Better Beginnings: The Link between a Library Skills Class and Student Success Rates

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BETTER BEGINNINGS: The link between a library skills class and student success rates

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• Part of the University System of Georgia
  – Fall under the USG Board of Regents
    • Shared core curriculum
    • Easy to transfer within state
    • Push to increase RPG rates

• Robust tier
  – Master’s + PhD programs
  – Undergraduate research

• Full Time Enrollment:
  – 5800 in 1999 to 8300 in 2008 to about 11,000 in 2011
LIBR 1101

- developed as elective credit course
  - 1 credit hour for 1 quarter (10 weeks)
- In Fall 1998, entered UWG’s Core Area B
  - 2 credit hours for 1 semester (15 weeks)

- taught by Instruction Services librarians
  - has been taught by adjuncts and tech services

• Students will:
  – understand intellectual org of info sources and the consequences of that org in accessing info
  – identify functional areas of the library and understand their significance in research process
  – recognize various types of info source and the appropriate use of the different types of info sources
  – access, evaluate, and select research materials
  – learn how to record and store information
  – learn the principles of proper documentation
  – principles and techniques of e-communication via internet
  – competent in the use of Ingram Library and its resources
Learning Outcomes (2008-now)

• Students will be able to:
  – Analyze and articulate the info need and identify appropriate sources of info to meet that need.
  – Understand the intellectual org of information sources and apply that understanding in accessing information.
  – Effectively and efficiently access, evaluate, select and use needed information.
  – Demonstrate an understanding of the economic, legal and social issues surrounding the use of information.
  – Identify functional areas of a library (both physical and virtual) and demonstrate their relationship to the research process.
  – Create a research product that incorporates appropriate information and research methodology.
Populations

• Based on Board of Regent’s measures

First Time, Full Time Freshman

LIBR 1101

Made ABC in class

No LIBR 1101

Made DFW or other
Populations

• We did not consider:
  – non-traditional or returning students
  – part-time students
  – students who began in spring or summer semesters
  – students who transferred to UWG
## Populations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total FTFT students</th>
<th>Students who took LIBR 1101</th>
<th>Students who made an ABC</th>
<th># of Sections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>1598</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>7 f2f, 3 online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1657</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>7 f2f, 7 online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>1557</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>4 f2f, 19 online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>1625</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>2 f2f, 27 online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>1728</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>0 f2f, 32 online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>1701</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>2 f2f, 28 online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1653</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>4 f2f, 17 online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>1700</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>2 f2f, 16 online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,219</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,628</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,815</strong></td>
<td><strong>28 f2f, 149 online</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Delivery Methods of Class

- 1999: 70% Online, 30% F-2-F
- 2000: 40% Online, 60% F-2-F
- 2001: 30% Online, 70% F-2-F
- 2002: 20% Online, 80% F-2-F
- 2003: 10% Online, 90% F-2-F
- 2004: 10% Online, 90% F-2-F
- 2005: 10% Online, 90% F-2-F
- 2006: 10% Online, 90% F-2-F
Graduation Rates – 5 year

All FTFT
No Class
Class
Class-ABC
Class-Other
Graduation Rates Significance Tests

- Pearson Chi-Square Test for Independence
- At the 5% level of significance,
  - taking LIBR 1101 and graduating in 4 years are not independent 7 out of 8 years
  - taking LIBR 1101 and graduating in 5 years are not independent 7 out of 7 years
  - taking LIBR 1101 and graduating in 6 years are not independent 6 out of 6 years
Prediction Tests

• Course is self-selected.
• Based on standard predictors for student success, would researchers expect that LIBR 1101 students to fare better?
High School GPAs

1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006

All FTFT
No Class
Class
Class-ABC
Class-Other
Predictor Significance Tests

• One tailed z-test
• At the 5% level of significance,
  – LIBR 1101 students did not score higher on the SATM, SATV, and ACT tests 8 out of 8 years.
  – LIBR 1101 students did score higher HS GPAs 5 out of 8 years than students not in the class.
College Graduation GPAs

Includes all graduates from each class as of Summer 2010 (4432 total)
Graduation GPA Significance Tests

- Considers only 4432 students who started in 1999 – 2006 and graduated by Summer 2010
- One tailed z-test
- At the 5% level of significance,
  - LIBR 1101 students averaged significantly lower graduation GPAs 3 out of 8 years than students not in the class.
Lower GPAs? Not really

- **Average HS GPA:**
  - Students with LIBR 1101: 3.01
  - Students without LIBR 1101: 2.96

- **Average Graduation GPA:**
  - Students with LIBR 1101: 3.03
  - Students without LIBR 1101: 3.09

- **Graduation Rates:**
  - Students with LIBR 1101: **1429** of **2628** (54%)
  - Students without LIBR 1101: **3003** of **10591** (28%)
## Total Graduation Rates

Students who started between 1999 and 2006 and graduated by Summer 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>No class</th>
<th>No class Grad</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Class Grad</th>
<th>Class-ABC</th>
<th>ABC Grad</th>
<th>Class-Other</th>
<th>Other Grad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10591</td>
<td>3003</td>
<td>2628</td>
<td>1429</td>
<td>1815</td>
<td>1155</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Graduation Rate</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td></td>
<td>64%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Graduate GPA</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions

• There is a significant correlation between the students who took the course and student graduation rates.
• This correlation is even stronger for students who passed the course.
• To pass the course, students must be able to demonstrate the basics tenets of academic research and information literacy.
• BUT! Correlation ≠ Causation
Suggestions for further study

• Supplemental qualitative studies
• Effects of class on specific students
• Online versus face-to-face sections
• Normalize for other contributing factors
  – gender, first gen students, HS GPAs, etc.
• Similar studies for effects on one-shots
  – Sections with BI sessions, sections without BI
• Look at grades in ENGL, major courses
Further Reading

• “What Are They Learning? Pre- And Post-Assessment Surveys for LIBR 1100, Introduction to Library Research.” *College & Research Libraries* March 2010

• “Assessment of The Lasting Effects of a Stand-Alone Information Literacy Course: the student perspectives.” *Journal Of Academic Librarianship* July 2011
Data-based Library RPG Studies

• “The Academic Library Impact on Student Persistence.” *College and Research Libraries* March 2011

• “Measuring Association between Library Instruction and Graduation GPA” *College and Research Libraries* September 2011

• “First-Year Programs and Information Literacy” sc.edu/fye/events/presentation/annual/2008/download/184-CI.ppt
Questions?

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