# Assessment at the Library: Evidence Based Change

## Katie Bishop

Director of Research & Instruction Services
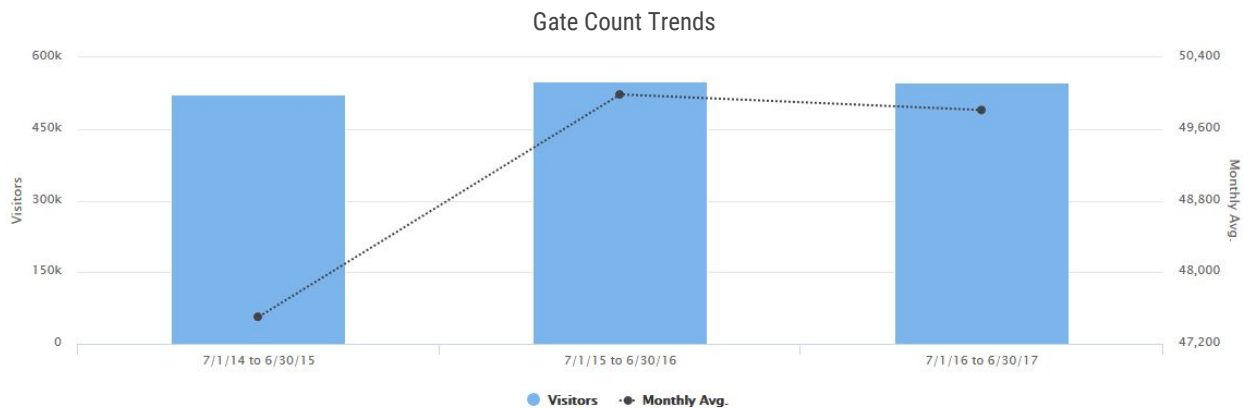kbishop@unomaha.edu

**UNO LIBRARIES**

# Traditional Metrics

- Gate counts
- Desk transactions
- Circulation statistics
- Collection totals
- E-resource downloads
- Budget numbers
- Staff size

# Gate Counts



Gate Count Trends

Here is an example of our gate count trends for the last three years. Gate counts are generally flat or declining, however the Milo Bail Student Center closed for renovations in May 2015 giving the library's gate count a boost. We were able to keep many of those visitors after MBSC re-opened. This may suggest that we are providing the types of study spaces and services that keep visitors returning.

# Circulation

## Total Count
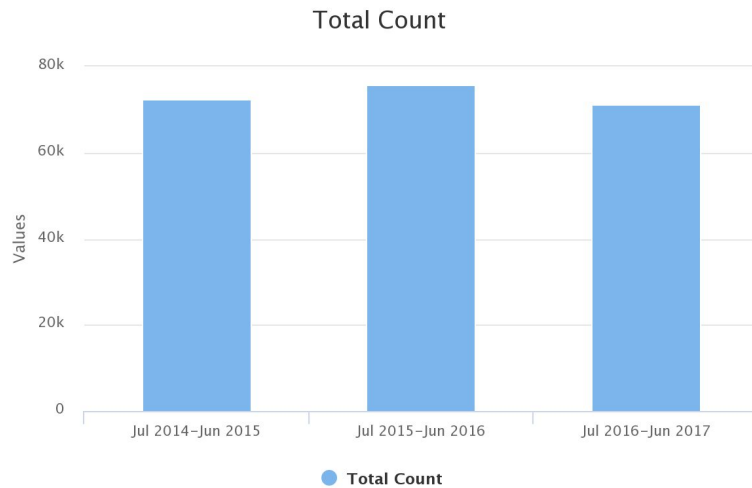


Looks like circulation is up or at least flat, but is it? This slide doesn't tell the entire story.

