Faculty Presentations

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Assessing History Student Research Activity and Learning Outcomes Through the Understanding Library Impacts Project

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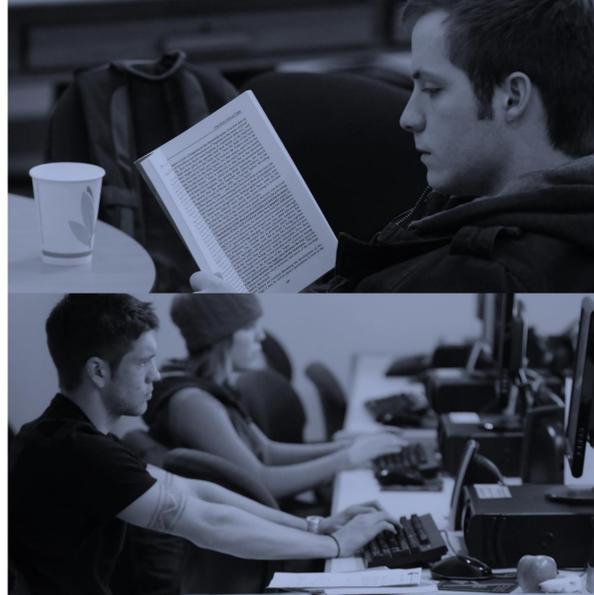
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Assessing History Student Research Activity and Learning Outcomes through the Understanding Library Impacts Project

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What is ULI?

Understanding Library Impacts (ULI) is a questionnaire-based tool that originated in a dissertation project by Derek Rodriguez (UNC). It measures student engagement with the library during "high impact" activities and seeks to link and translate this usage to broader departmental and campus learning outcomes.
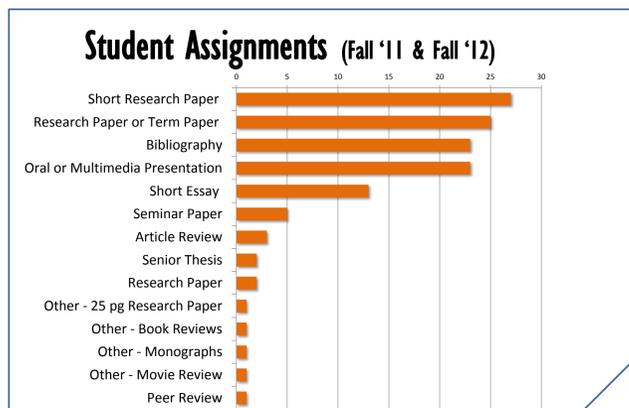
Survey Timeline

May 2011 - Responded to invitation to participate in dissertation study

Fall 2011 - Survey conducted in four 300 and 400-level history courses (n=15, 37.5% response)

Fall 2012 - Survey expanded to nine 100 to 400-level history courses (n=47, 45% response)

Spring 2013 - Final semester targeted 5 higher enrollment history courses, with particular focus on the 100-level research methods course (results pending)
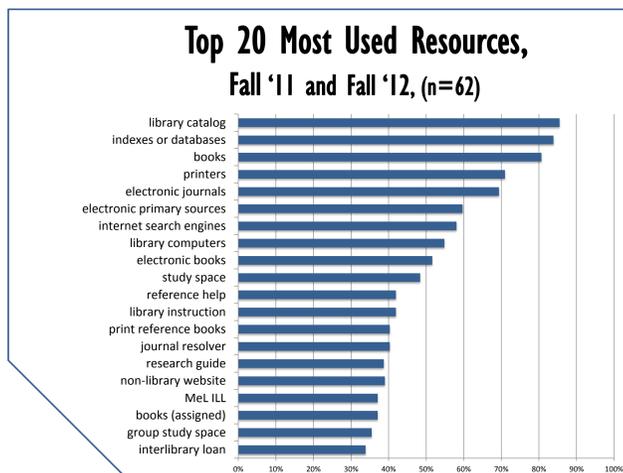
Campus workload

