You Don’t Say…

Students at the University of Virginia come clean when asked, “What are you doing, and how can we help?”

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Clemons Library
University of Virginia
About the University of Virginia

- Founded in 1819
- 12 schools
- 51 bachelor’s degrees
- 84 master’s degrees
- 57 doctoral degrees
- 14,297 undergraduates
- 6,598 graduates (incl. prof.)
About the U.Va. Library

- 14 libraries
- 250 employees
- 5.2 million books
- 41,000 videos
- 18.5 million manuscripts
- 3,165,000 gate count
- 116,000 ref. queries
- 1,200 instruction sessions
- Most circled item: *The Wire, Season 1*
Clemons Library

- Undergraduate and Media library
- Open 24 hours
- 4 floors
- Quiet and loud zones
- 23 group spaces
- Digital Media Lab
- Video collection
- A-Z book collection
- Leisure reading
- Support curriculum across disciplines
- Growing graphic novel collection
- Renovated entry floor based on student feedback
Goals of the Assessment

To learn what our students are doing when they’re in Clemons…

…and what we can do to help them.
Assessment Tools Used

- Task Survey
- Focus Groups
- Library User Surveys
- Computing Survey
- Reference Statistics
- Head Counts
- Gate Counts
- Space Survey
Context: 2009 MIS User Survey

• 36% undergrads consider Clemons their primary library.

• Most are undeclared or in the College of Arts and Sciences.

• Users value operating hours, media resources, and study spaces.
Busiest Months:
October (93,338)  
April (106,690)

Busiest Days:
Sunday - Wednesday

Busiest Times:
4:00 pm to midnight
Context: 2008 Computing Survey

• 54% brought a laptop

• 67% planned to use a library computer

• More outlets, power strips and data ports, printing from laptops, better wireless and spaces
Assessment Design

Task Survey
Focus Groups
• Exercise 1: Focus on Clemons
• Exercise 2: Focus on activities
• Exercise 3: Focus on work process

Group Discussion
• Exercise 1: Activities, help & tools
• Exercise 2: Roadblocks and solutions
Task Survey: The Tool

Distributed 9 times:

Three different days
Feb. 16, 2009
Mar. 10, 2009
Mar. 25, 2009

Three times per day
4:00 pm
9:00 pm
1:00 am

Surveys returned: 568
Task Survey: Who Uses Clemons?

Undergrads 95%
Task Survey: What Are They Doing?

Individual assignment 80%
Group assignment 35%

Bar chart showing percentages of activities:
- Checked Email: 80%
- Read/Studied: 60%
- Surfed the Web: 50%
- Copy/Print/Scan: 40%
- Other: 30%
- Non-Class Activity: 20%
- Watched a Video: 10%
Task Survey: What Equipment?

- Personal laptop (70%)
- Library desktop (60%)
- Group study space (40%)
- Library printer (30%)
- Individual seat/carrel (30%)
- Booth (20%)
- Library laptop (10%)
- iPhone/portable device
- Video room
- Library monitor
Task Survey: What Resources?

- Software: 70%–80%
- Google: 60%–70%
- Social networking: 50%–60%
- Textbook: 40%–50%
- Wikipedia: 30%–40%
- Databases: 20%–30%
- Video: 10%–20%
- Library book: 0%–10%
- Library staff: 0%–10%
- Reserve item: 0%
Task Survey: How Long?

When they’re in Clemons they’re here for...

- Less than 1 hour: 44%
- 1-3 hours: 42%
- More than 3 hours: 14%
Task Survey: “Can I get her number?”

Final Question: What could you have used help with?

“How do I find books in the library?”

“More tables with big monitors for group work.”

“Why is it so cold?”

“Get more laptops. Nicer headphones.”

“How can I connect to UVA wireless with my mobile device?”

“Is it possible to make desktop screens moveable?”

“More Ethernet cords.”

“...the air is stale down there...”

“How can we quickly access the online version of the Wall Street journal?”

“How do I do a problem with a differential eq.?”

