



Assessment Committee

Assessment Cycle

Approved January 24th, 2008

Description:

Under the Client Centered Focus of the 2006 Libraries Strategic Plan, the Assessment Committee was charged with drafting an assessment cycle. The goal is to “improve the experiences of clients by fostering a culture of continual, assessment-based action and by actively promoting our services,” and the objective is to “implement continual assessment of client needs, and modify services to respond to those needs.”

The Libraries Assessment Cycle will assist in addressing the first clause of the objective by gathering and analyzing assessment data based on the cycle, and by providing it to decision-makers so it can be utilized in the invention and improvement of services. The Committee perceives itself as a data-gathering, analyzing, and dissemination mechanism within the organization, its implementation of assessment instruments being focused primarily on LibQUAL+ surveys with occasional supplements.

Assessment Cycle:

The Libraries Assessment Cycle will be comprised of a three year schedule centered and augmented by a triennial administration of the Association of Research Libraries survey instrument, LibQUAL+. LibQUAL+ enables the Libraries to assess its performance in relation to its peers, and focus any further evaluation on particularly unique aspects discovered in this benchmark instrument.

Schedule:

Year One

Spring

- *LibQUAL+ is administered*

Summer

- *Begin preliminary analysis of LibQUAL+ results*
Committee members should pay particular attention to comparing results to both past years' results and to either ARL averages for that

year or previous years' norms tables in order to establish a benchmark for analysis.

Fall

- *Produce overall report*
The committee shall update the LibQUAL+ webpage to include new results.
- *Identify areas for furthered analysis*
Using benchmarks, committee members shall identify unique or aberrant scores in order to conduct further quantitative and/or qualitative analysis. These could include particular user groups, disciplines, or dimensions of service within the instrument.
- *Begin further quantitative analysis*
Once the area is identified, committee should begin with in-depth analysis of the LibQUAL+ scores, comparing user groups, disciplines and dimensions in order to glean more insight into the area.

Year Two

Spring

- *Continue furthered quantitative analysis*
Exhausting LibQUAL+ data, the committee shall determine if gathering other quantitative data is desirable. Circulation, e-usage, reference, instruction, and other traditional output measures can be consulted, or the administration of targeted surveys and other instruments can be considered.

Summer – Fall

- *Begin furthered qualitative analysis*
Using the benchmarking and furthering of qualitative data as a guide, the committee shall determine if other qualitative data can be gathered. In-depth analysis of LibQUAL+ or webmaster comments, conducting focus groups or interviews, or working with appropriate departments to establish ties with campus entities, can be considered. Preference shall be given to gathering qualitative data from other sources, rather than producing it as a committee.

Year Three

Spring

- *Analyze results*
Using the qualitative and quantitative data, the committee shall begin to analyze and discuss how to disseminate the data to decision-makers within and/or without the Libraries. This could include reports, presentations, or both, delivered to Cabinet, Council, and other working groups, committees, or task forces.

Summer

- *Communicate results*
Preparing reports or presentations, the committee shall work with appropriate groups to communicate the assessment cycle's findings to appropriate stakeholders.
- *Prepare for next LibQUAL+ survey*
Considering the current cycle's findings and both present and future service initiatives, the committee shall assist the Public Services office in preparing the next iteration of LibQUAL+. In each cycle, it is appropriate for the committee to evaluate the results of the previous cycle, and determine new issues to address.

Conclusion:

Using a triennial cycle of assessment centered on a recognized, standard instrument, the Libraries can assess their performance against peers, identify unique challenges or opportunities, and further analyze performance with respect to the Libraries uniqueness. The cycle envisions the Assessment Committee as the primary arbiter of data gathering and analysis in this regard, but not as the primary creator of the data. The committee is encouraged to work with other stakeholders, who are in most cases already creating the data, to triangulate and provide analytical context to it. The role of the cycle is to provide the committee with a structure by which they can gather and disseminate data to decision-makers, who can thereby act on assessment data in their planning and implementations of new or existing services. By providing contextual assessment data to faculty and staff within the Libraries, the Committee believes it will fulfill its Strategic Plan mandate and its charge as a committee.

The Libraries Assessment Cycle:

