Mission: Using words, numbers, and imagery the Assessment and Communication Department (A&C) helps users, staff, and other stakeholders to understand the Library and the external environment. Its focus is two-fold: to create, assemble, and analyze data to report on library performance and provide evidence and context for priority-setting and decision-making. It raises the Library's visibility and promotes the collections, programs, services, and expert staff to multiple audiences both on- and off-campus. (more)

STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR NEEDS

CUL unit/department directors and committee/task force chairs need:

- Assessment of their collections, services, spaces, operations including usage, user needs, user behaviors, user satisfaction, cost and benefits, impact on users including learning outcomes, benchmark against other CUL units, benchmark against peers.
- Assessing their progress towards goals and strategic plan priorities.
- Being enabled to do self-assessment for all projects and services.

AULs and UL need:

- Assessing staff culture and staff satisfaction
- Rankings, peer comparisons
- Supporting funding, reaccreditation
- Fundraising - making the case, telling the story (impact)
- Promoting the library
- Assessing partnerships
- User trends, needs, satisfaction for priority setting
- Annual updates for academic deans

Colleges and faculty need:

- Updates from the Library – how CUL improves faculty and student lives, usage patterns, new collections, impact on college/department, partnerships, etc.

Provost, Alumni Affairs and Development, Trustees need:
• Main national and international library trends
• Rankings
• Information for faculty recruitment and orientation
• Library information for new trustee briefing book
• Impact on Cornellians
• Major input/output data
• Knowing that we assess learning outcomes per Middle States reaccreditation criteria

National associations and agencies need:
• Input and output measures

**THE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM: A BALANCE OF CYCLICAL AND ONE-TIME ACTIVITIES**

Ongoing and repeat needs of our stakeholders are best satisfied through ongoing and repeat assessment activities. E.g.: the annual data collection and working with Cornell’s Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) to fold our questions into the university-wide surveys.

Assessment, however, cannot be complete without one-time projects to inform decision-makers as they confront specific questions. It is appropriate to allot a significant amount of time for ad hoc, non-cyclical projects, to be nimble and responsive to the specific and often changing needs of different units and working teams and the library as a whole. Examples include surveys related to space use and soliciting the faculty’s views on new directions for Rare Books and Manuscripts.

There are needs, however, that can be anticipated and planned for through centrally conducted one-time projects that, in some cases, can pave the way for cyclical assessment activities in the future. It is mostly this segment of our work that this Assessment Plan addresses (#3 below.)

Judging both from past experience and what we know about the upcoming couple of years we anticipate a roughly one third/one third/one third proportion between:

1) already established repeat activities, such as the annual data collection
2) ad hoc projects that respond nimbly to current need or take advantage of emergent possibilities
3) planned activities most of which will become part of cyclical activities in the future

**PLANNED ACTIVITIES** [most of which will become part of cyclical activities in the future]

1. Broad-based library-focused user survey to fill need for data on user needs, user satisfaction, library impact, user awareness of specific services, perceived level of library performance and importance to users
TARGET: FALL 2014 FOR FACULTY, FALL 2015 FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

DELIVERABLE: REPORT OF FINDINGS

PROCESS:

- Investigate new LibQual Lite to evaluate burden on respondents and increase response rate
- Work with stakeholders to identify major areas to probe including satisfaction, needs, self-reported impact, awareness, behavior etc. and priority of audiences
  - E.g.: library impact, awareness of liaison program, awareness of scholarly communication issues, what prompts them to talk to staff, use of print vs. electronic with great demographic granularity, are they happy with students’ info literacy skills, needs for digital services such as digitization and web site design, delivery mechanisms, publishing – do they expect these from the Library, what benefits faculty seek when putting their stuff into repositories, less about existing services than what would help their research
- Decide between LibQual Lite and homegrown instrument
- Develop instrument, plan deployment (work with or consult with Survey Research Institute as appropriate) might consider separate track for new members of the audience such as new faculty
- Deploy survey
- Analyze and report data, benchmark against peers if possible
- Compare to similar national data if possible
- Check back with stakeholders on utility of data
- If follow-up conversations are needed liaisons could engage their departments
- Decide on ongoing timeline and improve process for next cycle

2. Work with Consortium of Financing Higher Education (COFHE) institutions and Cornell’s Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) on updating Library questions in institutional surveys to fill need for longitudinal data on library impact and how the library fits into the lives of undergrads.

