

Duggan Library 2006-07 Assessment Report

Introduction

What had been intended as the year for library strategic planning quickly segued to something much more specific -- library assessment, as it was realized that proper planning is driven by proper assessment. The Duggan Library has not performed any consistent or formal assessment in some time. In reviewing the professional literature on successful strategic planning it was decided that the effort and time initially spent creating and implementing a continuous assessment plan would aid in the creation of a long range plan that would move from strategic to operational. Of course, it is understood for this endeavor to be successful, library goals have to be aligned with institutional goals.

As a first step in goal alignment, the library reviewed its mission statement which was last revised in the late 1990's. Since then we have experienced major changes in the library and college, and it is prudent to have a mission statement that is reflective of our current situation and is based upon the college's stated mission/vision.

Pertinent documents, including the Hanover College mission statement, Vision statement, and Vision of the Liberal Arts, were reviewed to ensure that the new Duggan Library mission statement was consistent with the institutional mission. A draft of the library's mission was circulated to all library staff, selected students, Library Advisory Group, Assessment Committee, and the Academic Dean, for input and feedback. After this vetting process, the new mission statement (Attachment 1), the cornerstone to our assessment planning, was put into place in April, 2007.

Concurrent to the revised mission statement process, the librarians began to formulate a library assessment plan rooted in the *ACRL Standards for College Libraries* and guided by the William Neal Nelson and Robert W. Fernekes book, Standards and Assessment for Academic Libraries: A Workbook. As a result, we have developed an initial Duggan Library Assessment Plan (Attachment 2) that will serve the basis of our continuous assessment. It is expected that this assessment plan will be reviewed yearly and goals updated and revised as necessary.

Goals and Objectives for 2006/07, Assessment Methodologies, and Outcome/Impact

In addition to revising the library's mission statement and developing a comprehensive assessment plan, each librarian selected an item within their respective areas of responsibility to assess for 2006/07. Following are the goals and objectives reviewed for this assessment period along with the methodology used to assess each, and the results generated by the assessment.

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Purpose: Provide quality resources

Goal: Support the Hanover College curriculum

- Objective: Provide adequate materials for the LADR (Liberal Arts Degree Requirements) program [Ken Gibson]

Measurement tool(s) employed: data analysis

Methodology(ies) used: Inspect fund expenditures, examine acquisition reports, analyze faculty participation, and review circulation statistics

Outcome(s): Data from 2005/06 was reviewed, including Fund Expenditures, acquisition reports, circulation statistics, and course lists. To simplify collection and analysis, World Languages, Health and Fitness, and Other Cultures LADRs were not considered. Data analysis revealed that just 1/3 of faculty who were involved in teaching LADR courses (in Great Works, Human Nature, Examined Life, Modern Society, Natural World, and Abstract and Formal Reasoning) used some portion of LADR funds, only expending about 1/5 of the total funds available. As a comparison, about 4/5 of these same faculty used some portion of their general allocation funds, expending approximately 3/4 of the total funds available. Overall, 4% (\$3,906) of all monographic and audiovisual expenditures for the year were purchased for support of LADR courses.

Of the six LADRs reviewed, Modern Society and Great Works were the ones most supported. Ten faculty teaching in each of these areas purchased items for their LADR courses. Examined Life courses were supported by five faculty, (and two faculty teaching in Other Cultures and two teaching World Languages utilized LADR funds). Only one faculty in Natural World used available funds while no faculty teaching Abstract and Formal Reasoning or Human Nature purchased items for their LADR areas. Last, one faculty member who was not on the course list to teach any LADRs nonetheless used these funds to purchase a videorecording.

There were a total of 112 items ordered with LADR funds, including 89 monographs (79% of total), 17 audiovisual recordings (15%), and 6 electronic files (6%). A review of circulation statistics of these items show that, to date, 48% have never circulated and 72% have circulated one or less times. The top eight items with the highest circulation statistics are all audiovisual recordings and all audiovisual recordings purchased with LADR funds have circulated at least once, with 16 of the 17 items having circulated multiple times.

