


COLLABORATING ACROSS CAMPUS TO ARTICULATE THE VALUE OF RESEARCH CONSULTATIONS

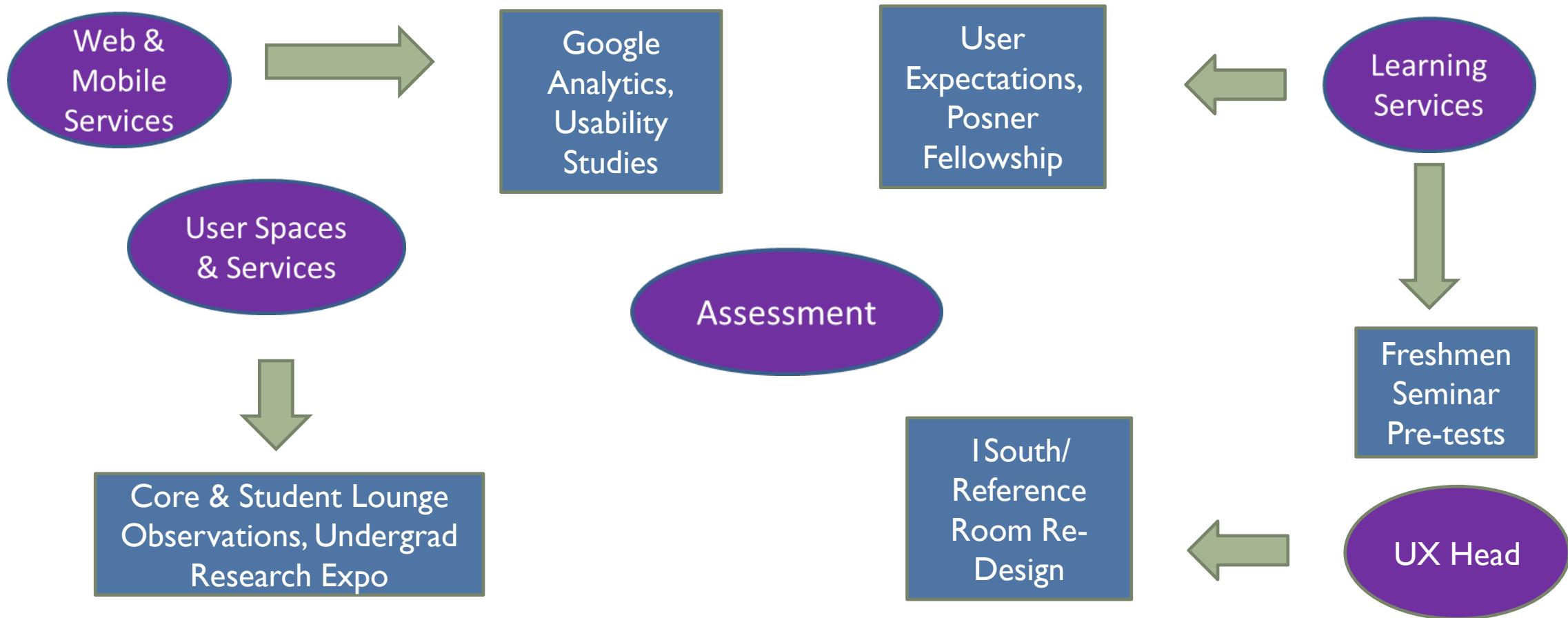
DEVIN SAVAGE, HEAD OF ASSESSMENT, PLANNING AND SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION



WHA' HAPPENED?