# Circulation

## Books
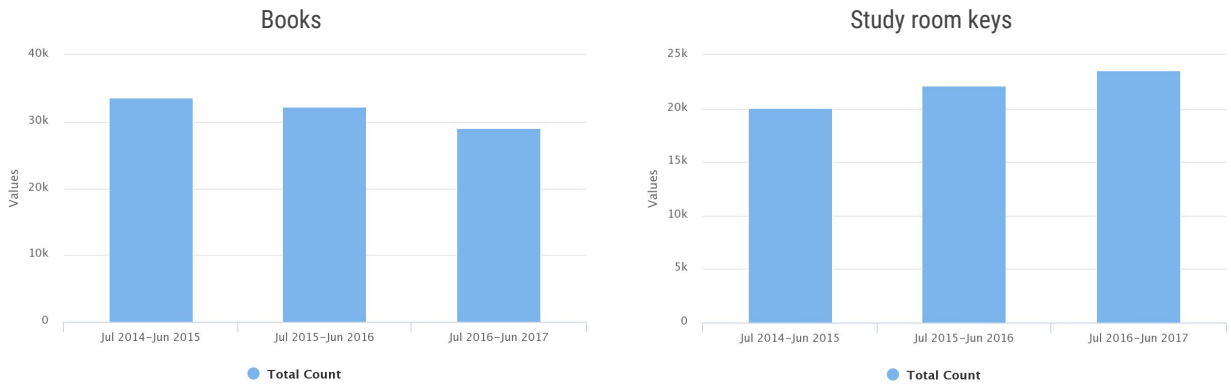


## Study room keys



Here is an example of book circulation vs. study room key circulation. Books are clearly down and study room keys are clearly up.

These stats demonstrate that the library should be spending less on books and more to improve study rooms. This year we implemented Solstice Pods so students can connect their devices to the monitors in the study rooms. We also added MavCard swipe access to the study rooms, so students can reserve and gain access to the rooms without having to wait at the main service desk.

# Circulation

**Books**
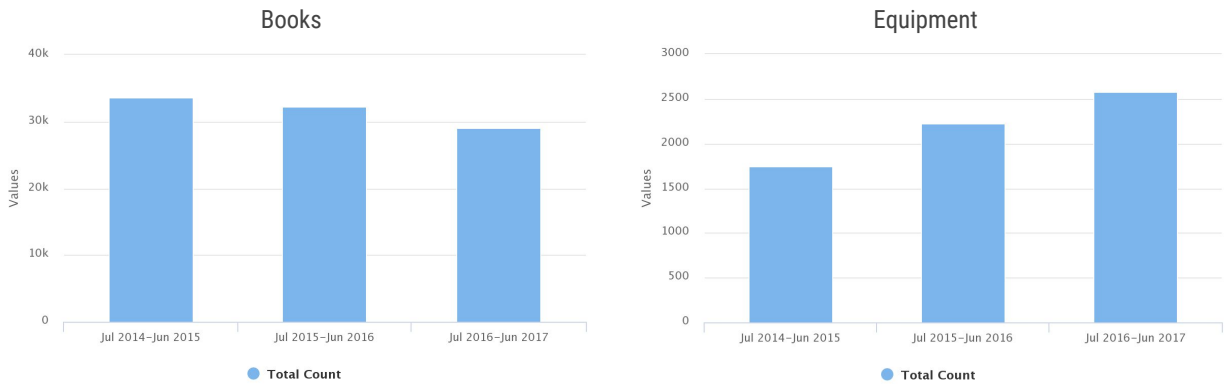


**Equipment**



We also see that circulation for equipment (such as laptops, video cameras, DSLR cameras, etc.) is up. This shows that sending student tech fee money to the library is a good investment. We also use general student fee money to purchase equipment upgrades. These statistics give us information on the most popular checkout items, so we aren't relying on anecdotal data

