

Institution Name

Lincoln College McKinstry Library

Institution Characteristics

Private, 4-year college

FTE Enrollment: 820

FTE Library staff: 4

Participant

Derrick Casey, Library Director

Project Name

The effect of library orientation on student success and future library use

Abstract

The McKinstry Library investigated the effect of library instruction on student success and future library use using existing institutional data and a library usage survey and found that participation in a library orientation session during the fall 2017 semester was positively correlated with higher semester GPA and year-to-year retention rate.

Motivation for Project

Drawing inspiration from the ACRL's *Assessment In Action* initiative, the McKinstry Library wanted to investigate the positive contributions the library makes in the area of library orientation. The Lincoln College McKinstry library's orientation and instruction program regularly changes, and being able to demonstrate our effect on student success would be valuable in growing and marketing the program.

Partners and Stakeholders

The investigators on the project were the Library Director and the Director of Institutional Records & Research. Given that the project involved student success in the classroom setting, stakeholders included students, faculty, and academic administration.

Inquiry Question

What impact does participation in a library orientation session have on student success measure and future library usage?

Study Participants

Participants consisted of all students enrolled in the Lincoln College IDS105 Freshman Seminar course in the fall of 2017 (N=280), the course where library orientation was administered at the time. From that group, only students enrolled at the time of the study were targeted for the survey (n=70).

Method of Data Collection/Analysis

The study used statistical analysis of existing academic data to determine the correlation between participation in the orientation session and student success factors such as grade for the course, semester GPA, persistence, and retention. Further, a survey of library usage was administered to determine correlation between participation in a library orientation session and frequency or type of library use.

Findings

We observed a .44 GPA higher average semester GPA of students who attended a library orientation session compared to those who did not.

The average one-year retention rate for Lincoln College students who attended a library orientation session in the fall 2017 semester was 13.3% higher than the average rate for full-time enrolled students in the fall 2017 semester and 6.4% higher compared to students who were enrolled in the freshman seminar course but did not attend the library orientation session.

The library usage survey did not yield a high enough response rate to draw statistically valid conclusions.

While we observed positive correlations between attending a library orientation session within the freshman seminar course and student success, confounding variables such as student absences and participation in freshmen orientation itself make claiming causation difficult.

Use of Findings

The positive correlations between library orientation and student success have been communicated internally to promote library orientation and advocate for a more consistent orientation structure for all incoming students.

Next Steps

The library and institutional research departments are discussing potentially re-administering the library usage survey to achieve statistically valid results, targeting either the orientation cohort from this study or the general college population in a new study. Aside from the results of the study, the greatest benefit of the CARLI Counts program on the Lincoln College McKinstry Library was prompting us to establish a closer working relationship with our institutional research department. The library will likely regularly collaborate with institutional research on future studies.

Additional Reflections

Without having to gather new research data, the library can leverage existing institutional data to discover useful information regarding library effectiveness. In our case, we were able to make connections to orientation effectiveness with course information, attendance records, student grades, and retention data.

We expect low response rates from our students when surveys are administered electronically, which is why we prefer to administer surveys in person, to a captive audience when possible. Unfortunately, given that our target cohort (those who received library orientation in the fall of 2017) was dispersed across the college population, we could only target them electronically, which led to the expected low response rate.

Timeline

February

- Carli Counts in-person meeting #1

March

- Worked with Institutional Research to develop study

May

- Institutional Review Board (IRB) certification training

June

- Gather existing institutional data for study
- Begin analyzing data

July

- Carli Counts in-person meeting #2
- Developed library usage survey instrument
- Submitted research protocol for IRB exempt review & approval

August

- Revised IRB research protocol after request for modifications
- Revised and finalized library usage survey instrument

September

- Institutional Review Board research protocol approved after modifications
- Administered library usage survey

Works Cited

[Assessment in Action: Academic Libraries and Student Success](#)

Appendices

Appendix A: Library Usage Survey Instrument

Appendix A: Library Usage Survey Instrument

Library Usage Survey

Student ID #: _____

With regards to the Lincoln College McKinstry Library, please indicate how often you have participated in each of the activities listed below:

Activity	Never	Once	2 to 5 times	6 to 9 times	10 or more times
Been to the McKinstry Library	<input type="radio"/>				
Had an official introduction to the library from library staff	<input type="radio"/>				
Sat in the library “quiet zone”	<input type="radio"/>				
Sat in the “active learning zone”	<input type="radio"/>				
Sat in the “silent zone” (2nd floor)	<input type="radio"/>				
Studied by yourself in the library	<input type="radio"/>				
Studied with a group in the library	<input type="radio"/>				
Used a library computer	<input type="radio"/>				
Used your own computer in the library	<input type="radio"/>				
Used a library printer	<input type="radio"/>				
Printed from your laptop in the library	<input type="radio"/>				
Checked out a book	<input type="radio"/>				
Borrowed a book through I-share	<input type="radio"/>				
Used the library website	<input type="radio"/>				
Used a library database	<input type="radio"/>				
Requested an article through interlibrary loan	<input type="radio"/>				
Used a library ebook	<input type="radio"/>				
Used one on the library’s online research guides	<input type="radio"/>				

Asked for help from library staff	<input type="radio"/>				
Gotten free coffee in the library	<input type="radio"/>				
Had a librarian visit your class	<input type="radio"/>				
Gotten 1 on 1 research help from a librarian	<input type="radio"/>				
Worked with a tutor in the library	<input type="radio"/>				
Ate or drank in the library	<input type="radio"/>				
Socialized with another person in the library	<input type="radio"/>				
Socialized in the library through your personal device	<input type="radio"/>				
Taken a nap	<input type="radio"/>				