- Completed Human Subjects Review Board training and application
- Identified target courses, completed library resources checklist and Curriculum Map checklist
- Distributed electronic survey to students
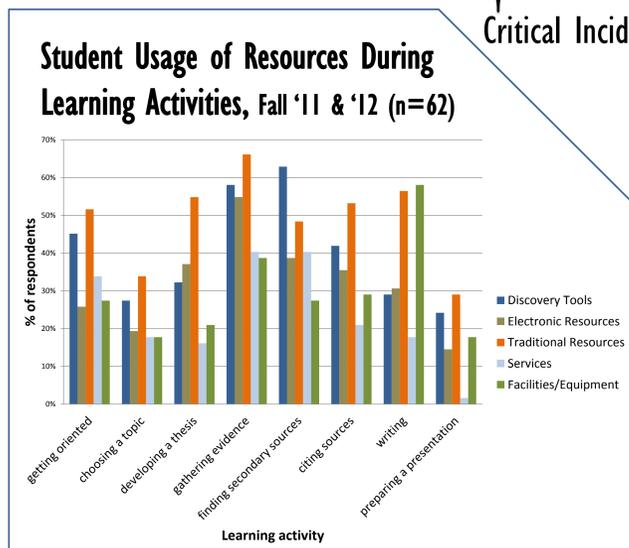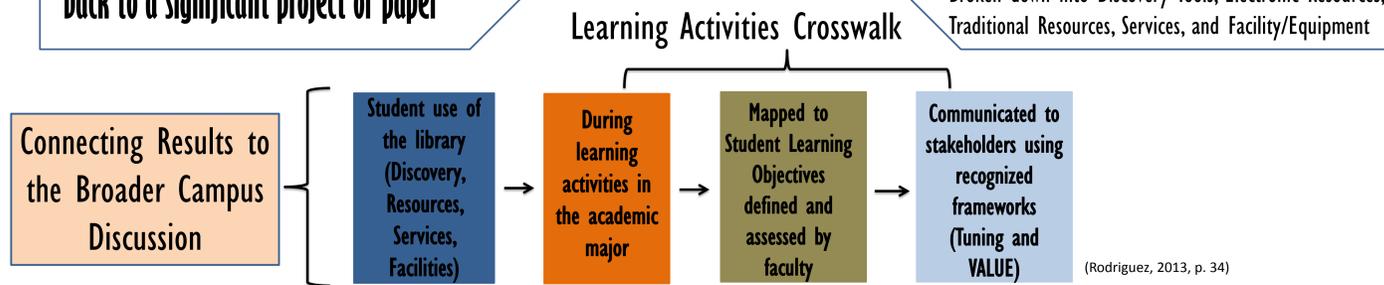- Data management and reporting provided by Rodriguez

Key Features:

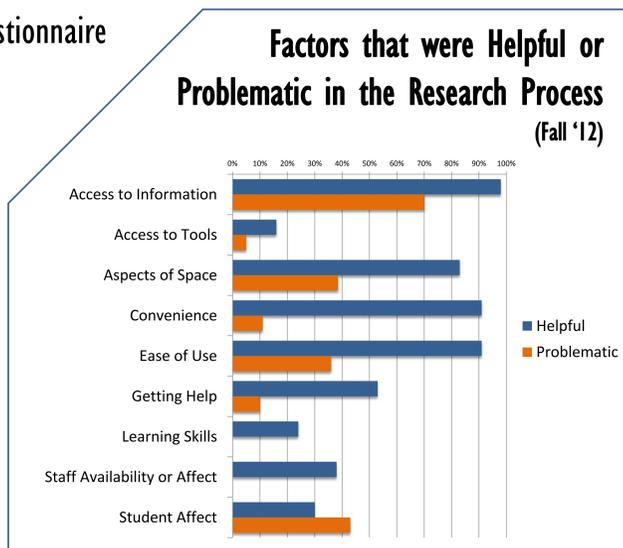**Survey questions engaged the following areas**