An informal conversation between members of Northwestern's Office of Fellowships and the Northwestern University Library's User Experience department led to planning for an assessment project that could:

- Obtain observational data on how students utilize research tools to discover sources
- Articulate the value of the pairing of a research consultation with a research fellowship
- Create enhanced CTEC data for the program's self-evaluation
- Create data to support the continuation of funding for university programs



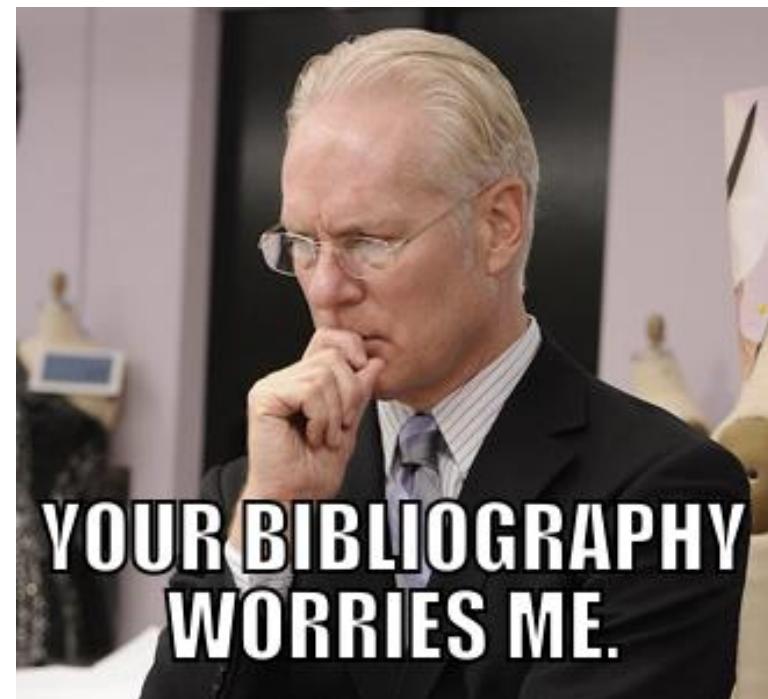
FINDING WAYS TO UNDERSTAND OUR USERS,
2012-2013

RESEARCH CONSULTATIONS

Definition

“...a reference service in which the librarian meets with a student in a scheduled session away from the reference desk.”

- Magi, Trina J., and Patricia E. Mardeusz. “What Students Need from Reference Librarians Exploring the Complexity of the Individual Consultation.” *College & Research Libraries News* 74, no. 6 (June 1, 2013): 288



<http://academictimgunn.tumblr.com/post/30809864544>

DEFINING TERMS

Posner & Davee Summer Fellowships

- The program is aimed at students who are rising sophomores in Weinberg College of Arts & Sciences. Nominations of students from underrepresented backgrounds are solicited from faculty. The students spend eight weeks in the summer shaping a scholarly project from beginning to end with the help of a faculty mentor.

The Proposal

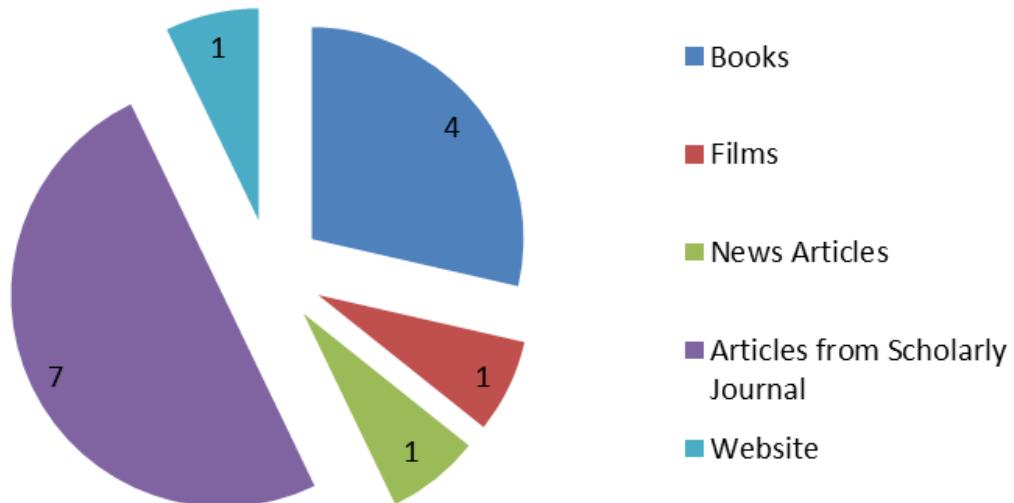
- The students would provide an initial working bibliography, which they would bring to a Research Consultation with a library subject specialist. **Students would spend a few minutes literally searching online while the librarian observes where they're going and how they're searching;** then the librarian would ask and record questions about the logic of searching and then make some suggestions.
- Individual specialists and the Coordinator of Research Consultations would deliver the data to me, so that I would not have any personally identifiable information to maintain.
- Then, later in the summer, the students deposited their bibliographies into a folder which will be viewed by the librarian in order to put together an aggregate list of sources.

