

Building Effective, Sustainable, and Practical Assessment During Challenging Times

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Library Assessment is More than Metrics

- Focuses on understanding customer needs and the services to meet those needs
- Collects, analyzes and uses quantitative and qualitative data for more effective management and decision-making
- Emphasizes ongoing communication with customers and stakeholders
- Seeks opportunities for collaboration and comparisons within the organization, institution and beyond

Why Assess?

- Accountability and justification
- Improve services
- Compare with others
- Identify changing user patterns
- Market and promote library resources and services
- Opportunity to tell our own story
- Demonstrate value of the library
- **Use data, not assumptions, to make decisions**

Why It's Even More Important in Challenging Times

- The pie is smaller (less money) with more competition
- Libraries are not direct revenue producers; part of common good
- Stakeholders and administrators want “simple” metrics to show accountability and success
- To counter the perception that:
 - Everything is available for free on the Web
 - Library facilities used only as “study hall”
 - Libraries don't contribute to student learning

The Challenge for Libraries

- **Traditional statistics are no longer sufficient**
 - Emphasize inputs/outputs – how big and how many
 - Do not tell the library's or customers' story
 - May not align with organizational goals and plans
 - Do not measure service quality or library impact
- **Need to demonstrate the value the library makes**
 - To the individual, community and the organization
 - Using qualitative and quantitative data
- **Need to be comfortable using evidence and data in decision-making**

Using Data in Decision Making

(From Pfeffer and Sutton, 2006)

What makes it hard to be evidence-based?

- There's too much evidence
- There's not enough good evidence
- Don't have the expertise to analyze the evidence
- The evidence doesn't quite apply
- People are trying to mislead you
- You are trying to mislead you

- Stories are more persuasive anyways

According to Which Homer?



He knew the things that were and the things that would be and the things that had been before

Oh, people can come up with statistics to prove anything. 14% of people know that

Words empty as the wind are best left unsaid



Facts are meaningless. You could use facts to prove any-thing that's even remotely true!

Assessing the Library Contribution to the Institutional Mission

- The library's contribution to learning and research
 - Student learning outcomes
 - Successful faculty and student research
- Value of the library to the academic community
 - Information resources/collections
 - Library as place
 - Information and instructional services
- Changes in library and information use
- Organizational performance and effectiveness
- Collaborations

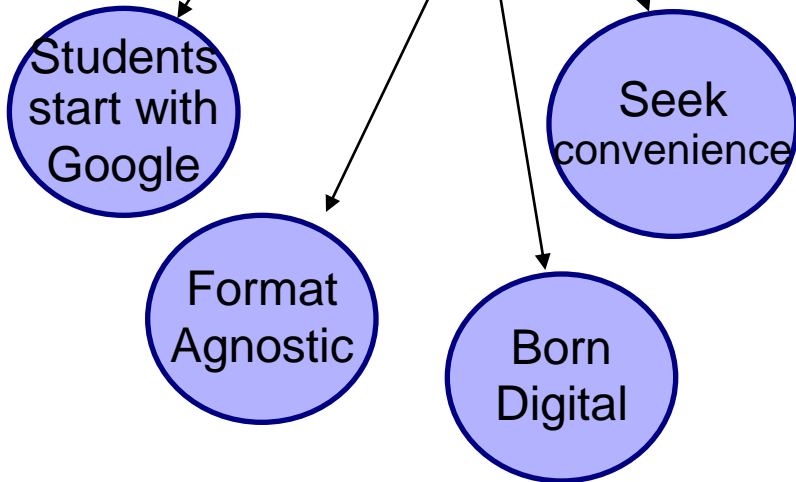
Documenting Library Performance and Impact

- **Traditional library assessment methods**
 - Surveys (satisfaction, needs, importance)
 - Usage and other library statistics
 - Qualitative information (interviews, focus groups, etc.)
- **Statistics**
 - Institutional
 - Comparator (Similar libraries, peer groups, customized)
 - Government
- **Collaborations focused on outcomes**
 - Lib-Value
 - ACRL Value of Academic Libraries

