ALIGNING ASSESSMENT EFFORTS WITH INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES
A Case Study from the University of Tennessee
Current Academic Library Assessment
Climate (in a nutshell):

- Darkening financial horizon
- Increasing costs of resources and services
- Increased emphasis on outcomes for institutional-level evaluation
Assessing the Academic Library’s Impact on Teaching and Learning:

MOST STUDIES DEMONSTRATE EITHER

Correlation between student Success and library use or...
Assessing the Academic Library’s Impact on Teaching and Learning:

MOST STUDIES DEMONSTRATE EITHER

Which of these is a good search in a library database?

1. future of nursing careers
2. careers, nursing
3. careers in nursing
4. careers and nursing
5. careers + nursing

*Short-term effects of information literacy instruction*
Assessing the Academic Library’s Impact on Teaching and Learning:

More difficult to assess and DEMONSTRATE CAUSATION
Foundations, so far...

Significant contributions to understanding library’s contribution to research:

① Study of library return on investment (ROI) in library resources in development of successful grant applications:

- **Phase I** (U.S.) and

- **Phase II** (International)
Foundations, so far...

Significant contributions to understanding library’s contribution to research:

② Ongoing efforts to shift academic library assessment conversation from input and output measurement to a focus on outcomes...

- Association of Research Libraries (ARL) [New Measures Initiative](#)
Foundations, so far...

Significant contributions to understanding library’s contribution to research:

③ ...and to improve understanding of the “state of the art” of academic library assessment

  View Report
ACRL’s Research Agenda: Areas of Library Value and Potential Surrogates

Student Enrollment

- Recruitment of prospective students
- Matriculation of admitted students
- Recommendation of current students

Student Retention & Graduation

- Fall-to-fall retention
- Graduation rates

Student Success

- Internship success
- Job placement
- Job salaries
- Professional/graduate school acceptance
- Marketable skills

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ACRL’s Research Agenda: Areas of Library Value and Potential Surrogates

Student Achievement
- GPA
- Professional/educational test scores

Student Learning
- Learning assessments
- Faculty judgments

Student Experience, Attitude, & Perception of Quality
- Self-report engagement studies
- Senior/alumni studies
- Help surveys
- Alumni donations

ACRL’s Research Agenda: Areas of Library Value and Potential Surrogates

Faculty Research Productivity

- Number of publications, number of patents, value of technology transfer
- Tenure/promotion judgments

Faculty Grants

- Number of grant proposals (funded or unfunded)
- Value of grants funded

Faculty Teaching

- Integration of library resources and services into course syllabi, websites, lectures, labs, texts, reserve readings, etc.
- Faculty/librarian collaborations; cooperative curriculum, assignment, or assessment design

ACRL’s Research Agenda: Areas of Library Value and Potential Surrogates

- Institutional Reputation & Prestige
  - Faculty recruitment
  - Institutional rankings
  - Community engagement