WHAT THEY HAD FOUND

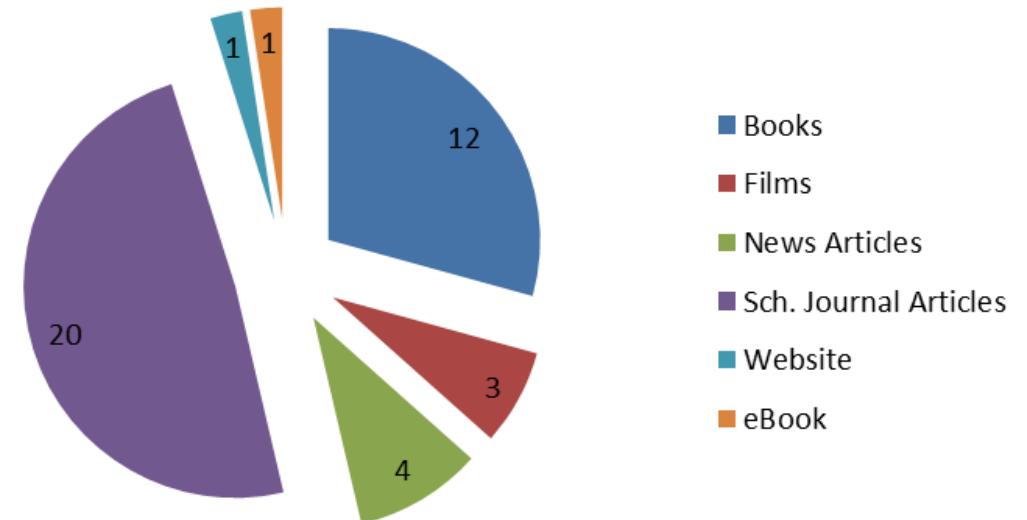
14 students brought sources to the Research Consultation

