

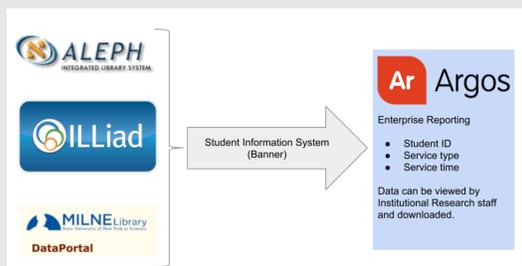
Purpose

The Research Instruction Librarians at SUNY Geneseo have been collecting quantitative data about student use of reference services, which were in decline. Paired with staff losses and expanding job responsibilities (e.g., hybridization of liaisons), the librarians wanted to restructure reference services in a meaningful way by using the data.

Data Collection

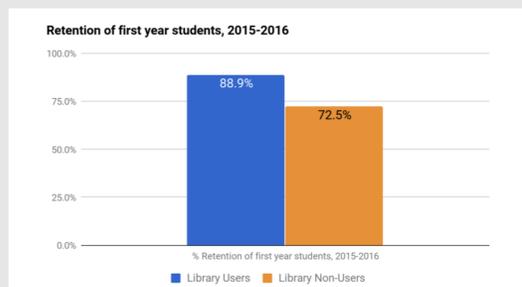
Milne Library collects information on every reference transaction, which contains the patron's email address, date, time, and location of each transaction.

Beginning in 2015–2016, the library began working with Institutional Research (IR) and CIT to use library data more meaningfully by correlating library usage data with factors of student success, which was inspired by Soria, Fransen, & Nackerud's (2013) methodology. This project is currently in its fourth year of data collection.



(Ross & Swoger, 2017)

The library sends its data through Banner, then IR cleans and anonymizes the data and returns a raw data file to the library. From there, the librarians begin analyzing various correlations.



(Ross & Swoger, 2017)

Reframing Assessment

Former Ways of Thinking About Data

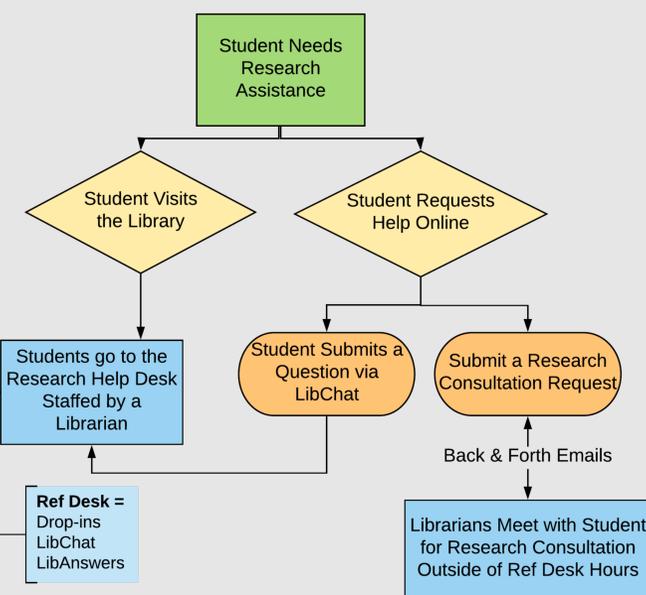
- Statistics
- Annual reports
- Quantity over quality (i.e., "We need to push reference services in our classes.")
- Uncertainty about what to do with the data
- Denial (i.e., "We need to maintain the same level of service we have always provided.")

