Action Research: Reference & Mixed Methods

Campus Priority: Student Success

Step 1: Outcome	The library's embedded peer reference assistance (PRA) program positively impacts residential freshmen and sophomore students' academic success and confidence.
Step 2: Criteria	1. Students who use the PRA at least one time report a 30% increase in confidence. 2. When students who used PRA as asked what library services helped them, 50% cite PRA. 3. 85% of first-year students who used PRA 3-5 times over last academic year were retained into sophomore year.
Step 3: Actions	Provide regular peer reference assistance embedded in residential halls during critical study hours.
Step 4: Evidence	Host two web-based surveys that students complete pre and post a PRA session. Use the survey to seek permission from students to track against retention data. Conduct end-of-year focus groups with first-year students who used PRA with discussion centered on the library services they had used and found helpful. Code the transcripts with two other librarians for expressions of confidence and count mentions of PRA as a named helpful service. Work with Institutional Research to access and use institutional data on retention for consenting students.
Step 5: Analysis	30% of students reported increase confidence, but only 40% named PRA specifically as a helpful service. Retention analysis was interesting: gender and incoming GPA influence whether the 85% threshold is met.
Step 6: Planning	Results show that PRA is doing a good job in supporting student success, but other services may be more valued. Consider how to increase its impact. Need to train peers more intentionally on support to different demographics of students.

Action Research: InfoLit & Mixed Methods

Campus Priority: Student Success

Step 1: Outcome	Student participation in first-year course-integrated library experiences positively impacts academic success (performance and self-efficacy) in those courses.
Step 2: Criteria	1. Bibliographies will increase 30% in judged quality from pre to post instruction. 2. Student reflective journal entries show 80% increase in confidence from pre to post instruction.
Step 3: Actions	Provide information literacy instruction and embedded librarians for 1st year courses that contain research components as part of the standard curricula. Use annotated bibliography assignments, each accompanied by a reflection essay.
Step 4: Evidence	Faculty team (which includes librarians) uses adapted AACU VALUE rubric to rate pre & post instruction essays & bibliographies from five sections of a common course. Teaching faculty collect pre & post 1-page reflection essays from the same five sections and share them with librarians for qualitative coding.
Step 5: Analysis	Engaged Institutional Research assistance with analysis. Mean bibliography ratings rose from 1.73 to 2.5 (+ strong inter-reader reliability). Two librarians coded reflection essays using grounded-theory approach. Also consulted with IR on coding practices.
Step 6: Planning	What we are doing is working well so we will keep doing it with existing courses and reach out to new courses with these results. This initial assessment round has led to library instruction formally incorporated into Gen Ed learning outcomes assessment plan.

Action Research: Space & Quantitative Methods

Campus Priorities: Student Engagement & Student Success

Step 1: Outcome	Student use of library space for academic work positively impacts first-year students' success in their courses.
Step 2: Criteria	1. 50% of first-year students indicate that library facilities enhance their ability to study and complete their readings & assignments. 2. Positive correlation demonstrated between GPAs of first-year students and reported time per week spent in the library.
Step 3: Actions	Provide adequate, comfortable, equipped space at relevant times for students to use for studying and for completing course readings and assignments.
Step 4: Evidence	Developed and delivered survey to students at end of their first year: goal is to establish the time students spend in the library completing academic work and to gauge extent to which students believe using library spaces contributes to success in their courses. Librarians and IR Office collaborate to compile and analyze grades of those students in relation to reported time spent on work in library per week.
Step 5: Analysis	Exceeded 50% threshold of students indicating library space enhances their academic success. But cross-tabulation reveals particular demographics below that threshold. Results also indicate a strong correlations between GPA and time spent on work in library per week.
Step 6: Planning	What we are doing is working well so we will keep doing it, but we will examine reasons why certain demographics not using space and developed targeted strategies in response.