Institution Name: University of Illinois at Chicago
Institution Characteristics:
University/public/FTE enrollment: 33,000/FTE library staff:150

CARLI Counts Participant Name:
Jung Mi Scoulas, PhD.
Clinical Assistant Professor and Assessment Coordinator

Project title: Measuring the Impact of Undergraduate Students' Library Use on Their Learning beyond GPA

Abstract: The UIC Library conducted an investigation by measuring the impact of undergraduate students' library use on their learning using a quantitative approach and found that their top reason for library visits (in-person) was "studying alone (24.56%), and the top reason for online library visits was "accessing library e-books, journals to help me complete assignments" (66.67%). Another finding shows that the majority of the respondents (79%) reported "strongly agree" and "agree" on the "using the library space made me feel more confident about my ability to accomplish my goals."

Motivation(s) for Project:

Since 2016 the UIC Library has conducted a student library use survey biannually. The student surveys were used to examine if their use of the library has an impact on their academic success (GPA). Key findings from quantitative data in the 2018 survey showed that student library visits and library space satisfaction were negatively associated with their GPA, whereas most students' use of library resources (e.g., journal articles and databases) was positively associated with their GPA (Scoulas & De Groote, 2019). This finding is contrary to the earlier studies indicating that students' library visits were positively associated with students' academic success (Brown & Malenfant, 2015; Massengale, Piotrowski, & Savage, 2016). It is possible that students with a lower GPA may need a place where they can concentrate on studying, which results in an increase in their visits to the library. On the other hand, students with a higher GPA may not think it is necessary to go to the library because of their self-discipline. However, given that the correlation does not guarantee the causation it is not easy to clearly explain this negative relationship.

As such, the current study aims to identify the primary reason of students' library use (in person and online) and examine whether academic related activities have impact on students' learning beyond GPA through quantitative approach. Additionally, investigators aim to further explore how students perceive their experience in the library and how students perceive their own learning through qualitative approach. The findings from the current research project will be valuable for the University Library to demonstrate whether students' library use (library space, instructions and online resources) has an impact on students learning beyond students' GPA.

Partners and Stakeholders:
- Head of Assessment and Scholarly Communications, Co-PI
- Assessment Coordinator Advisory Committee (AC2), Assessment Committee

Method(s) of Data Collection and Analysis:
The investigators plan to interview up to 50 undergraduate students; recruitment and data collection is ongoing. As of December 31, 2019, a total of 19 undergraduate students participated in the interviews.

Data Collection Procedures:
Since the beginning of summer 2019, the investigators have been recruiting undergraduate students with flyers displayed in the university library (Daley Library) and via social media. Students were selected by the investigators based on their responses to the recruitment survey (physical library users vs. online library users). Investigators are contacting the students who expressed their willingness to participate in the survey and set a date and time for the interview based on the students' preference. Interviews have been conducting by investigators at the UIC Richard Daley Library. The in-person interviews included a request to complete a print survey and a series of interview questions. Before their interview, participants were asked to sign an Informed Consent form. Then participants were asked to complete the survey and participate in the interview. At the end of each interview students receive $25 for their participation.

Data analysis:
Quantitative data from survey questions were manually entered by the Principle investigator and stored directly in the web-based online survey, developed in Qualtrics, and were analyzed to measure the impact of students' library use on their learning. Qualitative data have not been analyzed yet because this will be conducted after completion of the data collection.

Findings:

Preliminary findings from the quantitative data show that students' top three reasons for library visits (in-person) included "studying alone" (24.56%), "working on assignments" (19.30%), and "using computers or printers for assignments or preparing for exams" (17.54%). The primary reason for students using the online library was "accessing library e-books, journals to help me complete assignments" (66.67%). Most of the respondents who used the library in person used the Circle Reading Room on the library's first floor. About 40% of those respondents reported that they visited the library multiple times a week and spent between 1.5 and 2 hours in the library per week. However, respondents who used the online library were different. That is, about 37% of the respondents used the library website once a month and spent about 30 minutes on average. With respect to students' perceptions of the library space's influence on their learning, as shown in Figure 1, the majority of the respondents reported "strongly agree" and "agree" on the

"library environment helps me stay focused" (89%), "using the library space made me feel more confident about my ability to accomplish my goals" (79%), and "the library is a place to work with my classmates" (78%).