Vol Vision Pursuit of the Top 25
University of Tennessee’s Mission and Goals

- Improve retention rates
- Promote 4 year graduation
- Improve learning spaces
- Increase student support
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Vol Vision</th>
<th>Top 25 metrics</th>
<th>How can the library contribute?</th>
<th>Initiatives</th>
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</table>
| 1. Undergraduate Education — Recruit, develop, and graduate a diverse body of undergraduate students who through engagement in academic, social, and cultural experiences, embrace the Volunteer Spirit as life-long learners committed to the principles of ethical and professional leadership. | • ACT Equivalent  
• Retention Rate (1st to 2nd year)  
• Six-Year Graduation Rate | • Provide spaces, services, and resources to acclimate students to the university community  
• Contribute to retention and graduation by supporting academic needs, including study spaces, research consultations, and instruction  
• Provide “third place” for safe, secure, student socialization and interaction | • Commons 2nd floor renovation  
• Personal librarian program for first year students  
• Instruction program to increase undergraduate information competency  
• Library programming to facilitate student interaction |
| 2. Graduate Education — Educate and graduate increasing numbers of diverse graduate and professional students who are equipped to address the pressing concerns of their fields, to extend the frontiers of knowledge, and to contribute to the public good through service to the academy or their professions. | • Number of Ph.D. Degrees  
• Number of Master’s and Professional Degrees | • Provide a rich environment for study and research by acquisition of and access to scholarly resources  
• Improve graduate students’ information competency  
• Support of publishing | • Instruction to increase graduate student information competency  
• Develop new models to provide research assistance  
• Scholars’ Commons  
• Scholarly communications program  
• Intern program with SIS students |
| 3. Research — Strengthen our capacity and productivity in research, scholarship, and creative activity to better educate our students; enhance economic, social, and environmental development; support outreach to our various constituencies; and extend the reputation and recognition of our campus. | • Federal Research Expenditures  
• Total Research Expenditures | • Provide user driven collection development to assure availability of specialized information  
• Support scholarly communication activities  
• Support the grant seeking process  
• Provide outreach programs that show expertise and resources available at the Libraries | • User-driven collection development program  
• Scholars’ Commons  
• Scholarly communications program  
• Assess access to services; seek improvements |
| 4. Faculty — Attract and retain stellar, diverse faculty and staff who will proudly represent our campus, execute our mission, embrace our vision, exemplify our values, and collaborate to realize our strategic priorities. | • Avg. Tenure-Line Salary Range  
• Undergraduate Student/Tenure-Line Faculty  
• Faculty Awards | • Provide a Scholars’ Commons to facilitate collaboration and access to consultation services, contributing to faculty success and awards  
• Provide collections and services that attract stellar faculty  
• Support research and publishing venues and alternatives | • Teaching support program  
• Research/publishing support program  
• Scholars’ Commons  
• Scholarly communications program  
• Increase funding for librarians’ professional development/travel  
• Adjust staff levels as needed to ensure sustainable models of service |
| 5. Infrastructure and Resources — Continually improve the resource base, including attracting and retaining excellent staff, to achieve campus priorities by carefully balancing state revenues, tuition, and private funding, and by embracing stewardship of our campus infrastructure and a culture that values sustainability. | • Teaching and Support Expenditures/Student  
• Endowment/Student | • Improve Libraries’ efficiency and effectiveness in provision of services that maximize infrastructure  
• Create innovative outreach programs that highlight the University’s value to the community  
• Develop methodology to measure Libraries’ investment per student | • Assess efficiency and processes  
• Explore possible outreach programs  
• Optimize fundraising efforts  
• Plan for modernization of library facilities  
• Schedule events to highlight niche and special collections  
• Partner with Office of Research to boost grants program participation |
Data we started with:

- Campus data
- Usage data
- Anecdotal evidence of importance of the library
- Existing research re: Library’s importance in student life and success

I learned how to find ...
Data we needed to collect:

- Before-and-After: Students
- Evidence of Support for Instruction
- Evidence of Library’s role in recruitment and retention
How to fill in the gaps?

• Students:
  – Survey of use of Hodges Library Commons, in-library and in-class
  – Series of Research Workshops for First-Year Composition Students

• Instructors:
  – Survey (full- and part-time faculty, graduate teaching assistants)
  – Upcoming: instructor interviews, focus groups
Findings: Student Survey Commons

– 74% of respondents said using the Commons helped them do better in class

“I had a girl last week working at the desk in the commons help me research ideas for an English project. She was fantastic.”

“They have a friendly staff willing to help when needed.”
Findings: Research Workshop Series

“I felt like I learned a lot and my confidence in researching for my English paper and for other classes improved.”

“The best part about these workshops is that I learned a lot of information about research that I can use for the rest of my years at UT. It showed me the resources that I have here and how I can use them and as a freshman, that is very helpful.”
Findings: Instructor Survey

“Over the years, the library has been a great support in diverse ways: library orientation is mandatory in our first year; researching precedents is expected of all architecture students from first year on; DMS, Reserve, Studio, Map Library, and Archives, have all assisted me in a great way.”

- 65% of Instructors believe that using the Library to support their teaching saves them time
- 63% believe it saves them money
Outcomes:

• Campus administrators consult with library on technology and learning spaces
• Library facilities and services serve as a model for rest of campus
• Plagiarism tutorial viewed by all incoming students
• Unexpected...Marketing and Public Relations:

“This survey pretty much covered everything that the commons is used for and in fact I learned stuff that the commons had from this.”
QUESTIONS?
REFERENCES


LibValue. [http://libvalue.org](http://libvalue.org)