Charting User Change

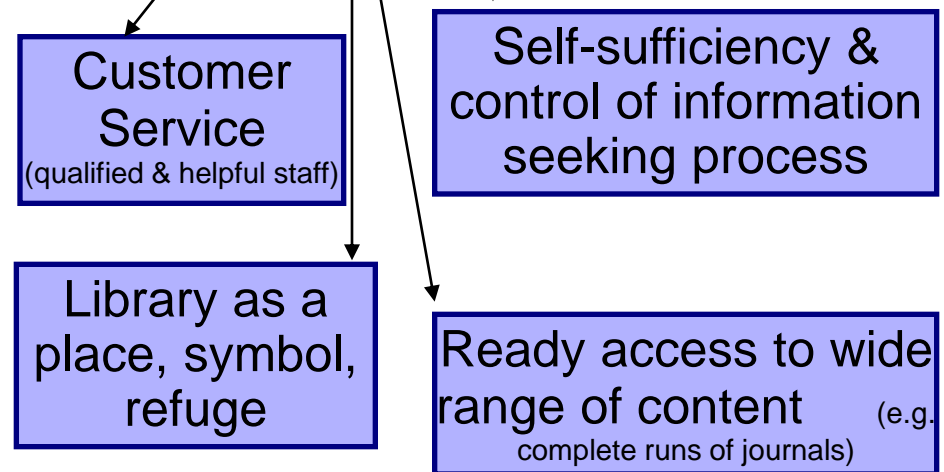
User Behavior

Wide Array of User Studies Now Available



User Expectations

LibQUAL+
Findings



Re-conceptualizing Library Facilities



Changing nature of library usage

Re-configuring library facilities:

Learning commons

Collaborative study

Social and
intellectual
center

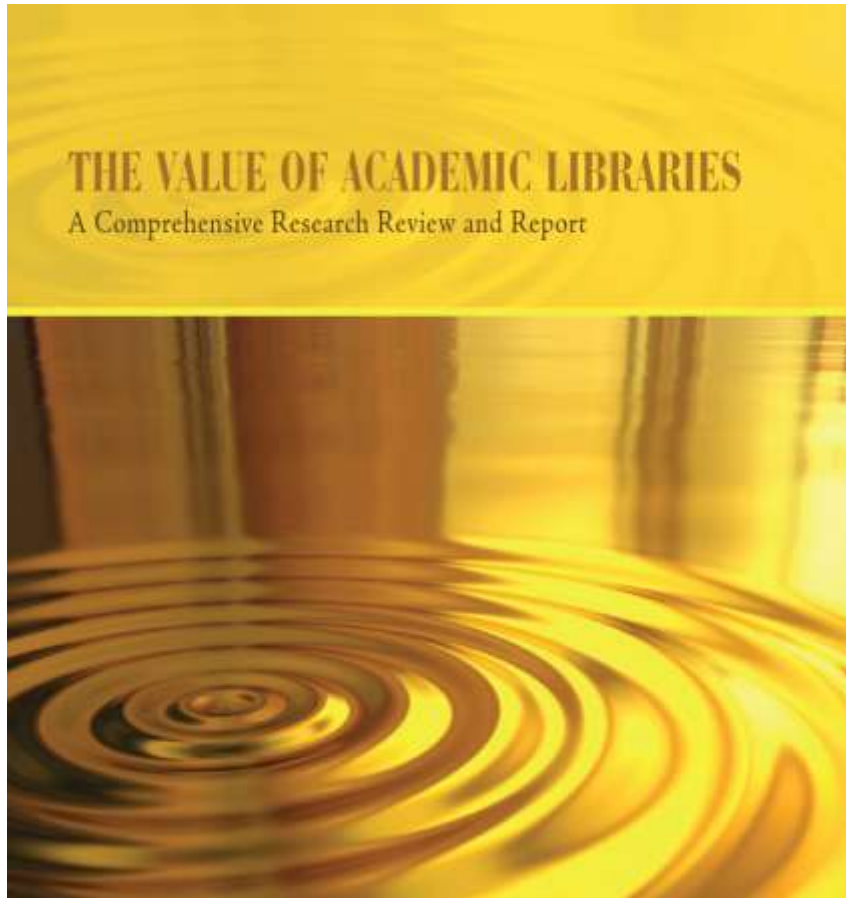
Secondary
Storage

Showcase for recruitment

Library as
physical
place,
intellectual
space,
and
community
center

Association of College and Research Libraries

Value of Academic Libraries



Purpose:

