Leveraging partnerships to assess library impact on undergraduate student learning via a longitudinal study

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Leveraging Partnerships to Assess Library Impact on Undergraduate Student Learning Via a Longitudinal Study.

Leslin H. Charles, Instructional Design Librarian

Question
Do McNair students retain research skills toward their ultimate goal of pursuing a doctoral degree?

Project Overview
- The Ronald E. McNair Post Baccalaureate Degree Achievement Program serves low-income, first-generation college students and students from groups historically under-represented in graduate education who aspire to obtain a doctoral degree.
- It is designed to prepare rising juniors (and some rising seniors) who have demonstrated academic potential, with the research and scholarship skills necessary for entry into doctoral studies.
- McNair students are tracked for 10 years after the undergraduate degree attainment.
- Library partnership occurs through instruction in:
  - Basics of Research Course - 3 weeks in the Spring
  - Research Proposal Course - 8 weeks in the Summer

Claims
McNair scholars who participate in the Basics of Research & Research Proposal courses...
- retain IL skills gained in the library courses
- while completing the undergraduate program
- while enrolled in a graduate program
- are agile in adapting to new information tools, services, & systems
- make & maintain connections with relevant subject librarians
- as undergraduates
- as graduates

Methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CS 1 of students indicate that the library instruction is a McNair Program strength that enables them to complete their research projects as undergraduates and graduates</td>
<td>Conduct a Literature Review</td>
<td>Using the correct databases and keywords to find relevant articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS 2 of students indicate that the library instruction is a McNair Program strength that enables them to complete their research projects as undergraduates and graduates</td>
<td>Create an annotated bibliography</td>
<td>Selecting the appropriate data set in my discipline and conducting a literature review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS 3 of students indicate that the library instruction is a McNair Program strength that enables them to complete their research projects as undergraduates and graduates</td>
<td>Conduct a Literature Review</td>
<td>Create an annotated bibliography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS 4 of students indicate that the library instruction is a McNair Program strength that enables them to complete their research projects as undergraduates and graduates</td>
<td>Evaluate the effectiveness of the library instruction</td>
<td>Create annotated bibliography and looking for relevant information from databases</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COHORT 2015</th>
<th>COHORT 2016</th>
<th>COHORT 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 14 Students</td>
<td>• 18 students</td>
<td>• 12 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 8 Grad Prep Survey Responses</td>
<td>• Post-Grad Survey: FALL 2017</td>
<td>• Grad Prep Survey: FALL 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Post-Grad Survey: FALL 2017</td>
<td>• Post-Grad Survey: FALL 2017</td>
<td>• Post-Grad Survey: FALL 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion & Conclusions
- In response to open-ended question it appears that students are comfortable with what they have learnt so metacognition is in progress
- Some seem to be conflating study skills with IL skills
- Students are retaining IL skills gained in the library courses
  - while completing the undergraduate program
  - while enrolled in a graduate program (to be determined in last 2 years of study)
- Students make and maintain connections with relevant subject librarians
  - as undergraduates: 4/5 (2015) indicate an increase and 10/12 (2016) indicate an increase in comfort level
  - as graduates (Next Steps: Grad survey)

Recommended Practices
- Seek partnerships outside of the libraries that have already defined assessment metrics
- Identify a group of students that you will have at least 2 interactions with
- Define the assessment strategy to determine library impact, including:
  - Align the learning outcomes, instructional tools/strategies, assessment/data collection
  - Possible IRB

Works Cited