Library Impact on Institutional Effectiveness: It was initially determined that LADR gift funds (beginning funds of \$41,365) would be available for two years or, until funds had been fully expended. However, because of low use during the first year (as supported by this assessment) continued through the second year (as evidenced by current fund balance), and the desire to not send the wrong message to the donor of the gift fund, it has been decided to lift the LADR restriction from this fund and include the remaining balance (less \$5,000 for support of the Senior Capstone) as part of the faculty's general allocation budget for 2007-08, allowing faculty to manage just one allocation for support of all their classes.

Clearly, according to this data, LADRs have not been consistently supported with new acquisitions during the two years this special fund allocation has existed. Interviewing faculty may help in understanding why the fund was underutilized. One could speculate that perhaps

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faculty didn't want to purchase items for new courses that may not become a permanent part of the curriculum, or that the library already held sufficient volumes to support a particular LADR course, or that faculty just used their general allocation to purchase items supporting their LADR courses because they didn't want to bother with the "red tape", or that change in the ordering process was an undue burden. However, since the decision has already been made in conjunction with the VP for Development and the Academic Dean to lift the fund restriction, interviews will not be attempted.

It is recommended that these results be used in combination with other collection development analysis attempted in the future, including a review of the collection development policy, to determine the overall effectiveness of our current collection development process of charging faculty with acquisition responsibilities.

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Purpose: Provide quality programs

Goal: Provide appropriate library and information literacy instruction

- Objective: Introduce research skills to incoming students via Great Works [Heather Loehr]

Measurement tool(s) employed: data analysis

Methodology(ies) used: review instruction session files and examine GPA data

Outcome(s): Data from 2005-6 and 2006-7 was reviewed. 27 Great Works course sequences (the fall and winter term linked courses) are represented in the data. Instruction files from sections receiving instruction were reviewed for session content. The Registrar's office provided GPA data for all sections of Great Works in the 3 semesters studied; this data analysis should be considered INCOMPLETE until the GPA data is received for Winter 2007.

1. **Instruction File Review:** Of the 27 course sequences studied, 11 out of 12 sequences in 2005-6 received library instruction in either the fall or winter terms. In 2006-7, 10 out of the 15 sequences received library instruction. Files were studied for common content and reviewed both communication from the faculty member, and notes from the library instructor. Over 90% of GW instruction sessions included all of the following: Reference collection orientation, introduction to and use of the OPAC, and use of a multidisciplinary journal article database (Academic Search Premier and/or JSTOR). 73% of files indicated that the session included research skills instruction: discussion of topic development, sequence of research events, explanation of LCSH, popular vs. scholarly resources, and description of database structure and fields. Approximately 33% of sessions incorporated instruction on an advanced database, typically America: History and Life and Historical Abstracts. 20% of sessions incorporated instruction of use (or nonuse) of free Internet resources, with one class devoting one 50-minute session to the topic of web research. 10% of sessions incorporated instruction about academic honesty, plagiarism, and proper use of citations. Of the 27 course sequences, 8 (30%) requested 2 or more instruction sessions; the remaining 70% offered the usual 50-minute one-shot session.
2. **GPA Analysis.** 12 Great Works course sequences completed in 2005-6 were studied for GPA progression over the 2-semester sequence. The average fall/winter combined GPA of course sequences which did NOT receive any library instruction was 2.938 (1 sequence). The average fall/winter combined GPA of course sequences which received library instruction in the fall or winter (or both) terms was 2.738 (11 sequences). Of the 11 sequences which received library instruction, 73% showed an improvement in GPA from the fall to winter terms. Individual sections (the fall and winter components, separately) were also studied; the GPA data for the Fall 2005, Winter 2006, and Fall 2006 GW sections was reviewed. The individual sections which received library instruction had an average GPA of 3.512, compared to an average GPA of 2.813 for those sections that did not receive instruction.

