

Assessment Team, Value Project-Team

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## **Recommendations for Demonstrating Library Value at WSU**

### **Introduction:**

In September 2010, ACRL released the report [\*The Value of Academic Libraries: a comprehensive research review and report\*](#). The report outlined twenty-two recommendations for demonstrating library value to institutional stakeholders. The Values project-team was tasked with reviewing the report, and creating a list of recommendations with the potential to demonstrate library value at WSU. The ten-item list below is not a prescriptive list of actionable items, but rather a prioritized list of recommendations culled from the “Value” report for methods of demonstrating library value on WSU campuses. The intent for this document is to serve as a resource for the Assessment Team to use in its planning processes.

### **Prioritized Recommendations:**

- 1. Create library assessment plans Executive Summary (ES) 17, What to do next (WTDN) 99**  
Assessment plans for departments and teams connected to libraries strategic priorities, that reflect university strategic priorities, will target efforts, and provide evidence of progress made toward institutional objectives. Coordination with regional campuses on assessment planning when appropriate should be a goal.
  
- 2. Define outcomes ES 12, WTDN 95**  
Defining student learning outcomes for core partner programs of institutional relevance, can demonstrate the connection of the libraries efforts to affect students in relation to areas identified in the “Value” report such as student learning, student enrollment, retention and graduation rates, student success, and achievement.  
  
Definition of outcomes beyond the instruction team will assist in demonstrating library value in relation to areas such as faculty research and productivity, faculty teaching, service and overarching institutional quality.
  
- 3. Determine what Libraries enable students, faculty, student affairs professionals to do ES 12, WTDN 95 - 97**  
Identify and document what the Libraries believe it enables its users to accomplish per the services and resources provided. Once documented, identify a small group and use existing data to assess if users are successful in their attempts.

4. **Link Libraries to improved student retention and graduation rates ES 13, Research Agenda (RS 107 - 109**

Identify and follow a cohort through their WSU educational experience, documenting the frequency and sequence of instruction received and use of library resources and services, will allow measurement against metrics of institutional importance (retention, graduation, enrollment, etc).

5. **Develop systems to collect data on individual user behavior, while maintaining privacy ES 12, WTDN 95 - 98**

Collecting identifying information (netids, or student numbers) from students receiving instruction, or participating in a library event, connected with data from the office of institutional research, will provide descriptive demographic information on the users served, similar to that included in the recent [report](#) by the WSU Writing Center. Additionally, an improved understanding of the demographics of library users will allow for greater customization of services.

6. **Track and increase library contributions to faculty research productivity ES 15, Review and Analysis of the Literature (RAAL) 47 – 49, RS 130 - 132**

Several metrics were identified as having potential to demonstrate library contributions to faculty research productivity. Ideas included, conducting an ROI study similar to that currently in process at the WSU Vancouver Library, examining the sources used in faculty grant awards, tracking the amount of instructor / librarian consultations in a given period, or the amount of interlibrary loans or other requested materials from faculty. Additionally, WORQS was identified as having potential to contain data that may demonstrate library impact on faculty productivity.

7. **Link Libraries to improved student retention and graduation rates ES 13, Research Agenda (RS 107 - 109**

Connecting results of local and national surveys (NSSE, BCSSE, NRSS, AAS, etc) to efforts of the Libraries can assist in demonstrating correlation between library value to retention and graduation rates of students. This variety of evidence is of particular interest to university administrators.

8. **Engage in higher education accreditation process ES 16, RAAL 54 – 55**

The report identifies the accreditation process as a major driver of institutional assessment efforts. Further, it suggests that accrediting agencies place a high value on information literacy.

A process of mapping and defining library relevance to academic programs with a particular focus on information literacy will assist in bringing clarity to library contributions.

**9. Create or adopt systems for assessment management ES 12, RAAL 45 – 46, WTDN 95**

The report identifies several assessment management systems available for use at the institution or library level (Weave ONLINE, TracDat, elumen, ILAT, etc). Assessment management systems are costly and typically, outcomes based. While the project-team sees potential in the future for exploration of assessment management systems, at present given the current financial situation of WSU, and lack of identified/stated library outcomes, it is not a high priority recommendation.

**10. Document and augment library advancement of student experiences, attitudes, and perceptions of quality ES 15, WTDN 95 – 98, RS 121 - 129**

Conduct a survey of recent graduates, upper division students, or students who have completed UCOLL 300 (formerly GenEd 300), that surveys perceptions on the impact the libraries had on their academic success as students, and in the workforce post-graduation.