**Library Value Study: Final Report**

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**Introduction**

The purpose of this assessment study was to determine the S.E. Wimberly Library’s contributions, through library instruction, in helping students to acquire the research skills needed for career success, by assessing the needs, expectations, and satisfaction level of administrators, faculty, and students from the College of Business (COB) with library instruction. The intent was also to use the results of the study to make any changes to better meet the needs of business students in helping them to acquire the research skills needed for career success. The study was conducted during the spring and fall semesters of 2012.

**Methodology**

In phase one of the study, a total of two COB administrators and four faculty members, who had brought their classes to the Wimberly Library for an instructional session, were selected to be interviewed. The six interview questions for administrators and faculty members were the same, and they were asked about their perceptions regarding the research skills business students need for career success and how the Library contributes in helping students to acquire these skills through library instruction.

In phase two of this study, a total of 160 students, undergraduates, graduates and non-degree seeking, were surveyed from seven classes. The professors had been interviewed prior to the student survey and all of the students in the seven classes had attended a library instructional session prior to the survey. There was one class that we were unable to survey, whose professor had been interviewed, which is a study limitation. The student survey was comprised of five questions with the last question asking for additional comments. It had been created based in part on the responses from the interviews conducted in the spring of 2012 with the COB administrators and faculty, who had brought their classes to the Wimberly Library for library instruction and was administered as a “pencil and paper” survey during class.

**Analysis of Results**

**Phase One: Interview Questions**

Two administrators and four faculty members were asked five open-ended interview questions, and one “yes or no” question with a “why or why not” that both administrators and faculty members had to answer. Question #1 asked which research skills business students (both undergraduates and graduates) are required to know before they graduate. Three of the respondents (n=6), 50%, agreed that students are required to know how to research a company. Two respondents said that students are required to know how to conduct an industry analysis and to understand what information is needed. Here are some of the other comments.

* Acquire good communication skills.
* Know how to use technology.
* Know what reliable information is and where to find it.
* Understand IT products and infrastructure and data analysis.
* Know how to use information to phrase a question.
* Understand the basic information literacy skills, including locating, evaluating, and using information.

Question #2 asked which research skills they thought were most important for business students to acquire for career success. The three responses most in common with the respondents include:

* Know how to research companies and industries.
* Know how to identify reliable information and sources.
* Acquire good communication skills.

Other responses include:

* Know how to phrase questions
* Know how to do a market analysis.
* Find data on industries, competitors, and consumers.
* Know how to find what other people have studied about a problem.
* Know how to access and work with business journals.
* Be able to differentiate between an article and a blog.

It appears from the question #3 comments that the respondents believe that the Library’s instructional sessions are critical. The responses or expectations for the Library to teach that are most in common with questions #1 and #2 include: knowing how to research companies and industries, knowing how to identify reliable sources and information, and acquiring good communication skills. Respondents believe that the Library should teach students how to properly format their references, and know how to find websites that are good for information and use databases and government resources, and do advanced searching in Google. They also wanted the Library to teach students how to find information to solve problems, use databases to find industry, competitors and consumer information, use SearchWiSE and get help.

Question #4 asked if library instructional sessions have helped students to acquire research skills needed for career success and “why or why not.” Five of the respondents (n=6), 83%, believe that the Library has contributed in helping students acquire research skills for career success. Only one administrator said that he did not know, since he had been in administration for several years. One respondent said that students wish that these sessions could be offered earlier in a person’s program and another felt that they should be required. Here are some responses to “why or why not.”

* These sessions help students to make presentations with better sources
* Help certificate students (non-degree seeking) to focus on finding the information that they need.
* Library sessions are helpful, especially finding information on company, government and social issues.
* For many students it is their starting point.

When asked what more the Library could do to help business students acquire these research skills for career success, which was question, #5, respondents, there were the following suggestions:

* Make sure professors are aware of the Library’s instructional services.
* Introduce students early to library instruction.
* Provide links to the Library’s resources in the ENC 3213: Writing for Management course.
* Make library sessions mandatory.
* Find out what peer institutions do.
* Access alumni information.
* Do outreach to chairs, department heads, and faculty.
* Ensure that students have the ability to find data and manage it.
* Teach students how to data mine information for businesses and how to find information for competitive and market intelligence.
* Teach the use of Ref Works in business instructional sessions.
* Use lecture/capture technology for library sessions.
* Provide a general session for MBA students and require all students to take session.

