Research Methods for Understanding the Library Support Needs of Academic Departments and Programs

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Presentation Objectives and Organization

- **Objective**
  - Use our experience to provide a framework for others to do similar projects

- **Organization**
  - Background and Context
  - Methodology
  - Study Finding and Accomplishments

Background and Context

- **Providence College**
  - 1917 - Founded
  - Primarily undergraduate Catholic & Dominican institution in Providence, RI
  - Historically and traditionally - a liberal arts & humanities focus

- **Providence College School of Business (PCSB)**
  - 2012 – Accredited
  - 2017 – The Arthur F. and Patricia Ryan
    Center for Business Studies

Background and Context

- **Fall 2020 – PCSB Enrollment**
  - 42% of students majored in Business
  - 44% of graduate degrees were in Business

- **What does this mean for a traditionally liberal arts college?**

- **How does the library support the business school?**

- **2018 – Ithaka S+R asked us to participate in a study, Support of Changing Practices of Teaching in Business Schools**
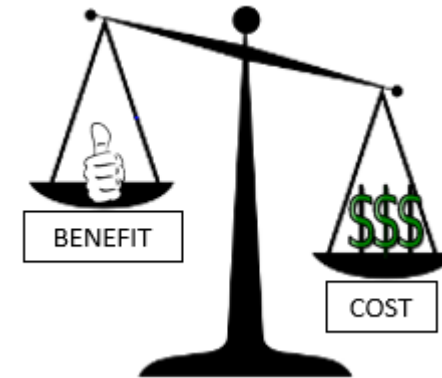
Methodology

- **General Observations on applied research**
  - Methodology is in service of applied goals
  - "Cost" of research < "Benefits

- **Methodological Package from Ithaka S+R**
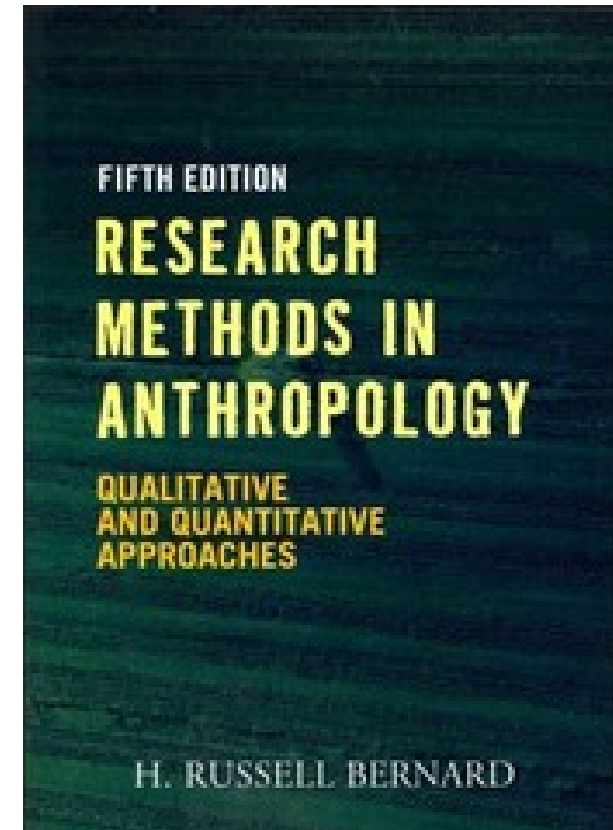 - October 2018 training workshop with other project participants

- **Divergence/adaption from Ithaka S+R methodology**

Theory

- **Exploratory**
  - Not seeking rigorous scientific generalizability

- **Qualitative**
  - No need for statistical expertise or analysis

- **Inductive**
  - Grounded coding later in the project

- **Stakeholder Engagement**
  - General library relationship building

Practice

- **Sample Selection**
  - Deliberate and non-random
  - Snowball sampling
  - The politics of sample selection

- **Semi-Structured Interviews**
  - S+R template with institution-specific modifications
  - Recorded and transcribed by professional **HUMAN** transcribers

- **Coding and Qualitative Analysis**
  - MAXQDA
  - Grounded theory coding scheme

Ethics

- **Institutional Review Board**

- **Partial anonymization of interview transcripts**

- **Complete anonymization of quotes in final report**

- **Post-project destruction of transcripts and digital recordings**

- **Tension with recent trends toward open scholarship and data sharing**

Methodology Conclusions

- **Institution-specific**

- **Flexible and adaptable**

- **Organic and incremental**

- **Process generates actionable information**

- **Sheer virtue of doing research**

Study Findings

- **Importance of Active Learning**
  - Some classrooms are more conducive to active learning than others
  - Provide support and latitude when faculty are experimenting with active learning

- **Faculty are interested in having a way to curate media content**

- **Marketing and Management are more likely ask for instruction sessions**

- **Investigate having librarians come to department meetings**

Study Findings

- **Have a librarian get some basic training in each subject area.**

- **Provide specific resources, such as online access to the WSJ and NYT.**

- **Range of opinions about the necessity of monitoring students' success.**

- **Concerns about how the business core curriculum and PC's overall core curriculum are preparing students for upper-level classes, capstone courses, internships, and the workplace**

Staying on Track

Pre-Project Curriculum Mapping

2023 Academic Planning Form: ACCOUNTANCY

As of 5/22/2019

1st course(s) recommended for Accountancy - ACC 203

	Fall Semester	# of Credits	Spring Semester	# of Credits	Total Year Credits
1st Year	DWC 101 (4 credit hrs; Honors 5 credit hrs)	4	DWC 102 (4 credit hrs; Honors 5 credits hrs)	4	
	ACC 203 Financial Accounting*	3	ACC 204 Managerial Accounting **(ACC 203)***	3	
	MTH 108 Math Business Analysis II****(*Quantitative Reasoning Core*)	3	ECN 102 Principles of Economics: Macro	3	
	Core (Recommended: ENG 101 or ENG 175 (*Intensive Writing I Proficiency*)	3	Core	3	
	ACC 113 Data Applications in Business (2 cr.)	2			
		15		13	28

Examples of our work available in there is interest

PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

Accomplishments

- **Campus-wide digital subscriptions to *NYT* and *Wall Street Journal***
    - Important resources for active learning
    - Exploring adding the Washington Post

- **Bloomberg Terminal training**

- **Enabled the Springshare LibGuides LTI in Sakai**

Accomplishments

- **Continued embedding in marketing classes**
  - Expanded the content to short video tutorials that were used by students to address different parts of assignments
  - Awareness of the various disciplines of business and their varied library resources and support needs

- **MBA orientation sessions via Zoom**
  - Diversity of the PCSB student body

Lessons Learned

- **Identify your "allies" and "key informants"**
- **Attitude toward librarians can vary widely by institution and department.**
- **Librarians/Libraries must be very targeted and specific.**
- **There is a need for continual curriculum analysis.**
- **Create space for experimentation and failure.**
- **Expand the use of virtual spaces in addition to physical ones**

Supporting Documents

Providence College Local Report

https://digitalcommons.providence.edu/lib_research/1/

Ithaka S+R Capstone Report

https://sr.ithaka.org/publications/teaching-business/

Core Curriculum – Academics at Providence College

https://academics.providence.edu/core-curriculum/