

Section Header	Description
Institution Name	Chicago Theological Seminary
Institution Characteristics	Private graduate seminary 144 FTE 1.5 library staff (1 full-time librarian, 1 part-time library assistant)
CARLI Counts Participant Name + Job Title	Yasmine Abou-El-Kheir, Director, Lapp Learning Commons
Project Name/Title	Do Embedded Librarians Lead Students to Ask More Complex Reference Questions?
Single Sentence Abstract	The LibAnswers reference tracker tool was used to log the level of complexity of reference transactions for students who were enrolled in a class with an embedded librarian versus those who were not.
Motivation(s) for Project	The initial motivation for the project was to measure the impact of the embedded librarian program on student performance on class assignments. COVID-19 led to the cancellation of all embedded instruction in the Spring. In the fall, embedded instruction was resumed in two MA thesis seminar classes and one History of Jewish Thought course. Due to the timeframe, and lack of faculty interest, assessment of student performance on class assignments was not a feasible option. Instead, the reference tracker tool was adapted to include a question tracking whether students were in a class with an embedded librarian. To date, there has only been anecdotal evidence from faculty about the value of having an embedded librarian. Employing the READ scale presented an opportunity to provide an evidence-based demonstration of the library's role as an instructional support partner.
Partners and Stakeholders	Partners in this project include library staff, the academic dean, and the library committee.
Inquiry Question	Does embedded librarian instruction lead students to access more complex reference services in the Learning Commons?
Study Participants/Population	While the reference tracker tool is used for all members accessing library services, the primary target were students enrolled in classes with an embedded librarian.
Method(s) of Data Collection and Analysis	A reference tracker form was created using SpringShare's LibAnswers. The READ scale was employed in order to determine the

complexity of questions. Student participation in courses with an embedded librarian was also tracked with a yes/no question. Other information included in the reference tracker form include the following: Patron type, mode of communication, question type, duration. Details about the posed question, and the answer provided were also included. Data was analyzed using the built in analytics from SpringShare as well as pivot tables in Excel.

Findings

Since implementing LibAnswers in April 2020, a total of 571 reference transactions were logged. No personally identifiable student information was captured. Of those accessing reference services, 9% were students who were enrolled in a class with an embedded librarian. Of all students seeking 1:1 Zoom reference sessions, 56% were enrolled in a course with an embedded librarian.

No Embedded Librarian

READ Scale	Percentage
Value	%
No Data	n/a
1	21%
2	54%
3	22%
4	3%
5	0%
6	0%

Embedded Librarian

READ Scale	Percentage
Value	%
No Data	n/a
1	2%
2	29%
3	31%
4	38%
5	0%
6	0%

Students with access to an embedded librarian sought reference assistance that required more complex responses, than students who did not have access to an embedded librarian. Students who did not receive instruction asked more questions that required less complex reference questions.

No Embedded Librarian

Duration	Percentage
Value	%
No Data	0%
0-3 minutes	22%
3-10 minutes	58%
10+ minutes	11%
30+ minutes	6%
1 hour	3%

No Embedded Librarian

Mode of Communication	Percentage
Value	%
No Data	0%
LibChat	12%
Email	81%
Phone	3%
In-Person	2%
Zoom	2%
Faculty Instruction Request	0%
Facebook	0%
Calendly	0%

Embedded Librarian

Duration	Percentage
Value	%
No Data	0%
0-3 minutes	4%
3-10 minutes	51%
10+ minutes	5%
30+ minutes	19%
1 hour	21%

The duration of reference transactions were also longer for students with an embedded librarian.

Embedded Librarian

Mode of Communication	Percentage
Count	
No Data	0%
LibChat	5%
Email	65%
Phone	0%
In-Person	0%
1:1 Zoom	25%
Faculty Instruction Request	5%
Facebook	0%
Calendly	0%

More 1:1 Zoom sessions were requested by students enrolled in a class with an embedded librarian than students who did not have instructional support.

No Embedded Librarian		Embedded Librarian	
Question Type	Percentage	Question Type	Percentage
Value	%	Value	%
No Data	0%	No Data	0%
Directional	0%	Directional	0%
Circulation	11%	Circulation	4%
ILL	9%	ILL	2%
Reference	5%	Reference	42%
eResource Assistance	20%	eResource Assistance	14%
Login help	22%	Login help	11%
Reserves	10%	Reserves	2%
Citation	5%	Citation	11%
Syllabus	1%	Syllabus	0%
Copier	1%	Copier	0%
Library Hours	1%	Library Hours	0%
Canvas	0%	Canvas	0%
Archives	3%	Archives	0%
Info on Tutoring	1%	Info on Tutoring	0%
Other	5%	Other	0%
Instruction Request	0%	Instruction Request	16%
Scan Request	3%	Scan Request	0%
Other borrowing privileges	1%	Other borrowing privileges	0%
Purchase request	1%	Purchase request	0%
		<p>Students with an embedded librarian also sought more assistance with reference and citation services. Transactions for students who did not receive instruction were less complex and clustered around login help and eresource assistance, as well as help with course reserves and circulation.</p>	
Use of Findings		<p>These findings will be submitted to the Academic Dean, the Library Committee and in the Learning Commons' quarterly report to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee for the CTS Board of Trustees. These findings will also</p>	