Lastly, question #6 asked which method of library instruction, classroom or online tutorial, is preferred for helping students acquire these research skills. Four of the respondents (n=6), about 67%, believed that the in class sessions are better. One respondent said that both are needed, and another said that we need more online instructional sessions.

**Phase Two: Student Survey**

Question #1 asked which research skills are important for business students to acquire for career success. According to the results, the top three research skills included:

* Knowing how to research companies and industries.
* Understanding how to find data on industries, competitors, and consumers for a market analysis.
* Knowing how to identify reliable information and sources.

Question #2 was about satisfaction with the FAU Libraries’ instructional sessions, and about **96%** of the respondents (n=160) indicated some level of satisfaction on a 7 point Likert scale. Question #3 asked what more the FAU Libraries could do through library instruction to help business students acquire research skills for career success. More respondents indicated that the Library should offer additional instructional sessions and do more advertising to inform students about these sessions. Many students also indicated that they would like to have access to more business databases and additional online resources and that library sessions be taught earlier in a student’s career and offer an online tutorial.

Question #4 asked students which method, in class or online, of library instruction they preferred, and about **77%** of the respondents (n=160) indicated that the in class method was preferred. Only **23**% indicated that online was preferred, with a few respondents indicating the need for both methods of instruction. Question #5 only asked for additional comments, with most respondents indicating that the library sessions were helpful.

**Summary and Conclusions**

The results showed that the majority of COB administrators, faculty, and business students surveyed appear to be pleased with the library instructional sessions, as far as helping business students to acquire the research skills for career success. They also would like more sessions offered (and online sessions) and earlier on in a student’s career and more advertising and outreach of library sessions.

The results will be shared with the COB administrators and faculty who participated in this study, librarians who teach instructional sessions, and library administrators. It is hoped the results from this study will be used to make any needed changes in library instruction and that the model created for this study will be used to assess needs, expectations, and satisfaction with library sessions in other Colleges at FAU.

**Appendix A**

**Interview Questions for COB Administrators and Faculty**

1. Which research skills are all business students (undergraduates and graduates) required to know before they graduate?
2. Which research skills do you think are most important for business students to acquire for career success?
3. What are your expectations regarding the Library’s instructional sessions in helping students to acquire these research skills?
4. In your opinion, have library instructional sessions helped students to acquire these research skills required for career success? Why or why not?
5. What more can the Library do, as far as library instruction, to help business students acquire these research skills required for career success?
6. Which method of library instruction, classroom or online (tutorials), is preferred to help business

students acquire these research skills?

**Appendix B**

**Library Value Study Student Survey**

You are being asked to complete a survey, as part of an assessment study that will help to determine the FAU Libraries’ contributions, as far as library instruction, in assisting business students to acquire research skills needed for career success. The survey should take less than 5 minutes to complete and is voluntary. The results of the survey will be kept confidential and will be used to make improvements in library instruction.

1. **Please select those research skills that you think are important for business students to acquire for career success.**
   1. **\_\_\_\_\_** Know how to research companies and industries.
   2. **\_\_\_\_\_** Know how to identify reliable information and sources.
   3. **\_\_\_\_\_** Know how to find data on industries, competitors, and consumers for a market analysis.
   4. **\_\_\_\_\_** Know how to analyze and apply information to solve a problem.
   5. **\_\_\_\_\_** Understand how to properly cite a reference source.
   6. \_\_\_\_\_ Know how to find websites appropriate for business research.
   7. \_\_\_\_\_ Understand how to use business related databases.
   8. \_\_\_\_\_ Understand how to use government resources.
   9. **\_\_\_\_\_** Other, please name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
2. **Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:**

I am satisfied with what is being taught through the FAU Libraries’ instructional sessions, to help business students acquire the research skills needed for career success.

Strongly Somewhat Neither Agree Somewhat Strongly  
Disagree Disagree Disagree nor Disagree Agree Agree Agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

1. **What more can the FAU Libraries do through library instruction to help business students acquire research skills needed for career success?**
2. **Which method of library instruction do you prefer, for helping students acquire research skills needed for career success? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in class \_\_\_\_\_\_\_online Why?**
3. **Additional comments:**

**THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE SURVEY!**