Identify common data sources on campuses that can be shared and leveraged with library data to document student learning and success

1.5. Identify, describe, and publicize data collection and management tools and systems to advance library assessment activities.

1.6. Develop strategies to advance library participation in learning analytics initiatives, which use technology applications to monitor student learning and achievement

Recommendation 2: Articulate and promote the importance of assessment competencies necessary for documenting and communicating library impact on student learning and success.

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3.2 Develop multiple replicable approaches for documenting and demonstrating library impact on student learning and success.

3.3 Build a community of practice to engage and sustain professional dialogue about library value.

Recommendation 4: Expand partnerships for assessment activities with higher education constituent groups and related stakeholders.

During the summits, the librarians, academic administrators, institutional researchers, and representatives of higher education organizations had numerous opportunities to exchang perspectives and ideas about assessment

Comments on the evaluation forms

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Appendix A : Roster of Participants

EVENT ORGANIZERS

Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL)

Karen Brown, Associate Professor, Dominican University Graduate School of Library and Information Science

Mary Ellen Davis, ACRL Executive Director

Steve Hiller, Director of Assessment and Planning, University of Washington Libraries

Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe, ACRL President and Associate Professor/Coordinator for Information Literacy Services and Instruction, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Kara Malenfant, ACRL Scholarly Communications and Government Relations Specialist

Megan Oakleaf, Assistant Professor, Syracuse University School of Information Services

Joyce Ogburn, ACRL President, Dean, Willard Marriott Library and University Librarian, University of Utah

Mary Jane Petrowski, ACRL Associate Director

Association for Institutional Research (AIR)

Trudy Bers, AIR Past President and Executive Director, Research, Curriculum and Planning, Oakton Community College

Randy Swing, AIR Executive Director

Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU)

Christine Keller, APLU Director of Research Policy & Analysis and Executive Director, Voluntary System of Accountability

David Shulenburger, APLU S1 Tc tio7(r)11Fc till(o)-7(w)8(s 0 Tc 0 Tw 5.783 0 Td [(PTj EMC /P <</MCID 19 2>E

Berea, KY
Anne Chase, Director of Library Ser

, South Hadley, MA
Lenore Carlisle, Coordinator of Educational Programs and Assistant Professor of Education
Matt McKeever, Associate Professor of Sociology and Associate Dean
Alex Wirth-Cauchon, Director of Research and Instructional Support

, Greensboro, NC
Winser Alexander, Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Vick

[illegible], Cincinnati, OH
Gisela Escoe, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs
Victoria Montavon, Dean and University Librarian
Lee Mortimer, Director, Institutional Research

[illegible], Las Vegas, NV
Kari Coburn, Assistant Vice Provost, Institutional Analysis and Planning
Patricia Iannuzzi, Dean of Libraries
David James, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Programs

[illegible], Logan, UT
Richard Clement, Dean of Libraries

Appendix B : Agenda for Summit One

June 9, 2011

5:00 p.m. Opening Reception

5:45 p.m. Welcome
Joyce Ogburn, ACRL President, Dean, J. Willard Marriott Library and

Appendix D: Recording Tool for Librarians/Facilitators

Please use this recording tool to take notes throughout the first summit, "Demonstrating Library Value: A National Conversation."

Purpose: This tool is intended to

GOALS

What are the major institutional focus areas (IFAs) libraries can/do contribute to?

BARRIERS

In what ways can/do libraries contribute to IFAs?

EVIDENCE/DATA

What evidence/data do librarians need to show the library's contribution to IFAs?
(including data we have that they need, and data they have that we need)

PARTNERSHIPS

What partnerships/collaborations do librarians need to establish/expand to contribute to IFAs?

SKILLS

What do librarians need to learn in order to contribute to IFAs?

[illegible]

How would you like to learn these things? For example, what formats or types of professional development might be helpful? What tools would be most useful?

ACRL

What would you like ACRL to do to support the effort to demonstrate library contribution to IFAs?

[illegible]

Did any ideas emerge about research/assessment projects that demonstrate library contributions to IFAs?

What final thoughts do you have about what you've heard or considered during Summit #1?

CONCERNS

What, if anything, concerns you about demonstrating library contribution to IFAs?

Appendix E: Reflection Form for Ac ademic Administrators/

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