- Current state of literature on the value of libraries
- Suggestions for immediate next steps in demonstrating academic library value
- Research agenda for articulating library value
- Focus on defining outcomes

Prepared by Megan Oakleaf, Sept. 2010
<http://www.acrl.ala.org/value/>

Value of Academic Libraries Research Agenda

- **How does the library contribute to:**
 - Student enrollment
 - Student retention and graduation rates
 - Student success
 - Student achievement
 - Student learning
 - The student experience
 - Faculty research productivity
 - Faculty grant proposals and funding
 - Faculty teaching
 - Overall institutional reputation and prestige

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Demonstrating Library Value

ACRL Value Summits November 29-December 1, 2011



- **What data do libraries need to demonstrate value?**
 - Academic administrators, library directors, and institutional research directors from 22 institutions
- **What strategies do libraries need to communicate value?**
 - Library directors only

LIB-VALUE

- » [Lib-Value Project](#)
- » [Bibliographic Database](#)
- » [Publications and Presentations](#)
- » [JISC Project](#)
- » [Suggestions / Comments](#)

ROI IN THE GRANTS PROCESS

To learn more about ROI in

[Home](#)

ROI & Value DATABASE

Search our free **Bibliographic Database** or explore resources using the **Subject Area Citation Map**

ISSOME KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY CAROL TENOPIR

Date:

Wednesday, August 24, 2011 (All day)

Lib-Value: Multiple institutions using multiple methods to measure multiple values for multiple stakeholders



In the information context, economist Machlup described two types of value:

1. **purchase or exchange value**: what one is willing to pay for information in money and/or time, and
2. **use value**: the favorable consequences derived from reading and using the information.

Library Return on Investment and Value:

**Purchase and Exchange Value
+ Use Value =
Total LIBRARY VALUE**

Comprehensive Library Value Study

- Economic (private)
 - What is the value to an individual to use the library resources?
- Social (public)
 - What is the value to the institution of the library?
- Environmental (externality)
 - What is the value of the environmental savings of library provision of electronic resources?
 - Have libraries gone green without knowing it?

