LIBRARY
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Library Impact on Student Research and Learning: Summary Report 2010-2017

A Summary Report of Library Assessment
September 2017

Relates to: Bicentennial Strategic Plan (Imp. 5, Obj. 5); 2016-2017 PTS Action Plan
(Initiative 2; High Priority Items); Library Strategic Plan (Goal 1.1; 2.1; 2.2;
4.1).

Library mission statement: The Princeton Theological Seminary Library
strengthens teaching, inspires learning, broadens access, fosters
research, embraces change, and advances and preserves knowledge.

Artifacts/data: Graduating Students Survey (annual)
Focus groups (2014 Ph.D.s; 2015 M.Div.s; 2017 Ph.D.s)
LibQUAL+ survey (2011, 2014)
Library issued student surveys (2010-2016)
Information literacy workshop surveys (various topics; 2016-2018)
Citation Analysis Study (four-year study, 2013-2016)
Information literacy elements in course final project rubrics (new 2017)

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Library Impact on Student Research and Learning

Princeton Theological Seminary Library pursued several avenues to find appropriate evidence of
library impact on student research and learning. This report will summarize several library
efforts to draw direct and indirect correlations between library services and collections and
student research and learning outcomes during the period 2010-2017.

Surveys and Focus Groups (2010-2017)

The library has used a variety of surveys and focus groups to gather student feedback about the
library's impact on their educational experience and information literacy skill development.
Following is a brief outline of the surveys and focus groups, and a summary of the major
findings of each. In instances where the library responded to specific student survey and focus
group responses by creating or modifying a library service, policy, or resource, that change has
been noted (evidence-based decision making). While not all of the changes enacted by the

library from these responses can draw a direct link with student outcomes and success, the library believes that providing evidence that the library is a responsive, patron-focused organization ultimately supports student success broadly.

- Graduating Students Survey (annually, 2007-2011)
  - *Major finding*: Graduating students reflecting back on their academic experience report high levels of satisfaction with the library's collections.
  - *Key data*: 428 student responses about their level of satisfaction with the "Adequacy of library collection." Over 4 years of surveys, students rated the library an average of 4.6 on a scale of 1 ("very dissatisfied") to 5 ("very satisfied"). The library is one of three areas consistently receiving scores of 4 ("satisfied") or higher.

- Student focus groups (2014 Ph.D.s; 2015 M.Div.s; 2017 Ph.D.s)
  - *Major finding*: Both masters and doctoral students find the library a rich and hospitable physical and digital space in which to conduct their research, collaborate with others, and learn new skills.
  - *Key data*: 24 student focus group participant comments across 3 focus groups.
  - *Evidence-based changes*: Improved communication about services and resources; modified library hours; installation of a lactation room in the library; improvement of online recall procedures for M.Div.s.

- LibQUAL+ survey (2011; 2014)
  - *Major finding*: LibQUAL+ survey confirms that student and faculty patrons find the library providing very satisfactory to above average service in the three areas of the survey's focus: library service, access to information, and the library as place.
  - *Key data*: Overall average library satisfaction scores of 7.47 (out of 9) in 2014 and 6.95 (out of 9) in 2011. A wide array of other detailed data points is available in the full survey reports.
  - *Evidence-based changes*: The 2011 report resulted in several concrete changes, including: library website redesign, expanded electronic resources, and library space considerations for the new library building. The 2014 report also resulted in several concrete changes, including: implementation of the Summon Discovery tool, expanded digital and print collections, extended library hours, improved building signage, refined library space use policies, and the installation of updated microform readers.

- Library issued student surveys (2010-2016; various topics)
  - *Major finding*: The library is responsive to direct student feedback on service and collection issues raised over the year, and attentive to student interests and concerns with emerging areas such as digital humanities and mobile technologies.

- *Key data*: 391 student respondents across 4 surveys over the years 2010-2016 on topics that included digital scholarship, mobile technologies, research practices, e-book reading habits, library space, library services, collections and resources.
    - *Evidence-based changes*: Over the years, several library improvements were driven or supported by student survey responses, including: expanded database and digital newspaper access, updated Blackboard interface, and increased library workshop offerings.