Articles from Scholarly Journals made up less than half of the total sources

Source Type by Student



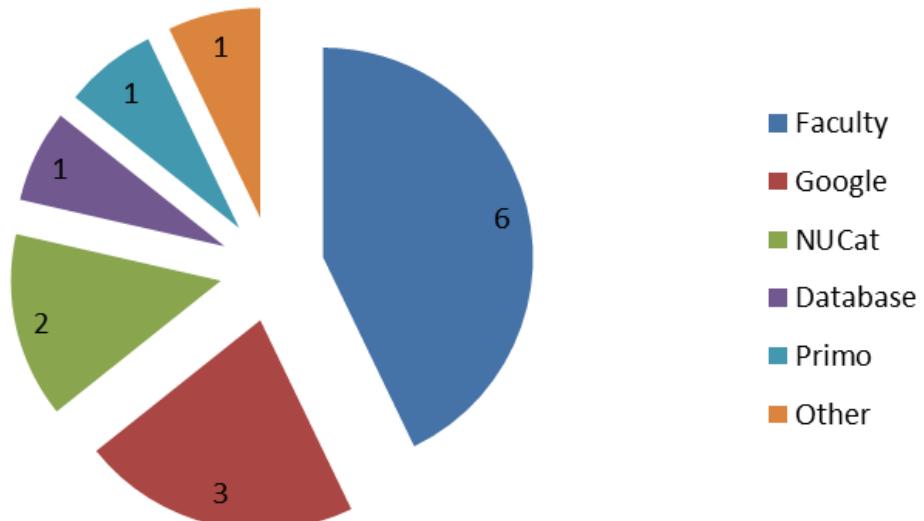
Source Type total



WHERE THEY GOT IT

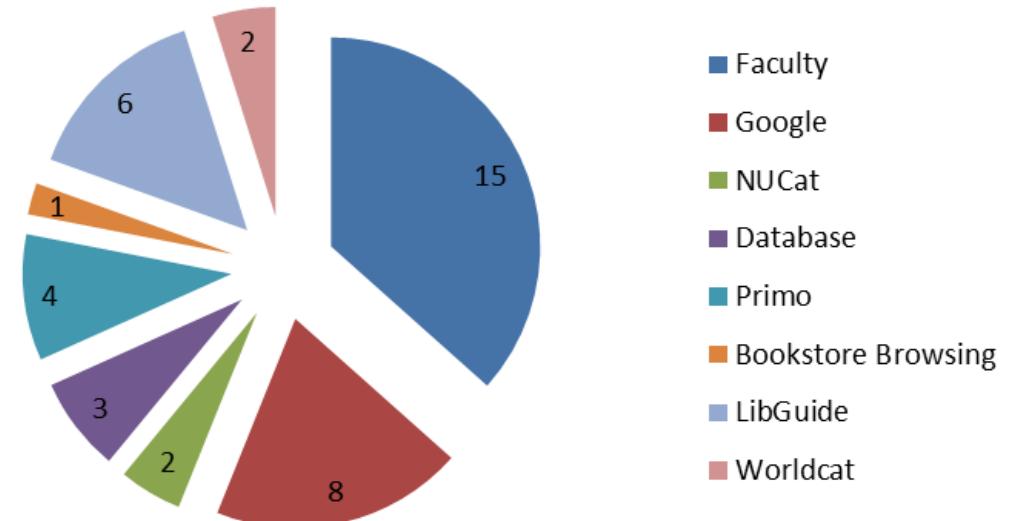
Instructor recommendations and Google were the dominant methods of discovery

Source Discovery by Student



Looking at the total number of sources showed a diversity students searches

Source Discovery total methods



HOWEVER!

Student Source Type and Discovery Percentages

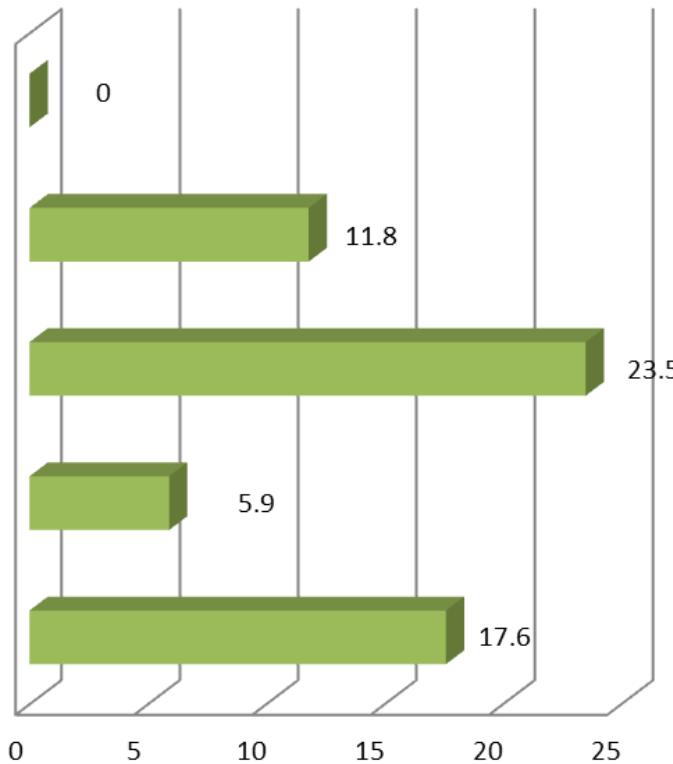
Successful use and access of mult tools for 2 or more:
article, book, film,website

