From Results to Practice: Application of assessment findings informing the direction of a new position

Steve Borrelli, Head of Library Assessment; Mark Mattson, Global Partnerships and Outreach Librarian

Abstract:

In response to the university's strategic plan foundational component of "Enhancing Global Engagement," the Penn State University Libraries created the position of Global Partnerships and Outreach Librarian.

This poster illustrates collaboration between the Global Partnerships and Outreach Librarian and the Library Assessment Department in culling together relevant data points from recent assessments into a report to inform practice relative to constituent needs.

To provide insights into the needs of international students a key constituency for the Global Partnerships and Outreach Librarian, the Department conducted statistical analyses comparing international and domestic student results from a recent administration of the Ithaka S+R Undergraduate Survey connected with findings from a multi-campus focus group investigation into the sense of belonging of international students while in library facilities.

The results provided direction for initial efforts for the Global Partnerships and Outreach Librarian including the development of metrics relating to training for library personnel on cultural differences and sensitivities, and multicultural focused exhibits and programming for use in assessing the reach and impact of the Librarian's activities.

This process demonstrates how examining existing assessment results through a new lens enhances the ROI of investigations.

Cultural Differences and Sensitivities

Professional Development	2017 Totals
• Total events	02
• Total event attendees	47
• Total minutes on trainings	120

Outcomes:
- Confidence – I feel more confident about the topic
- Application / behavior change – I intend to apply what I just learned
- Awareness – I am more aware of the topic of the program or event
- Knowledgeable – I learned something new from this event or program

6.

Multicultural Programming and Exhibits

Descriptive Metrics:		2017 Totals
• Total events		16
	• Number of co-sponsored events	12
	• Number of events contributed to	04
• Total event attendees		990
• Number of exhibits		02
• Unique university unit collaborators		05

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Findings from Ithaka Undergraduate Student Survey, 2016

- International students were more likely than domestic students to go inside a library building on campus (ROL12)
- **International students interacted with library staff more frequently than domestic students (ROL14)**
- International students had a relatively smaller percentage that have attended instruction sessions overall. At the UP campus, there were both more international students who both attended and those who have never attended an instruction session before (ROL17)
- International students were more likely than domestic students to have attended an online library information session taught by a librarian, such as a webinar or tutorial (ROL18_3)
- **The availability of space for students to socialize was significant and more useful for international students (LS15)**
- **International students participated in nearly all measured activities within library facilities more frequently than domestic students (LS1)**

5.

Sense of Belonging of International Students study

- All students want to feel successful, adopt practices that aim at their success in library environments
- Relax policies relating to expected behaviors, allow library space to be used to meet the needs of users
- Provide enough seating, workspaces, computer hardware and software to meet demand
- Accommodate the learning styles of people of different cultures by providing spaces to accommodate groups, individuals, and various noise levels
- **Integrate multicultural exhibits reflective of the student population**
- **Facilitate the social connector role of the library through combinations of programming, spatial design, and policy**
- **Train employees in cultural differences, awareness, and sensitivity**
- Invite international students to provide their perspective on the differences in services provided by libraries in their country and your library
- Be patient when working with international students. They don't know what's available until they're exposed to it
- Ensure international students receive library instruction
- **Provide programs that aim to reduce stress and promote socialization**
- Acknowledge the role of the library for your international student population and adapt to accommodate

5.

PSU Strategic Plan – Foundations
1.
- Enabling Access to Education
- **Engaging Our Students**
- **Enhancing Global Engagement**
- Fostering and Embracing a Diverse World
- Driving Economic Development
- Ensuring a Sustainable Future

PSUL Strategic Plan Elements and Actions

Advance University Research
- Goal 1, Objective 2: Promote awareness of University priorities and strategic directions… by developing a multi-campus approach
  - **Action 2016 – 2017 created the position of Global Partnerships and Outreach Librarian**
  - Action 2017 – 2018 Identify global engagement initiatives to be accomplished in 2017 through collaborations within the University Libraries as well as externally
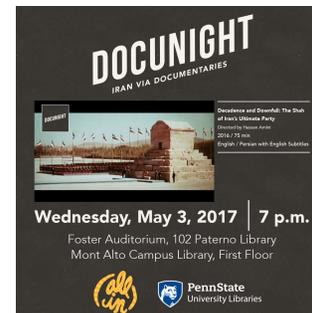
2.

3.

Deliverables
- Initiate international library relationships with GEN institutions
- **Perform an international student needs assessment**
- Increase Libraries involvement in Penn State and community outreach events
- **Host globally focused exhibits**
- **Promote the Libraries as a partner in fostering intercultural communication**
- Increase Libraries involvement in International student orientations

4.

DOCUNIGHT
IRAN VIA DOCUMENTARIES

Decadence and Downfall: The Shah of Iran's Ultimate Party
Directed by Hassan Amini
2016 / 75 min
English / Persian with English Subtitles

Wednesday, May 3, 2017 | 7 p.m.

Foster Auditorium, 102 Paterno Library
Mont Alto Campus Library, First Floor

PennState
University Libraries

Next Steps:

Informed by evidence collected and synthesized by the Library Assessment Department, the Global Partnerships and Outreach Librarian implemented metrics to address the scope of programming provided and plans to pilot draft outcomes from ACRL's Project Outcome to assess the impact of programming. Next steps include broadening the use of adopted metrics and outcomes across the 20+ commonwealth campus libraries and developing metrics that contribute to key institutional partner programs. While the initial phase of the collaboration has met its goal, the partnership continues.

References:

ACRL. (2018, August 02). ACRL Project Outcome for Academic Libraries Task Force. Retrieved from http://www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl/directoryofleadership/taskforces/acr-tfpi