Use of Findings:

The current research project is ongoing, so the findings have not yet been applied to the library. Once the data collection and analysis are completed by Summer 2020, the findings will be shared with the AC2 and the UIC Library staff and faculty as well as external stakeholders (e.g., UIC Faculty Advisory Committee). Afterwards, the researchers aim to share the findings through conferences and publications.

Next Steps and Other Results:
The investigators will continue recruiting potential participants and interviewing them. Afterwards, both the quantitative and qualitative data will be analyzed.

Additional Reflections: Compensation to participants participating in the interviews and transcribing the audio recordings require funding. The University Library supports these expenses.

Timeline:

Submission to IRB: May 8, 2019
IRB approval: May 21, 2019 (Research protocol #2019-0538)
IRB amendment: June 11, 2019
Recruitment: Summer 2019-Spring 2020
Data collection: Summer 2019- Spring 2020
Data analysis: Ongoing

Bibliography/Works Cited:

Brown, K., & Malenfant, K. (2015). Academic library contributions to student success: documented practices from the field. ALA/ACRL.

Massengale, L., Piotrowski, P., & Savage, D. (2016). Identifying and articulating library connections to student success. College & Research Libraries, 77(2), 227–235. https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.77.2.227

Scoulas, J. M. & De Groote, S. L. (2019) 'The library's impact on university students' academic success and learning', Evidence Based Library and Information Practice, 14(3), pp. 2–27. doi: 10.18438/eblip29547.
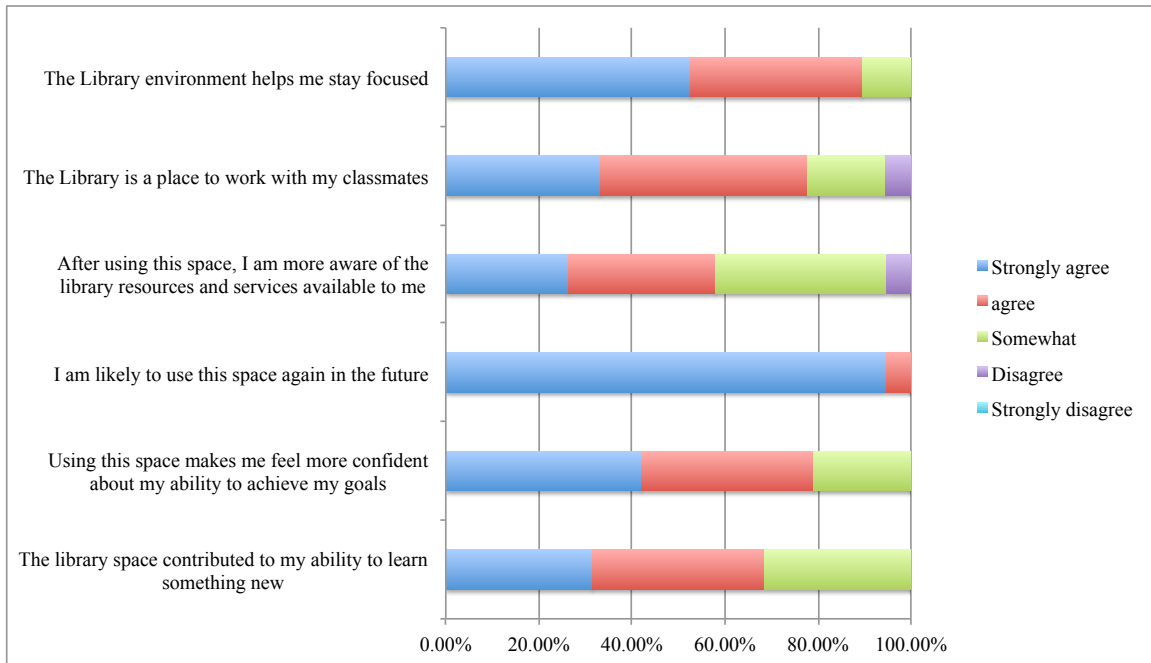
Appendix

Figure 1. Students perceptions of library space on their learning (n=19).