Library Impact on Institutional Effectiveness:

1. Instruction File Review: Study of the data indicates that students receiving library instruction through Great Works receive a common skill set on use of basic library resources – reference, OPAC, and multidisciplinary databases. This skill set, including instruction on basic research strategies, is most commonly requested by faculty and presented by the librarians. The majority of instruction sessions follow this curriculum and maximize the use of the typical 50-minute one-shot session. This skill set could be offered in the future as a for-credit research skills course for first-year students. It is apparent from this data that certain faculty are more involved with the library instruction program and request more in-depth presentations for their students, which provides an added benefit for the students enrolled. It also indicates that the needs of first-year students in the modern information climate have outgrown what can be presented in a single 50-minute session, and this will need to be addressed in planning for the future of the program. Of greater immediate concern is the fact that faculty participation in the Great Works library instruction program has dropped off (from 2005-6 to 2006-7) and this leaves a substantial number of students potentially without any library instruction in their first year and possibly beyond. Consultation with faculty is recommended to address reasons why instruction was not requested; however, in lieu of any formal requirement for GW faculty to include library instruction and/or an independent library-offered research course, there may be little we can do to keep some students from falling through the cracks.
2. GPA Analysis: There appears to be some evidence to support the theory that library instruction has a positive effect on GPA during the semester that it is provided, although more study and feedback from faculty are necessary to determine to what role library instruction may have played along with other factors. Additional data and study are needed to determine any correlation of library instruction with GPA over the fall-winter GW course sequence.

It is recommended that these results be used in combination with other analysis methods, with particular emphasis on student and faculty surveys and feedback, to better determine the effectiveness of our Great Works instruction program.

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Purpose: Contribute to a meaningful learning environment

Goal: Provide suitable facilities

- Objective: Prepare a Standard Facility Report with particular attention to the Archives area [Doug Denne]

Measurement tool(s) employed: industry standard report form

Methodology(ies) used: gather information, complete and submit report for external review and response

Outcome(s): Please note that this assessment did not evaluate the appearance of the library (carpeting, paint, etc.) nor did it address overarching issues like future space for staff and library materials.

Following the American Association of Museums Standard Facility Report, the assessment examined building construction, environment, fire protection, and security.

Environmental data (humidity and temperature) was analyzed over a 12-month period in five separate areas of the second floor of the Library (Archives, Special Collections, Reading Room, Vault, and Photo Archives). This data was compared to data from previous years and was found to be consistent with data from previous years. Temperature - with a few extraordinary situations - remained +/- 2° off of 70°. This is an optimal temperature for library materials. Data shows, however, that the humidity varied by as much as 10% over a 24-hour period. During the Winter months, the humidity ranged between 12.1 and 61.2%. And during the Spring/Summer months, it ranged between 19.3 and 73.1%. This is entirely unacceptable. It has ramifications for staff and patron health, the long term preservation and care of library materials, and the ability of the library to borrow items from other institutions for exhibitions.

The fire alarm system has been upgraded in the last year. The upgrade included more detection devices throughout the Library as well as ADA-approved signaling devices (audible/visual) in the restrooms on first and second floors, an enunciator panel in the main lobby, removing the old fire panel and connecting everything to the new addressable panel. Also, at the writing of this assessment, some of the flood lights are out of commission.

The Library has 24-hour human guard security and there is always a guard on patrol. Magnetic contacts exist at all exits in addition to passive infrared motion detectors in the Archives. It is recommended that locks on all doors to the Archives be switched out with new locks that do not work with the current master key.

Library Impact on Institutional Effectiveness: Most tellingly, our request to borrow items from the Mathers Museum for an upcoming Archives display was denied, principally due to wide fluctuations in humidity. The Archives Facility Report has been shared with several other departments, including Development and Administrative Affairs, to determine HVAC system remedies. It is hoped that other changes and/or upgrades identified as a result of this report will be addressed as time and resources permit.