- Information literacy workshop surveys (2016-2018)
    - *Major finding*: Students find topical library workshops relevant to their academic success.
    - *Key data*: A total average of 95.4% of workshop participants reported that they "developed new skills or learned about a new resource in today's workshop that I can directly incorporate in my academic research."
    - *Evidence-based change*: The library will continue with workshop surveys, but customize them for each workshop going forward in the AY 2017-18.

Citation Analysis (2013-2016)

This four-year research study demonstrated two important themes: first, evidence that the library's collections directly and richly support doctoral student work; and second, evidence that student resource usage in theology and religion is still heavily book and journal centric. In brief, this study demonstrates that the library's collections do support advanced research in theology and religion. For full details, please see the "Citation Analysis as Lens on Collections and Community" report at https://library.ptsem.edu/content/documents/Citation-Analysis_2013-2016.pdf.

Rubrics (2017 to present)

In the 2017-18 academic year, the Library made important strides forward in demonstrating library impact and student outcomes. The Library partnered with Associate Dean for Planning and Assessment Dr. Shawn Oliver, Professor of Reformation Studies and the History of Worship Dr. Elsie McKee to pilot the incorporation of a jointly designed new information literacy-related element into the final project grading rubric for one course: CH3315 Theology of John Calvin.

This new effort is designed to focus on courses that have a "library intensive" experience incorporated into their syllabi. That is, courses that invite a librarian into their classroom—or come to the library--for a tailored instructional research session (relevant resources, constructing successful search strategies, etc.). Librarians work with the faculty member and the Associate Dean for Planning and Assessment to shape an appropriate information literacy element for that course's final project assessment rubric, based on the course objectives.

Example:

Library Characteristics Evaluated – Final Paper/Project
Fall 2017
CH3315 Theology of John Calvin
Dr. Elsie McKee

Course objectives: The primary objective of the course is to enable students to understand the rich and complex coherence of Calvin's theological-pastoral activity by introducing them to a reasonably comprehensive range of his writings. Given the prerequisite, it is assumed that most students will have encountered Calvin 1559 Institutes. Although he is often remembered as a man of one book, Calvin was actually as much interested in exegetical writings, especially commentaries, as in "systematic" ones. He was also a full time pastor and theological teacher from the age of 27, and these aspects of his thought strongly influenced his theology as well.

Student Learning Outcomes: At the end of the course each student will be able
    1) to identify and distinguish various genres of theological writings (here Calvin's in particular) and explain how each is to be interpreted; and to grasp core theological teachings in their historical context (i.e., what the language meant to the original writer and audience, what the occasion for the text was and how it should be interpreted historically); [Cf. M.Div. 1, 2; MACEF 1, 2; MATS 1; Th.M. 1]
    2) to identify crucial aspects of the church's faith and practice at a specific time in history as a conversation partner in analyzing contemporary church life, and so to make responsible use of Calvin's teaching in writing, preaching, teaching, and ministry in the twenty-first century. [Cf. M.Div. 3; MACEF 3; Th.M. 3]
    The information at the end of each outcome connects the course outcomes to a particular degree program and learning goal[s]. *PTS Learning Goals*

LIBRARY CHARACTERISTIC EVALUATED: The student demonstrated skill in using relevant resources (books, databases, journals, other) to successfully locate primary and secondary material related to Calvin's theological-pastoral activity.

Please select only one method of evaluation below—descriptive ("exceeds") or numerical (4, 3, 2, 1).

For each student, place one "tick/hash sign" in the box that best describes whether the student exceeded, met, or did not meet the library characteristic.

Exceeds	Meets	Does Not Meet	

On a scale of 1 to 4, rate each student's performance on the library characteristic with 1 being lowest and 4 being highest. Place an (X) in the appropriate box.

4	3	2	1

It is anticipated that an additional two courses with "library intensive" experiences will be selected in the Spring 2018 semester. At the end of the 2017-18 academic year, the Library will issue a report on the findings of this pilot endeavor.

Conclusion

The library has obtained a set of mostly indirect evidence of positive impact on student learning and outcomes over the last seven years, using a variety of instruments and methodologies to stay in communication with one of its core patron groups. The library has demonstrated its commitment to continually improving feedback and monitoring of student research needs, as well as its commitment to patron-centered approaches to managing library services, resources, and spaces.

The library's assessment efforts in relation to impacts on student research and learning are evolving and, with the move to work with faculty to incorporate an information literacy element directly into select course assessment rubrics, is becoming more sophisticated and integrated in overall campus student outcomes assessment.