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**2015-2016 LIBRARY  
ASSESSMENT:  
CONTRIBUTIONS OF CSU  
LIBRARIES TO STUDENT  
SUCCESS**

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OCTOBER 24, 2016  
CSU LIBRARIES  
Columbus State University

## Executive Summary

This report is the result of a comprehensive assessment of library services at Columbus State University and focuses on student perception of the library and its impact on learning outcomes. It also presents a current view of library services that are currently offered to the Columbus State community.

It has been ten years since CSU Libraries has conducted a comprehensive assessment. Since that time, the library underwent major changes that included building of the mezzanine, renovation of the first floor and basement areas to make room for more student seating, and expanded hours during the week to 2 am. The Schwob Library on the main campus now offers flexible seating for up to 850 students. Students can choose between collaborative work areas on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor as well as “quiet” study space on the second and third floors. In addition to the furnishings, Schwob Library now offers a full service coffee shop. Technology has also been greatly expanded during this time period with wireless (WiFi) Internet access in all areas and over 148 computers including laptops and other mobile computing devices. Portable whiteboards provide students with excellent opportunities for creative collaboration and the library has greatly expanded access to online resources such as electronic journals and eBooks.

Students have responded well to these changes with now over 444,869 visits per year and growing or approximately 10,000 visits a week. In addition, students and faculty have 24/7 access to the online resources of CSU Libraries and in the last year conducted over 6 million searches of licensed resources. Outside of class times there are no other programs of service at Columbus State with this level of student and faculty engagement on a daily basis.

First and foremost, however, CSU Libraries is about teaching. Through formal instruction (LIBR 1105) and classroom appearances by way of “Bibliographic Instruction” the librarians at CSU have provided instruction in library research methods to 12% of the undergraduates enrolled at CSU.

For this study, a mixed-methods approach was used to explore library users’ attitudes and patterns of behavior linked to student success and faculty/staff professional development. The assessment was conducted in two phases. Phase 1 involved a survey (quantitative approach). Phase 2 of the study involved conducting in-depth focus-group interviews which were very helpful in clarifying the results of the survey. A total of 625 respondents completed the survey and participated in the focus groups. This sample is representative of the total CSU community.

What are the students at Columbus State saying about the impact of library services on their academic success? The following are highlights from the study’s findings. But the full report offers much more information.

Most students (89%) use the library on the main campus. The majority of students (67%) prefer to use the library in person – even when using online resources.

The majority of student respondents (79%) agree that the library has influenced their learning activities in a positive way.

The study found that certain types of library activities specifically impact student achievement. The activities that ranked most high are the ability to locate resources (86%); the ability to gather information ethically to avoid plagiarism (83%); the ability to write a successful research assignment/paper (83%) and the ability to earn better grades on research assignments (81%). Overall 84% of student respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the library services they used.

Further, data collected by the CSU Office of Institutional Research shows that graduation success rates of student who completed LIBR 1105 are higher than the general population of students who have chosen not to take the library research methods course (57% vs. 28%).

The focus-group data agree with these observations with the following typical comments:

“The librarians are a really good source to go to when you get stuck on finding what you need...” and “You look back and you say, wow, if I had taken this [course] in the beginning I’d have such great papers.”

Students also made comments on things they did not like such as the noise level in Schwob Library and other limitations of our facilities:

“Need more study rooms! Sometimes I want to be in a study room but I can’t because they are all full.”

In Schwob Library...”it’s a lot louder downstairs than it is upstairs. The second floor is hardly ever quiet.”

“Schwob Music Library does not have enough areas to chill/study with friends. There is only one small room.”

The Music Library “is very small...it kind of feels like we know we don’t belong in here because I’m not a music major.”

The following are recommendations for improvement of library services resulting from the study:

**Library instruction:** CSU Libraries will continue to seek ways to offer more sections of the LIBR 1105 course within the limited resources available. CSU Libraries will continue to promote on demand “Bibliographic Instruction” but also expand availability of instruction sessions to graduate level courses.

**Library Collections:** there is a need to improve funding for print books that are not available online. Dollars for print monographs have declined as collection budget resources have not kept