

Student Success Initiatives in Academic Libraries

ROSE FANARA

LIS 656



What are Student Success Initiatives (SSI)?

- “Student Success Initiatives aim to provide students the personal, academic, and professional support and development to thrive and succeed.” (UCI Student Success Initiatives)
- Active Student Success Initiatives are a recent focus! Many universities established SSI teams in the late 2010’s

SSI is a learning community that aims to actively empower students to be productive and engaged as they move throughout their academic journey.

Why are Student Success Initiatives important ?

- Transfers “ownership” to the student, allowing them to take charge of their experiences
- Empowers students to meet and exceed short-term (college graduation) and long-term goals (later career)
- Arms students with the tools they need to apply their education to their career

What do Student Success Initiatives look like in Academic Libraries?

- Assessing student need based on university goals
- Making resources available to all students
- Providing tools to access resources
- Providing information literacy learning
- Assisting students in their efforts to apply knowledge to coursework

Step 1: Defining student success

Academic libraries align their definition with their university's definition, contributing to the larger goal

- Retention
- Good academic standing
- Graduation

*Everyone has a different definition of student success!

Step 2: Choosing a target group

- Most start young, focusing on first-year students
 - Creating good habits early on will benefit in the long run
 - First-year programming collaborations are key!

Over time, libraries have moved away from “hands off” seminars. Now, universities often hire student success librarians to better reach and engage with the population.

Step 3: Determining current areas of need

- Establishing good study, homework, and research habits (high school methods don't always work!)
- Familiarizing students with library resources, especially unique aspects
- Evolving with the needs of the student body
 - Example: Distance education students have a different set of needs, compelling SSI to increase accessibility

Step 4: Guiding the student body

- Advocate for the student body in faculty meetings
- Empower students to define success in their own way. Success is not “one size fits all”
- Create positive partnerships with students
- Aim for **holistic** success beyond academia

Academic Library's role in Student Success Initiatives: University Outreach and Student Engagement

- SSI helps the academic library remain relevant, while improving campus visibility
- Collaboration is important! Working with other university departments offers a different perspective
- SSI teams play an active roll in student success; they reach out to students rather than waiting until students ask for assistance or resources

Academic Library's role in Student Success Initiatives: Open Access Movement

- Technology is largely determining the trajectory of the Student Success Initiative!
- High demand for online resources due to increased distance education
- Academic library focus on providing access to class materials for no cost, alleviating financial pressure and contributing to holistic success
- **Open Educational Resource/ Affordable content programs:** SSI sponsored by academic libraries, serving as an example of continued growth
 - Encouraging faculty to utilize print resources offered through the library, rather than forcing students to purchase materials
 - Goals are reducing student cost and ensuring equal access to course materials

SSI in Academic Libraries: Student Success Librarians

- New addition to the scope of professional academic librarianship as the focus centers around student success
- Primary goal of advancing student academic engagement and success
- Responsible for outreach to the student body, development of information literacy programming, first-year-experience collaboration, accessibility instruction, and more
- Since this position is relatively new within the field there are several job openings!

Student Success Initiatives in Academic Libraries: Examples

- Workshops
- Additional training courses
- Improved study spaces
- Reference/ research resources
- Student wellness programming
 - Destress events
 - Finals week study treats
- Writing Centers and other tutoring workspaces
- Library tutorials and/ or instructional games
- Technological offerings
 - Internet access
 - Copiers/ printers
 - Laptops
 - Film equipment

Bibliography

- Association of College and Research Libraries. *Academic Library Contributions to Student Success: Documented Practices from the Field*. Prepared by Karen Brown. Contributions by Kara J. Malenfant. Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries, 2015.
- Gaha, Ula, Suzanne Hinnefeld, and Catherine Pellegrino. "The Academic Library's Contribution to Student Success: Library Instruction and GPA." *College and Research Libraries*, vol. 79, no. 6, 2018, <https://crl.acrl.org/index.php/crl/article/view/16824/18994>. Accessed 17 March 2024.
- Mowreader, Ashley. "Librarians as Promoters of Student Success Early in College." *Inside Higher Ed*, 15 February 2023, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2023/02/16/librarians-target-incoming-students-collaborative-measures>. Accessed 17 March 2024.
- Pelletier, Kathe. "Student Success: 3 Big Questions." *Educause Review*, 14 October 2019, <https://er.educause.edu/articles/2019/10/student-success--3-big-questions>. Accessed 17 March 2024.
- Salem Jr., Joseph A. "Open Pathways to Student Success: Academic Library Partnerships for Open Educational Resource and Affordable Course Content Creation and Adoption." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, vol. 43, no. 1, 2017, pp. 34-38.
- *Student Success Initiatives*. University of California- Irvine, 2023, <https://ssi.uci.edu/>. Accessed 16 March 2024.