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Purpose: Provide quality services

Goal: Support the Hanover College curriculum

- Objective: Monitor Interlibrary Loan items borrowed in targeting potential items/areas for collection development [Kelly Joyce]

Measurement tool(s) employed: data analysis

Methodology(ies) used: examine monthly OCLC ILL reports

Outcome(s): Data from the most recent 5 months of interlibrary loan book requests were examined to see what LC classifications were the most requested, with the idea that the most highly requested subjects would reflect areas of the library's current collection areas that could be updated. Data from Oct. of 2006 through the end of March 2007 were collated and sorted by LC classification. Future examinations of this data will include a complete 12 month year.

Serials requests were NOT examined as part of this project. However, they are assigned LC call numbers in the WorldCat records from which our statistics are downloaded and so could be included in the future.

There were 979 individual monograph requests by Duggan Library users. In reviewing these requests, two major classification areas stood out, P (Language and Literature) and D (History – General; Europe), accounting for 41% of total monograph requests.

If classifications are broken down further to more specific subject areas, the following are the most requested subjects through interlibrary loan:

PR – (English Literature) = 62 requests

PT – (Germanic Literatures) = 54 requests

PN – (Literature (General)) = 53 requests

D – (History (General); Europe (General)) = 35 requests

E – (History (America)) = 31 requests

HQ – (Family. Marriage. Women) = 29 requests

PQ – (French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese Literatures) = 29 requests

DS – (History (Asia)) = 27 requests

PS – (American Literature) = 26 requests

DA – (History (Great Britain)) = 24 requests

PZ – (Juvenile belles letters) = 23 requests

With only one exception (Family - HQ), it's clear that the disciplines most in need of external support are Language and Literature, and History. However, further data must be compiled to see if these areas remain highly requested.

Library Impact on Institutional Effectiveness: The results will be conveyed to the appropriate departments along with a list of actual titles borrowed so that these may be considered for purchase for the Duggan Library collection. Of course, continued evaluation of this data is required as current ILLs may not reflect future research needs.

Conclusion

In beginning this process, what has been learned is that assessment is vital for program planning, growth, and decision-making. Doing assessment can also be fun!

What we are doing well: Assessment has been a process that has brought the librarians closer together (providing a framework for better and more consistent communications) and has provided tangible results (new library mission statement and a library assessment plan). We have finally moved beyond *thinking* about assessment to doing it, and have created the basis for continuous assessment as part of our routine work responsibilities.

Additionally, a review of the 2005/06 PALNI statistics (Attachment 3) show Hanover in the top quartile in the following areas: total library expenditures per student, acquisition expenditures per student, total collections (books and bound journal volumes), total circulations, and hours open in a typical week.

What we need to do better: In reviewing the results of the assessed areas this year, there is a sense that we are doing the best we can with what we have, but that we can (and need to) do much better. A review of our collection development process is needed but will require the time and talents of a collection development librarian/faculty liaison (new position) to undertake a thorough review and to investigate new possibilities. While writing and speaking across the curriculum has been a staple of the new Academic Vision, one critical area that may be overlooked is information literacy. Consistency in reaching all first-year students with library instruction is lacking in lieu of any mandate of Great Works faculty to participate, and other alternatives may thus need to be explored. Environmental controls, especially in the Library's Archives area, fluctuate wildly, and, as a result, we will be unable to borrow items from most other institutions in supplementing our first-rate exhibits until the problems, particularly with humidity, have been addressed.

Additionally, a review of the 2005/06 PALNI statistics (Attachment 3) show that the stated minimum beginning professional salary is the only area where Hanover falls in the bottom quartile. This may also have implications regarding continuing salaries for our existing librarians.

Future assessment tasks: In addition to assessing specific goals (such as utilizing the SAILS information literacy tool as a way to measure student learning outcomes), we hope in the coming year to further refine our assessment planning document by identifying goals across all areas of the ACRL/CLS Standards. We also plan to create and implement an extensive web-based user survey tool, and involve additional library staff in the assessment process. Finally, we need to begin thinking about the self-study process ahead of the North Central visit to campus.