	<p>be presented via Zoom at the next Academic and Student Affairs Committee meeting in February.</p>
Next Steps and Other Results	<p>There are additional stories that can be pulled from the data in the reference tracker. A descriptive survey of the data will need to be gathered. For example, IT service at CTS is outsourced and the data demonstrates how the Learning Commons has stepped in to provide login and other IT services for students. The reference tracker narrative includes expressions of frustration with the slow response time of Proven IT our IT service provider. Students have turned to the Learning Commons as an advocate to troubleshoot problems.</p>
Additional Reflections	<p>Library staff will need to ask students whether they are in a class with an embedded librarian during a reference transaction and log that info. The vast majority of reference transactions are logged by myself (77%), and so students during the reference interview either mentioned the embedded librarian, or I would inquire which class they needed the information for. The part-time library assistant was briefed on questions to ask and capture during the reference transaction.</p> <p>I should note that like many of my colleagues, I had to rethink my project and figure out another way in which I can salvage the goal of developing evidence-based data for the embedded librarianship program. The challenge was thinking of alternate forms of assessment that were not so dependent on faculty cooperation. The impact of COVID-19 on workflows throughout the school, meant that I needed to defer tracking student performance. Additional funds also needed to be secured for the LibAnswers service. Thankfully this was an expense that was approved.</p>
Timeline	<p>February: CARLI Counts training.</p> <p>February-March: Discussions held with academic dean about conducting an assessment project for the embedded librarianship program. COVID-19 made this impossible when faculty cancelled the sessions.</p>

	<p>April: The Learning Commons moved to virtual reference services and implemented a LibChat service.</p> <p>May: Research use of READ scale for reference transactions. Developed reference tracker using LibAnswers. Consulted Dr. Lisa Janicke Hinchcliffe about project scope change.</p> <p>August: Presentation at annual faculty retreat on embedded librarianship and curriculum mapping information literacy skills. Reach out to faculty about instructional support in classroom.</p> <p>September: Add question to reference tracker about embedded librarian services (yes/no)</p> <p>September-November: Develop research guides tailored for student assignments, conduct research workshop in three classes.</p> <p>September-January: Provide reference and research support to students. Ensure that all reference transactions include a response for the embedded librarian question.</p>
Bibliography/Works Cited	<p>Carlozzi, Michael, "Data for Decision Making: Tracking Your Library's Needs with TrackRef," <i>Code4lib</i> 33 (July 2016) https://journal.code4lib.org/articles/11740</p> <p>Gerlich, Bella Karr and Berard, G. Lynn, "Testing the Viability of the READ Scale: Qualitative Statistics for Academic Reference Services" <i>The 2007 National Study College & Research Libraries</i>.</p> <p>Gerlich, Bella Karla and Berard, G. Lynn "Introducing the READ Scale: Qualitative Statistics for Academic Reference Services," <i>Georgia Library Quarterly</i> 43, no. 4 (2007): 7-13. https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/glq/vol43/iss4/4</p>
Appendices	Reference Tracker Form

Note: Submit report as a single PDF to Michelle Haake (mjhuls@uillinois.edu).

Add Transaction

Dataset: Reference Tracker

LibChat is Online .



LibChat: You are online: [Go Chat](#)

Question

Type the question (140 chars max)

Type more detail (optional). 1000 chars max.

Answer

Type the answer here.

Include this transaction in the public knowledge base. [What is this?](#)

See if similar questions are already in the public knowledge base:

Time Stamp: Current Edit Date/Time

Answered By:

Abou-El-Kheir, Yasmine

Internal Note: [?](#)

READ scale **1** 2 3 4 5 6 reset [?](#)

Mode of Communication

- LibChat
- Email
- Phone
- In-Person
- Zoom
- Zoom Instruction
- Facebook
- Calendly

Patron Type

- Student
- Staff
- Faculty
- ACTS Student
- Alumni
- Other
- MDiv Student
- STM Student
- MA Student
- PhD Student

Question Type

- Directional
- Circulation
- ILL
- Reference
- eResource Assistance
- Login help
- Reserves
- Citation
- Syllabus
- Copier

Duration

- 0-3 minutes
- 3-10 minutes
- 10+ minutes
- 30+ minutes
- 1 hour

Time of Day

- Morning (8:30am-12:00p
- Afternoon (12:00pm-5:00
- Evening (5:00pm-9:00pm

Embedded Librarian

- Yes
- No

Submit

Submit & Clear

[What's the difference?](#)

NOTE: If any of the fields above do not apply, simply leave them blank. [Click here to unselect the above fields.](#)

Support