# Database Use
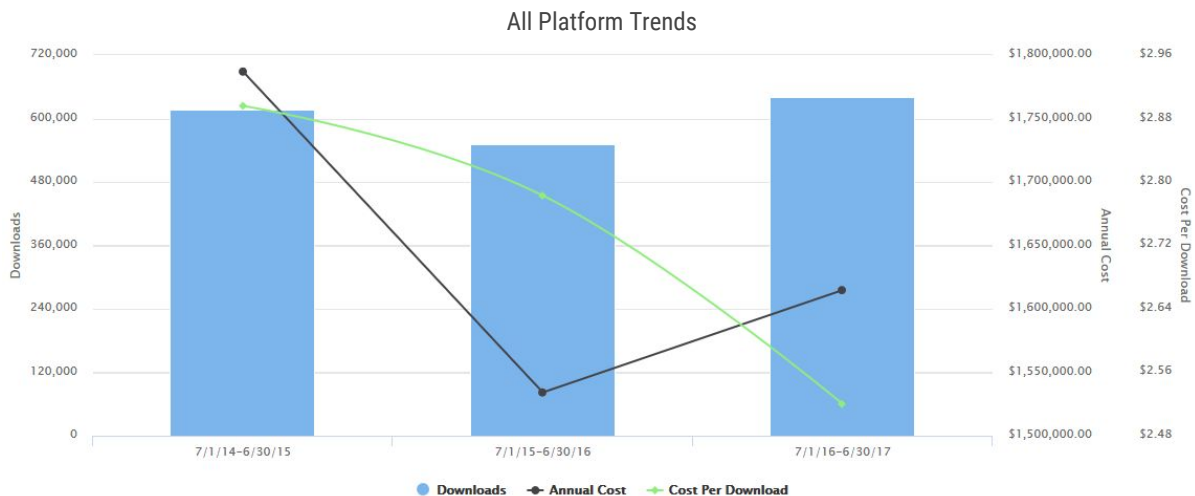


This graph represents database downloads, cost and cost per download. The amount we pay each year for databases may fluctuate as we work with the University of Nebraska Consortium of Libraries to negotiate renewals and add new packages, purchase one-time cost packages to replace print or microfilm backfiles, or cancel unused resources. For example, at the end of fiscal year 2015 we made some large one-time purchases to replaced microfilm cabinets with digital government documents.

What might be most important is that even as annual costs may fluctuate, the cost per use is consistently declining. As faculty, students, and staff make more use of our resources the overall cost per use goes down. In addition, we can look at the total number of downloads to determine if we we are promoting our resources effectively. If a database is not being used it could either mean that it isn't needed, or that students and faculty aren't aware of it. If we have promoted a resource heavily, but it still isn't being used we will cancel it.

# Digital Commons

Digital Commons Downloads
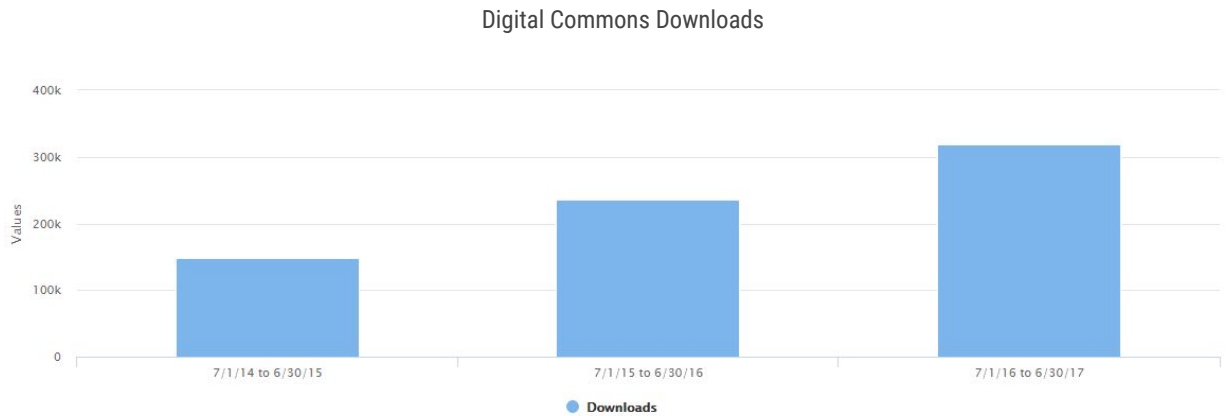


We continue to promote Digital Commons, our institutional repository. As more faculty research and UNO documents are uploaded our downloads also increase.
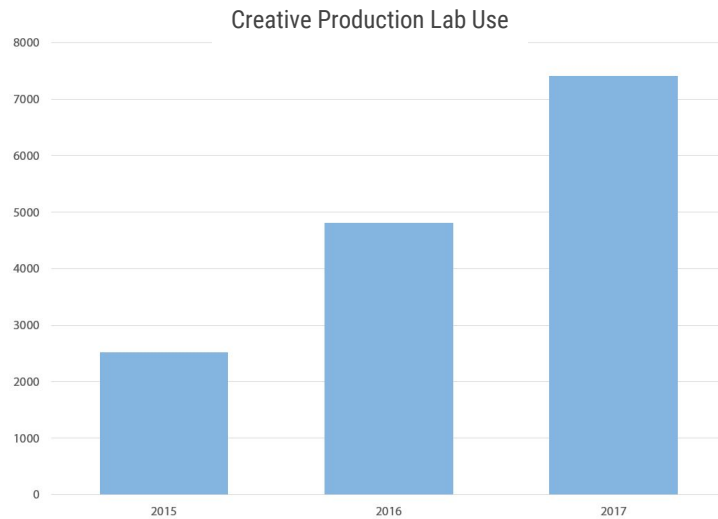
# Traditional Metrics +

- Space use
  - Study rooms
  - Creative Production Lab
  - Archives & Special Collections
- Scheduled transactions
- Instruction sessions
- Outreach events

Along with the "usual" traditional counts, many libraries count other events and library use. There isn't time to cover everything in these slides, so what follows are highlights.

