

CAN DATA DRIVE SUCCESS?: IMPLEMENTING INSTRUCTION EVALUATION FORMS

Ashley Rosener, James Gulvas, Barbara Harvey, Anne Merkle, Emily Frigo

PURPOSE

In 2013, a committee of Research and Instruction Librarians at Grand Valley State University met to analyze, evaluate, and recommend changes to a newly-implemented librarian instruction evaluation form.

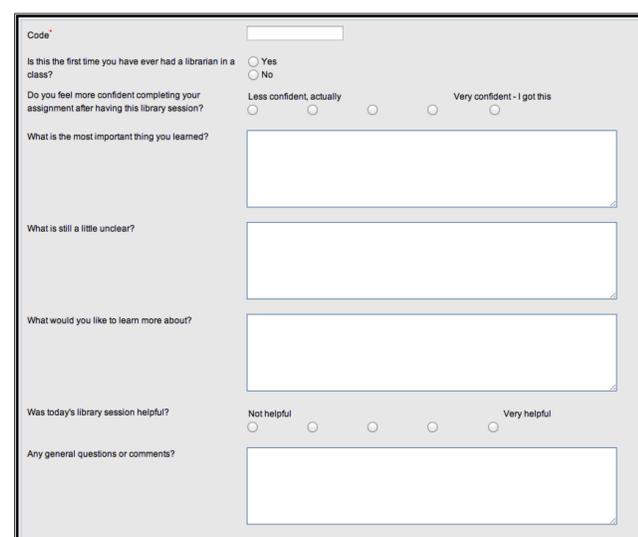
COMMITTEE GOALS

- To create an effective, sustainable, and practical instruction assessment that could be adopted by our colleagues.
- To scale up from unshared, nonstandard evaluations to a standard evaluation form that would make student perceptions of library instruction more widely accessible to all instructors in order to make data driven decisions within our Instruction Program.
- To expand beyond only using instruction assessment forms on an individual, ad hoc basis for personal self-evaluation.
- To improve librarian confidence.

METHODOLOGY

During the 2013 trial, instruction librarians asked students to complete the evaluation by providing the link to the form either in a class session or asynchronously (completion rates were greater when administered during class time). The data was collected using LibAnalytics software. Numerical data was analyzed using basic statistics and Excel PivotTables. Qualitative data was coded by the committee for statistical analysis. Our findings consist of 680 student evaluation forms from September 6 through October 1, 2013.

ORIGINAL EVALUATION FORM



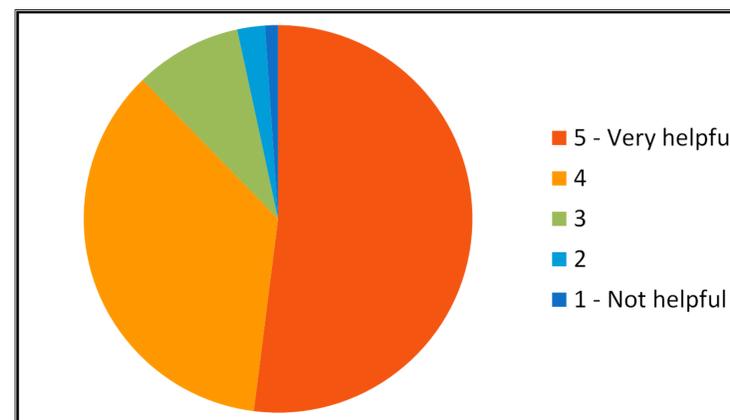
The original form includes the following questions and options:

- Code* (text input)
- Is this the first time you have ever had a librarian in a class? (Yes/No radio buttons)
- Do you feel more confident completing your assignment after having this library session? (Less confident, actually / Very confident - I got this Likert scale)
- What is the most important thing you learned? (text input)
- What is still a little unclear? (text input)
- What would you like to learn more about? (text input)
- Was today's library session helpful? (Not helpful / Very helpful Likert scale)
- Any general questions or comments? (text input)

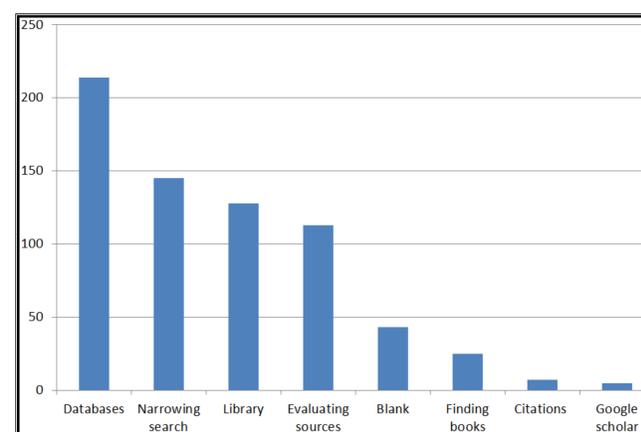
FINDINGS

- **63%** of respondents indicated this was the first time they'd had a librarian in class.
- **88%** reported the session as "helpful."
- Data showed that confidence level rises with the helpfulness rating.
- *Databases* was the most important concept learned for these sessions.
- **49%** responded that "nothing" was unclear after the session.
- The overwhelming reply to "What would you like to learn more about?" was blank. Of those responding (**54%**), "Books" were most frequent (**7%**).
- Nearly **80%** left "Any general questions or comments?" blank.