TARGET: 2013/2014

DELIVERABLE: UPDATED LIBRARY QUESTIONS ON PULSE SURVEY OF 2015, IDEALLY PEER COMPARISON DATA FOR BOTH PULSE AND SENIOR SURVEY QUESTIONS

PROCESS:

- Consult with CUL stakeholders to identify major areas to probe
- Put together COFHE librarians’ interest group to come up with recommended questions
- Work with IRP to incorporate questions
- Check back with stakeholders on utility of data
3. Work with team leaders to develop assessment measures for the five next CUL goals to fill need for assessing progress towards goals

TARGET: 2013/2014

DELIVERABLE: METRICS FOR FIVE NEXT GOALS

PROCESS:

- Consider key performance indicators (KPIs) in a balanced scorecard format
- Identify major measures and data collection interval and process
- Consider what could be done to track ‘lessening the load and preparing for the future’

4. Work with others to ensure the availability of more meaningful online usage data to fill the need of understanding user behavior in the online environment

TARGET: ONGOING

DELIVERABLE: COLLEGE-SPECIFIC USAGE DATA FOR MAJOR LICENSED RESOURCES

PROCESS:

- Participate in future cross-unit and cross-departmental team to represent bigger picture data needs in this effort

5. Develop short and simple ‘annual update’ reports for schools and colleges to showcase to academic units the role and contributions of the Library

TARGET: SPRING 2014

DELIVERABLE: ‘ANNUAL UPDATE’ REPORTS FOR EACH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

PROCESS:

- Identify relevant data elements (qualitative and quantitative) to include
- Secure new data as needed
- Work with unit heads and Communication to present the full story of library value and appropriate template/format – no more than one page, use of visuals preferred. Include 1-2 related national trends (e.g. from Pew report), include use of central services and other library units

6. Curriculum mapping as part of assessing CUL’s instruction program to provide a basis for focused outreach to faculty
TARGET: SUMMER/FALL 2013

DELIVERABLE: GENERAL SUMMARY OF FINDINGS TO cu-lib AND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION TO UNIT LIBRARIES

PROCESS:

- Analyze CountIt data about what courses our instruction sessions reach against Registrar data about available courses and course enrollment figures. Data will help identify the best opportunities for outreach efforts to promote library instruction.

7. Assist Instruction Committee with program-wide learning outcomes assessment to improve instruction efforts and demonstrate outcomes based assessment

TARGET: SPRING/FALL 2014

DELIVERABLE: WEB-BASED EXAMPLES AND TOOLS FOR INSTRUCTION LIBRARIANS

PROCESS:

- Work with assessment subgroup of the Instruction Committee

8. Second CUL ClimateQual to assess changes in staff culture, climate and satisfaction; to provide insights to the to-be hired key leaders

TARGET: FALL 2013

DELIVERABLE: REPORT OF FINDINGS

PROCESS:

- Sign up with ARL
- Put together timeline
- Work with MC once timeline is available
- Work with HR to provide staff info to ARL
- Publicize to staff, provide answers
- Work with ARL on analysis
- Digest report for All Staff Meeting and CU-Lib
- Make public report available to staff
- Assist HR as needed with interpreting department level data
9. Organize assessment output for access and archival needs to make our reports more readily available for CUL staff.

TARGET: 2013

DELIVERABLE: ANNOUNCE USER-FRIENDLY WAY TO FIND RAU REPORTS TO CU-LIB

PROCESS:

- Investigate platform options
- Investigate Confluence macros for automatically building indexes of attachments
- Set up needed access levels (world, CU, CUL, CUL admin)
- Move/link to all relevant reports
- Announce to CU-Lib

AD HOC PROJECTS ALREADY REQUESTED [ad hoc projects that respond nimbly to current needs or take advantage of emergent possibilities]

How to communicate with students

Assess the satisfaction of researchers with 2CUL shared librarians

Investigate carrel use in Olin

Investigate locker use in Olin and Uris

2CUL-related assessment

CONSCIOUS OMISSION: CORRELATING LIBRARY USE WITH ACADEMIC SUCCESS

In the past couple of years or so ARL and some ARL libraries have been promoting the study of correlations between library use and some surrogate of student or faculty success (such as GPA or grants awarded) as a way to definitively prove to senior administrators the library's role in academic success. We have considered these studies and discussed them with colleagues and statistics experts. We made the conscious decision to not try to replicate them at Cornell. Our main concern is the huge number of variables that would cloud the picture and that such a study would lead to misinterpretations and open up many more questions than it would answer.