“Where can I find more on this topic?”
Focus Groups and Discussion: Tools

Focus groups of 10-12 students:
Groups 1-3:
Exercise 1: Post-it Notes About Clemons
Exercise 2: Post-it Notes About Activities
Exercise 3: Timeline About Process

Group 4:
Discussion Group: Activities, Help, Roadblocks, Solutions
Exercise 1: “New books!”

Post-it Notes About Clemons
1. Write down things that you associate with Clemons.
2. Stick the Post-it notes on the wall in groups that make sense to you.
Exercise 1: “Meet group @ fish tanks”

Post-it Notes About Clemons
Exercise 1: “Write paper” & “Napping”

Student activities fell into 5 areas:

• Group projects, studying, paper writing and research (49 notes)
• Reading books or watching movies and browsing for both (50 notes)
• Digital Media Lab for video editing and creation (10 notes)
• Equipment: power strips, printers (34 notes)
• Socializing (51 notes)
Exercise 2: “Watched Scarface”

Post-it Notes About Activities
1. Write down for each of your last three visits to Clemons:
   - what you worked on
   - was it group or individual
   - what resources you used
2. Place the Post-it notes on the wall according to what floor you were on when you did the activity.
Exercise 2: “Astronomy Midterm”

1st Floor:
- Silent floor
- Individual study
- Extra power
- Stacks

2nd Floor:
- Group work
- Study tables
- Group rooms
- Stacks

3rd Floor:
- Video viewing
- Media creation

4th Floor:
- Collaborative work
- Individual work
- Lounging
- Browsing
Exercise 3: “My topic was assigned.”

Timeline About Process

1. Create a timeline of a project from beginning to end.
2. What’s the first thing you do? Then what? Then what? Then what?
3. Where along this timeline did you encounter roadblocks or difficulties of any kind?
4. What were they?
5. Where did you go for help?
6. Were there times when there simply was no help that you could find?
Exercise 3: “I Google for keywords.”

What They Said About Timeline:

“Use fish as a landmark”
“Clemons is close to everyone”
“Open 24 hrs.”
“Not your house”
“My TA is there”
“Wait until last minute”
“See if people did pre-work”
“Divide tasks”
“Allocate slides to group members”

“Start searching from home”
“Reconvene with resources”
“Coordinate by email”
“Meet again to compile”
“Use GoogleDocs, email”
“Plan final presentation”
“See if people did pre-work”
“Split work” and “Edit”
“Put it together”
“Print”
“Practice”
Exercise 3: “Walk around library 6 times”

When do students visit during their process?

**Individual Work:**
After getting assignment; after meeting with teacher; after Googling; before 2nd draft.

**Group Work:**
After getting assignment; after setting up meetings; before delegating tasks; after individual task; to complete project.
Phase 3: “The problem is...”

Write down all the difficulties or roadblocks you’ve encountered when doing your school work.

- Not being able to find information online. Textbook
- All the computers being used at the library
- No tables available/ private rooms / cubicles
- Place being either too quiet or too loud (even if I go to the 3rd floor, it’s sometimes too loud)
- Wanting to check out a movie for a class, & it’s checked out
Exercise 4: “We need pencils & paper.”

Help! Power, Computing and Tools

“If the power strip isn’t working, I leave, pray or get a new one”

“Logging on to a public computer takes FOREVER!

“The internet goes in and out when there are a lot of people in the library.”
Exercise 4: “I can’t find what I need.”

Help! Finding information

“One on one…isn’t as intimidating”

“Getting started is the hardest part.”

“You have to go where the books are, not where you want to be”

“Librarian says Oh, stacks and I’m lost for two hours!”

“You assume the librarian can’t help you [with physics].”

“I would rather leave than talk to a librarian”

“Librarians don’t know more than me.”
Conclusion: Pull up a chair.

Pairing Task Survey with previous assessments helped develop process and exercises.

Flexibility to add open discussion to fit students’ style worked.

Results have formed a foundation for decisions about space, education, outreach, communication and policies.
Thank you.

Questions?