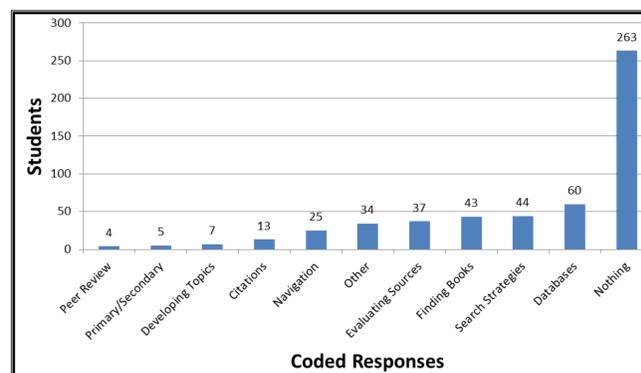
WAS TODAY'S LIBRARY SESSION HELPFUL?



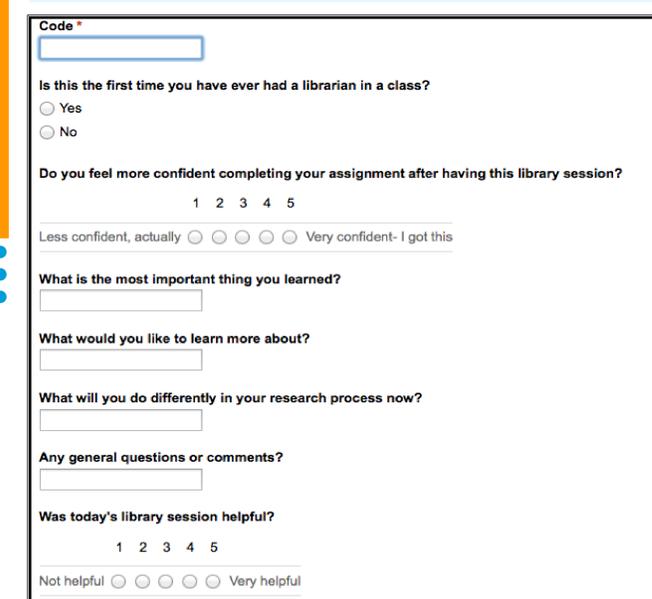
WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU LEARNED?



WHAT IS STILL UNCLEAR?



REVISED EVALUATION FORM



The revised form includes the following questions and options:

- Code* (text input)
- Is this the first time you have ever had a librarian in a class? (Yes/No radio buttons)
- Do you feel more confident completing your assignment after having this library session? (1-5 Likert scale)
- What is the most important thing you learned? (text input)
- What would you like to learn more about? (text input)
- What will you do differently in your research process now? (text input)
- Any general questions or comments? (text input)
- Was today's library session helpful? (1-5 Likert scale)

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The evaluation form is useful to librarians with differing levels of experience. Those who have spent years teaching reflexively will find student responses to "What was the most important thing I learned?" helpful in adjusting their practice. Newer instruction librarians can use the responses to this same question in order to determine if students perceive they are learning what the librarians are aspiring to teach, i.e., if the students' responses match the learning objectives for the session. A follow-up question of "What will you do differently in your research process now?" may provide revealing student responses, which can guide librarians when they are implementing changes to their teaching activities and plans.

Considerations for instruction evaluation forms include:

- An alternative or customizable form with questions about a specific learning activity
- Questions concerning the format of the lesson or learning activities and engagement, with Likert-type scales, such as:
 - The structure of the class session helped me learn the concepts
 - The structure of the class session kept my interest
 - The structure of the class session helped motivate me to learn
- An additional open-ended question, "What could be done to improve any particular aspect related to the in-class activities?"

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create a mobile, web-friendly version of the form.
- Create a separate Faculty Feedback form about library instruction.
- Add the question: "What will you do differently in your research process now?" to the form.
- Remove the question: "What is still unclear?" from the form.
- Include questions about helpfulness of the session and/or increased student confidence at the end of the session.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Committee Members: Lindy Scripps-Hoekstra and Kim Ranger
 Head of Instructional Services: Mary O'Kelly
 GVSU Research and Instruction Unit