Current Projects

Ebooks

**Special
Collections**

**Information
Commons**

**Journal
Collections**

Value and ROI

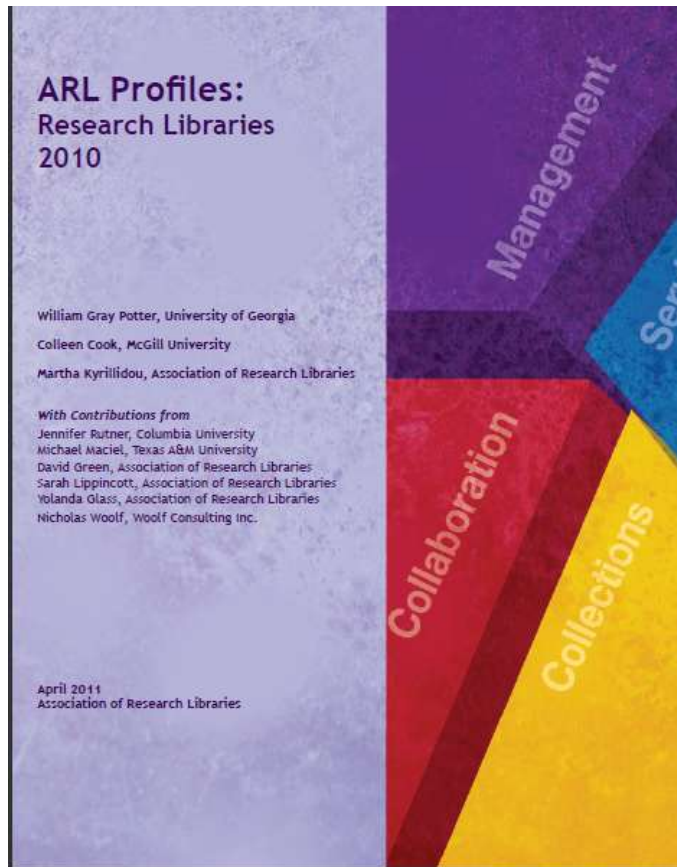
**Teaching and
Learning**

**Reading and
Scholarship**

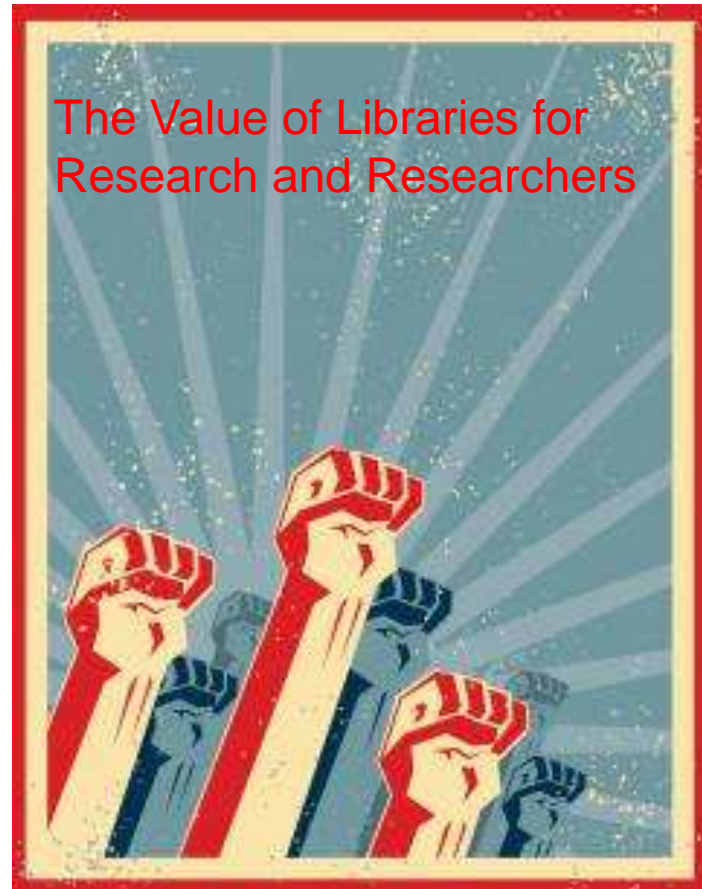
Tools

**Website and
Value
Bibliography**

... for Research and Researchers



<http://www.arl.org/stats/index/profiles/index.shtml>



<http://www.rin.ac.uk/our-work/using-and-accessing-information-resources/value-libraries-research-and-researchers>

Building A Community of Practice: The Library Assessment Conference

<http://libraryassessment.org/>



Charlottesville, Virginia 2006



Seattle, Washington 2008



Baltimore, Maryland 2010



Conference Goals

Nurture an active learning community for assessment

Focus on practitioners

Provide a forum for presentations on effective, practical and sustainable assessment

Encourage informal interaction among participants,

Build the knowledge base of participants

Make it fun

LEARN SHARE CONNECT

Library Assessment Conference Basics

	2006 Charlottesville, VA	2008 Seattle, WA	2010 Baltimore, MD
Registrants	217	377	460
“Assessment” in job title	15	32	61
Presentations (papers)	44	60	68
Poster sessions	20	40	80
Workshops	3 (half day, offered 2x)	6 (half-day)	2 (full-day) 4 (half-day)
Conference Proceedings	452 pages	552 pages	788 pages

2012 Library Assessment Conference

Charlottesville, Virginia

October 29-31, 2012



LIBRARY ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE

BUILDING EFFECTIVE, SUSTAINABLE, PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA

OCTOBER 29-31 2012

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In Conclusion

Can You Answer These Questions?

- What do we know about our communities to provide services and resources to make them successful?
- How do we measure the effectiveness of our services, programs and resources from the user perspective?
- What do our university administrators need to know to provide the resources for a successful library?