# Traditional Metrics +

## Creative Production Lab Use



By tracking CPL users/visitors we can justify spending more money on technology, staff time, and student worker hours. If use continues to increase significantly that might signal that another expansion is in order.

# Traditional Metrics +

## Scheduled Consultations
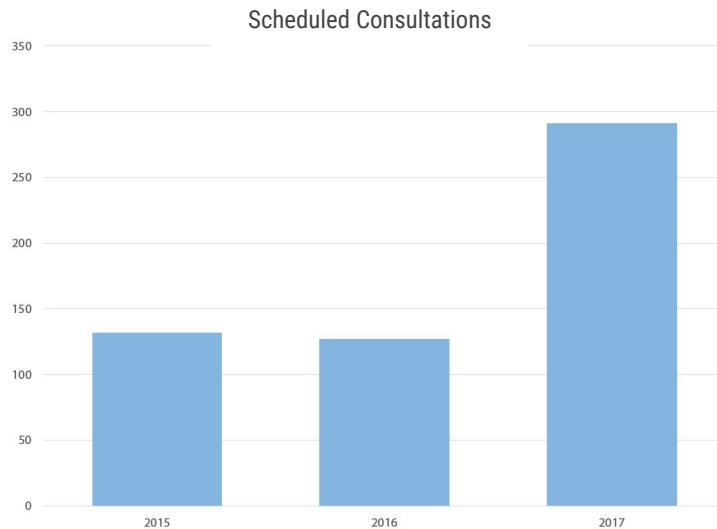


In August 2016 we moved faculty librarians off the service desks. Instead of staffing the desk, faculty schedule office hours. Students are able to use an online booking system to create appointments with the librarians. Prior to this switch librarians were getting a low number of scheduled consults.Students likely weren't sure which librarian to contact and/or didn't want to look up our email addresses to make an appointment.

Once we switched to an online booking form the scheduled consultations increased over 100% as demonstrated by the 2017 academic year bar. We hope scheduled appointments continue to increase because our booking system is now integrated with the new campus LMS.

Because the online booking system sends out automated emails, we are also able to distribute a thank you email with a survey link. So far the responses have been almost unanimously positive. With this survey we can also get a general sense of how students are hearing about this service.

# Informal & Mixed Methods

- Information Literacy instruction
  - Post-it note minute papers
  - Final paper rubric
- Whiteboard polls
- Needs assessments
- Customer satisfaction surveys

In additional to more "traditional" metrics we also conduct ongoing informal and mixed-methods approaches to assessment. Much of our time is spent on assessing our information literacy curriculum. Customer satisfaction and needs assessment surveys make up a very small part of what we do.

# Information Literacy Instruction

- Mixed methods approach
- Summative
  - final paper rubric assessment
- Formative
  - minute papers using post-its

A large majority of our information literacy instruction is focused on Comp II and MKT 3200. For Comp II we get a week's worth of library instruction. MKT 3200 library instruction consists of one class session. In these sessions we focus on information literacy outcomes such as accessing and evaluating information. Over the past few years we have adjusted and improved our curriculum based on formal and informal assessment results.

# Comp II post-its

- What do you want to learn today?
- What types of sources/information are you looking for?
- What do you still need to know/what do you still have questions about/what was most confusing?
- What is the most helpful thing you've learned?

For both Comp II and MKT 3200 instructors hand out post-it notes and ask the students to answer the above questions. The first two are asked at the beginning of the sessions, and the last two are asked at the end of the sessions.

# Comp II post-its



**Tag Usage**
Tag usage for student responses.
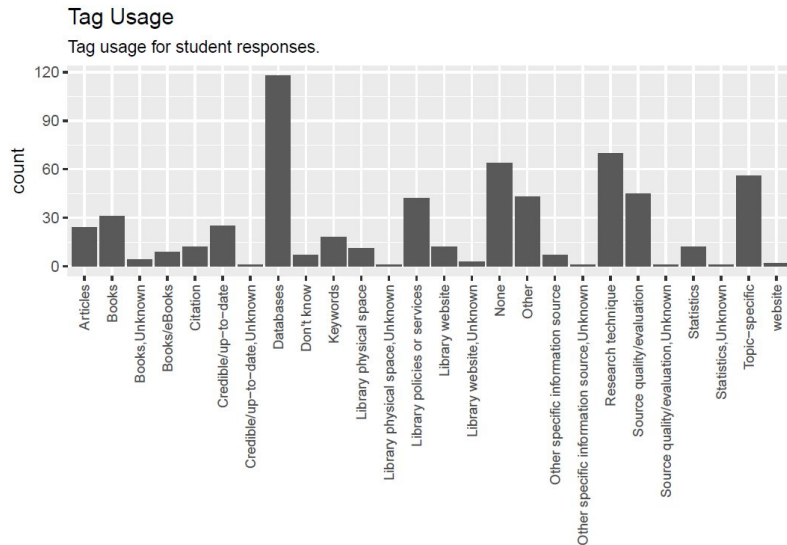
Here are the tags we use to track the responses. Students definitely "get" that the library provides databases, which is where we want them to go to find their sources instead of using Google.