Student Assignments (Fall '11 & Fall '12)

- Short Research Paper
- Research Paper or Term Paper
- Bibliography
- Oral or Multimedia Presentation
- Short Essay
- Seminar Paper
- Article Review
- Senior Thesis
- Research Paper
- Other - 25 pg Research Paper
- Other - Book Reviews
- Other - Monographs
- Other - Movie Review
- Peer Review

Critical Incident Technique (CIT) - "think back to a significant project or paper"

Top 20 Most Used Resources, Fall '11 and Fall '12, (n=62)

- library catalog
- indexes or databases
- books
- printers
- electronic journals
- electronic primary sources
- internet search engines
- library computers
- electronic books
- study space
- reference help
- library instruction
- print reference books
- journal resolver
- research guide
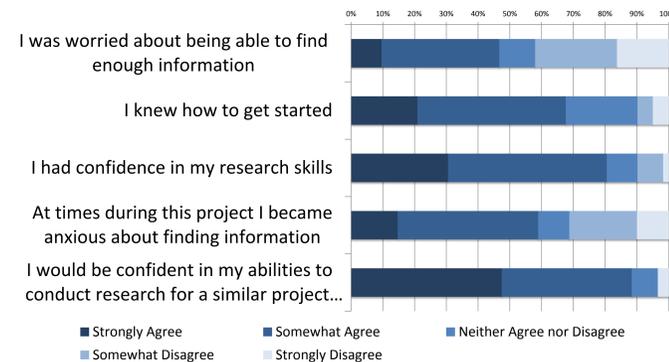- non-library website
- MeL ILL
- books (assigned)
- group study space
- interlibrary loan

Broken down into Discovery Tools, Electronic Resources, Traditional Resources, Services, and Facility/Equipment

Learning Activities Crosswalk

Connecting Results to the Broader Campus Discussion → Student use of the library (Discovery, Resources, Services, Facilities) → During learning activities in the academic major → Mapped to Student Learning Objectives defined and assessed by faculty → Communicated to stakeholders using recognized frameworks (Tuning and VALUE)

(Rodriguez, 2013, p. 34)

Critical Incident Questionnaire

Student Usage of Resources During Learning Activities, Fall '11 & '12 (n=62)

Learning activity: getting oriented, choosing a topic, developing a thesis, gathering evidence, finding secondary sources, citing sources, writing, preparing a presentation

Legend: Discovery Tools, Electronic Resources, Traditional Resources, Services, Facilities/Equipment

Factors that were Helpful or Problematic in the Research Process (Fall '12)

- Access to Information
- Access to Tools
- Aspects of Space
- Convenience
- Ease of Use
- Getting Help
- Learning Skills
- Staff Availability or Affect
- Student Affect

Legend: Helpful, Problematic

Student Confidence and Anxiety throughout the Research Process

- I was worried about being able to find enough information
- I knew how to get started
- I had confidence in my research skills
- At times during this project I became anxious about finding information
- I would be confident in my abilities to conduct research for a similar project...

Legend: Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Strongly Disagree

Open-Ended Questions

- Top tool and alternate choice
- Challenges faced and how they overcame them (57% info seeking, 49% academic tasks)
- Recommendations for Library

Lessons Learned

- Faculty buy-in key (and communication!)
- Consider meaningful frameworks on your particular campus
- Survey-driven questions vs. question-driven surveys?
- Student identifiers = potential to connect to other assessment measures and performance data
- Assessment fatigue vs. longitudinal analysis

Bibliography

Rodriguez, D. (2013). Answering 'how' and 'why' questions of library impact on undergraduate student learning. In Imagine, innovate, inspire: The proceedings of the acrl 2013 conference (pp. 33-42). Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries. Retrieved May 9, 2013, from http://www.ala.org/acrl/acrl/conferences/2013/papers

Rodriguez, D. (2012, April 4). Answering questions about library impact on student learning. In the Library with the Lead Pipe. Retrieved May 9, 2013, from www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org