Assessment of library instruction within General Education learning outcomes and Academic Support programs: determining impact on student research skills, confidence and retention

Research Question: What impact does information literacy instruction for first-year students have on research skills, confidence and retention?

SUMMARY: Sample student artifacts in two freshmen courses were assessed in Fall 2013. Change in bibliography quality was assessed in one course and library confidence and perceptions were assessed in the other. Retention data will be analyzed after the Fall 2014 semester begins.

Course #1: ISEM 101, Bibliography Analysis

METHODS
- Integrated Seminars (ISEM) 101, thematic courses for first year students, Fall 2013
- 27 sections total, 5 included in assessment
- Essay #1: To establish baseline rating of students’ level of competency of learning outcomes, ISEM students reacted to the university’s “common read” book in a 1200 word essay, with bibliography. Sample size: 95
- Essays were rated by a team of faculty after norming session using a UI adaptation of the AACU VALUE rubrics, as well as a library-developed bibliography rubric.
- Library instruction sessions and an online research guide provided students in sample sections with resources and skills for class assignment research.
- Essay #2: End-of-the-semester essay on topics related to the particular seminar. Sample size: 42
- Faculty team rated the end-of-the-semester essays using the same rubrics.

ISEM101 Essay and Bibliography RESULTS

The Question of Retention: Research In Progress

- Research data on retention cannot be obtained until Fall 2014, since that data is compared fall to fall.
- Retention for Fall 2014 sections with library instruction will be compared with control (no instruction) from Fall 2013.
- Soria, Fransen and Nackerud, 2014, showed library use in the first semester was associated with higher GPAs and retention.
- First year seminars are listed as one of the top 3 interventions for retention in the 2010 survey "What works in Student Retention?"
- Sanabria, 2013, showed an association with collaboration of librarians in first-year experience courses and retention
- When completed, it is hoped that this research will show increased retention in sections of first-year courses with library instruction, adding to the body of research associating library instruction with academic success.

Course #2: INTR101, Student Perceptions

- INTR101 “College Success” classes, Fall 2013
- Courses for students to improve study skills
- Some sections for identified groups (such as special needs or ethnicity), others mixed.
- Sample size: 10 sections, 86 responses
- Students came for a one-shot “self-guided tour”, done in small groups.
- No research assignment

METHODS
- Pre- and post-session surveys explored perceptions of the library and confidence in using the library
- Students rated confidence on a numeric scale.
- Comments were grouped by theme and positive/negative feelings.

INTR 101 RESULTS

INTR Sample perceptions of the library, pre-survey

INTR Sample perceptions of the library, POST-survey

Discussion and Conclusion

- Results in Course #1 show growth in essay writing and bibliographies.
- Results in Course #2 show increased confidence and positive perceptions regarding the library and library use.
- Studies found in the literature and preliminary results of this research imply a positive indication for the effect of library instruction on retention.
- Although retention data requires further analysis, the collaboration with General Education on assessment and the integration of library instruction into general education and student services, puts the UI library in a strong position to continue pursuing this research question and to improve assessment of student learning across campus.

Rubrics, surveys, full bibliography and more information are available at
http://libguides.uidaho.edu/AiAidaho

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