Student used multiple tools for discovery of multiple
types

Student used multiple tools for discovery

Student had discovered multiple types

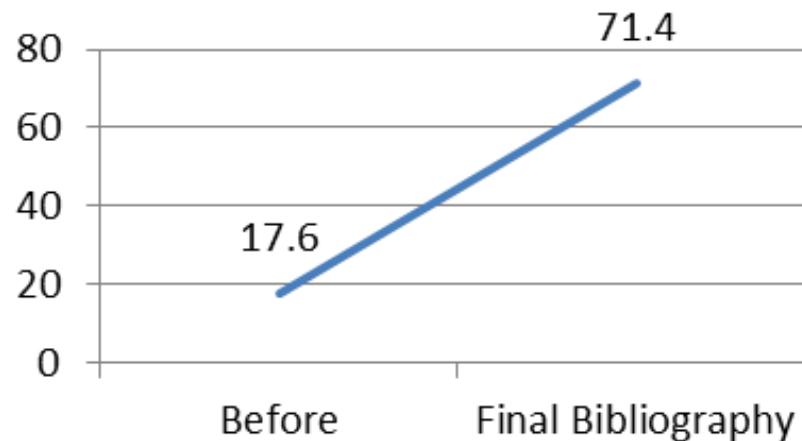
Student had multiple types



Searching in more than one area was unusual, and success with multiple tools was nearly non-existent. Only one student successfully found a Scholarly Journal article and a News Article using two separate searches (Google and a database). Others tried to use the Library Search Tool, but reverted to Google when results were deemed “overwhelming.”

THE FINAL BIBLIOGRAPHIES CONTAINED MULTIPLE TYPES OF SOURCES (YAY!)

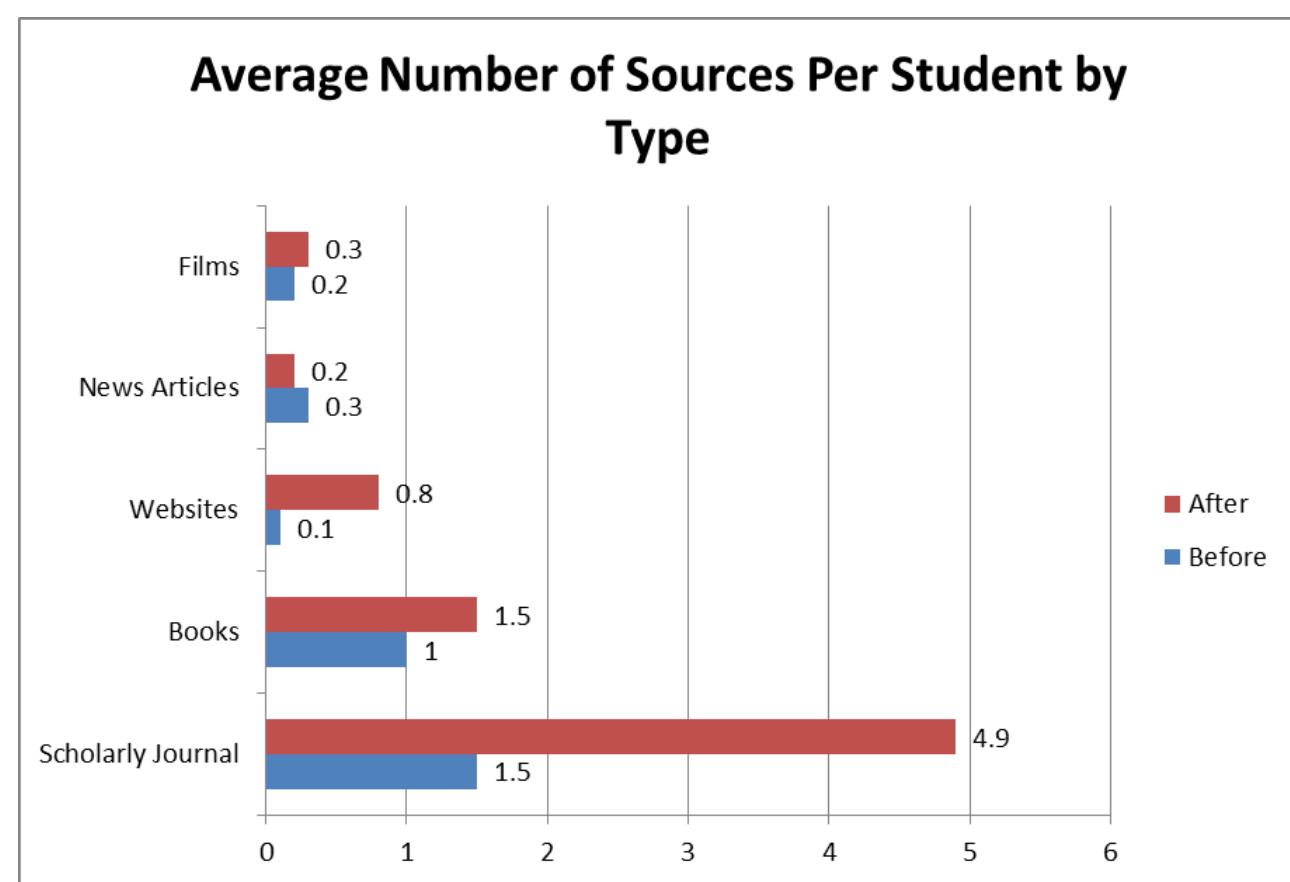
Percentage of students that had multiple types of sources