Newer Ways of Thinking About Data

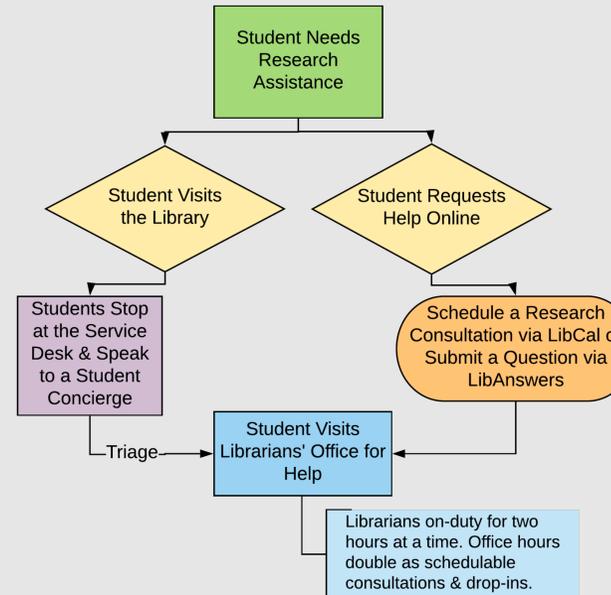
- What can we learn from the data?
- What is missing from our data collection?
- When/where do students visit reference?
- Who is coming to the reference desk (i.e., are students who receive library instruction more likely to utilize reference services)?
- How can we reinvent reference services?

Restructuring the Reference Model

Reference Desk Model (2016–2017)

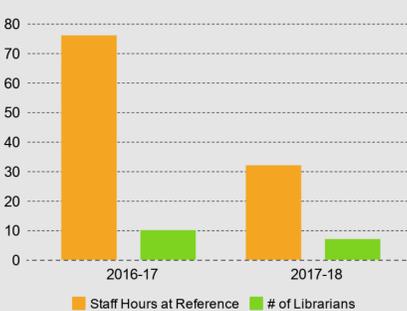


Office Hours Model (2017–Present)

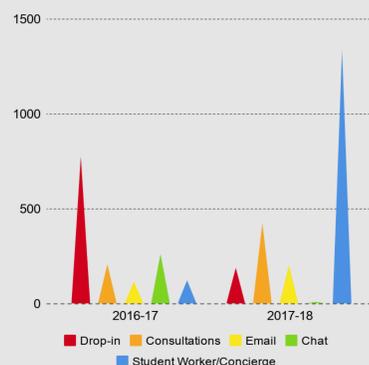


Findings

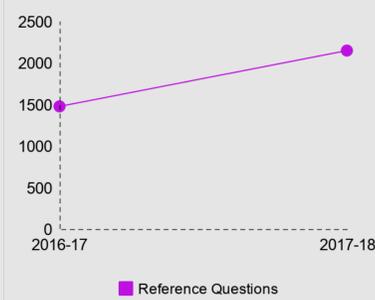
of Dedicated Librarian Reference Hours per Week



Reference Question Format



Total Number of Reference Questions Answered



Benefits & Challenges

- + Increased interest in working with assessment data and exploring new ways of assessment
- + Fewer hours spent "waiting" at a reference desk, which frees up time for other responsibilities
- + More in-depth research consultations rather than ready-reference questions
- Decreased librarian visibility given the lack of a dedicated reference services point
- Data collection inconsistencies and difficulty of extrapolating location (e.g., online vs. in-person) in data files

Future Directions

Spring 2019:

We are bringing back LibChat in a limited capacity; it will be used by a library clerk to answer ready-reference questions and triage research questions to the librarians.

2019–2020:

We are planning an in-depth study of reference services that will incorporate qualitative research methods, such as interviews or focus groups.

This study will also utilize LibCal to send students follow-up surveys after research consultations for additional feedback.

Future:

We want to explore the relationship between library instruction and reference services.

References

- Ross, D., & Swoger, B. (2017). Student success at SUNY Geneseo: Building a data collection model to support long term assessment [PowerPoint presentation]. SUNY Librarians' Association 49th Annual Conference, Stony Brook, NY.
- Soria, K. M., Fransen, J., & Nackerud, S. (2013). Library use and undergraduate student outcomes: New evidence for students' retention and academic success. *portal: Libraries and the Academy*, 13(2), 147-164. doi: 10.1353/pla.2013.0010