Of the fourteen bibliographies that I was able to access, only four of them provided just one type of source. All four solely utilized scholarly journals, and actually provided some of the clearest final bibliographies.

THE NUMBER OF SCHOLARLY SOURCES ROSE

- This confirms our hope that, after meeting with a librarian subject specialist, students would be able to discover more types of high-quality sources than the single type that they had found previous to the Research Consultation.



ASSESSING THE ASSESSMENT

- This fellowship, paired with the Research Consultation, steered students towards a **vastly increased usage of scholarly journals and authoritative websites**. but the assessment confirmed our suspicion that **undergraduates have a great level of difficulty successfully utilizing two or more types of source-finding tools** on their own.
- One of the most advanced users of library resources was the sole student who volunteered the information that **they had learned how to find scholarly articles during a library instruction session** in their freshmen seminar.
- Faculty feedback component needed, awareness of Google feedback loop/research impediments, new institution poses new challenges

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Goooooooooooooogle >

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TWO PATHS DIVERGED IN A YELLOWWOOD

This project continues at NU Library

- The pieces have changed, but the Posner Research Consultation Assessment project continues on at Northwestern, with faculty and Associate Dean expressing desires for the project to be repeated.
- Before I left, I passed on my contacts and activities to the Head of User Experience, the Outreach & Community Services Librarian and the Assistant Head of Research and Information Services (who coordinates RC requests).

Launching Research Consultation at IIT

- Co-coordinator of Liaison Renovation Group
- Provided post-RC survey
- Using new service as part of template for outreach and engagement of faculty
- In talks with History faculty and Digital Humanities program to identify possible curricular touchpoints and best opportunities for broader RC assessment
- Working with IIT IRB for expedited approval of new process, project for publication.

- Bergen, K, and B MacAdam.“One-to-One: Term Paper Assistance Programs.” *RQ* 24, no. 3 (1985): 333–40.
- Gale, Crystal D., and Betty S. Evans.“Face-to-Face: The Implementation and Analysis of a Research Consultation Service.” *College & Undergraduate Libraries* 14, no. 3 (September 2007): 85–101.
- Lee, Deborah.“Research Consultations: Enhancing Library Research Skills.” *Reference Librarian* 41, no. 85 (January 2004): 169–80.
- Magi, Trina J., and Patricia E. Mardeusz.“What Students Need from Reference Librarians Exploring the Complexity of the Individual Consultation.” *College & Research Libraries News* 74, no. 6 (June 1, 2013): 288–91.
- ———.“Why Some Students Continue to Value Individual, Face-to-Face Research Consultations in a Technology-Rich World.” *College & Research Libraries* 74, no. 6 (November 1, 2013): 605–18.
- Reinsfelder, Thomas L.“Citation Analysis as a Tool to Measure the Impact of Individual Research Consultations.” *College & Research Libraries* 73, no. 3 (May 1, 2012): 263–77.
- “Research Consultations Revived at Northwestern.” *Library Journal* 107, no. 10 (May 15, 1982): 930.

MORE READING ON RESEARCH CONSULTATIONS
(SOURCES!)

THANK YOU!

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