# Comp II post–its
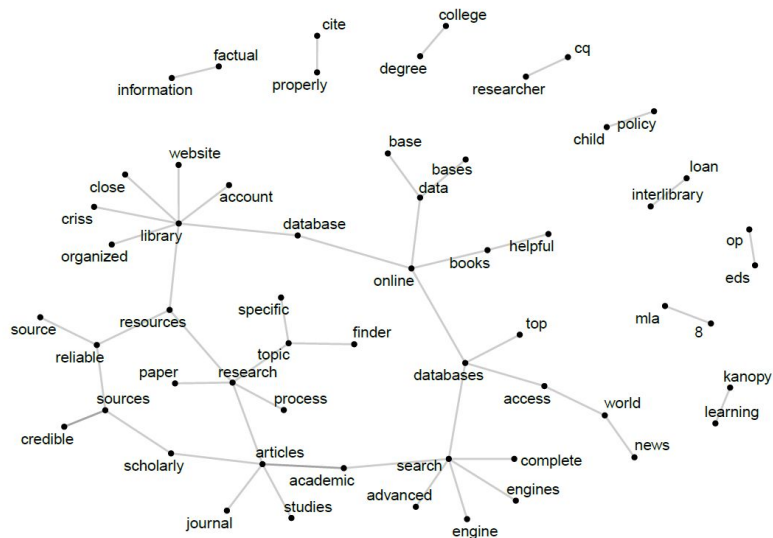


Jason Heppler our Digital Engagement librarian ran a program to find word pairings (bigrams) and connect them together. These bigrams show what language the students are using and what connections they are making. We've adjusted our teaching so that we are using the students' language based on their post-it comments.

# Comp II Rubric


Fall 2015 Comp II Final Papers


Fall 2016 Comp II Final Papers
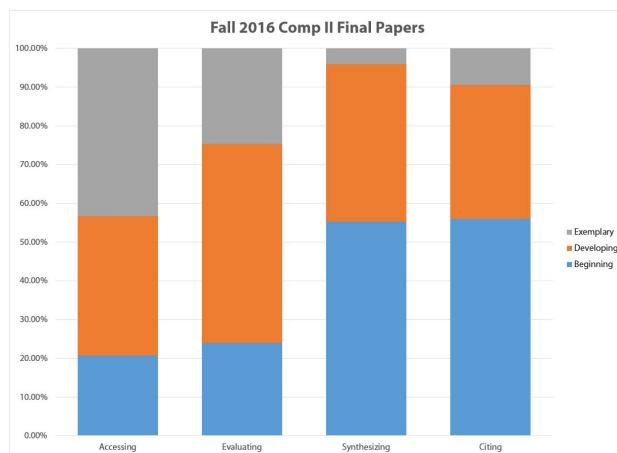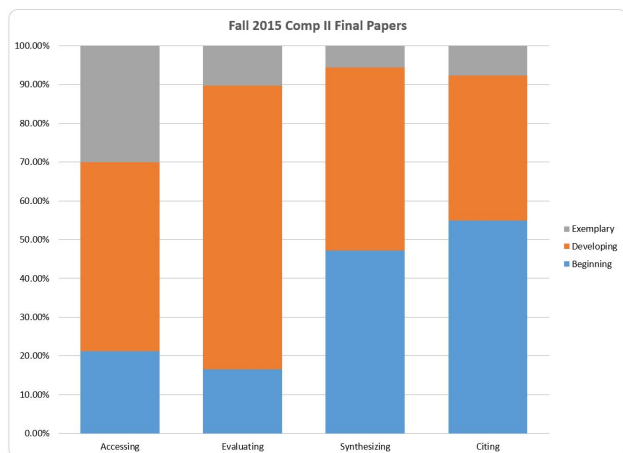
We use a rubric to evaluate Comp II final papers, not in terms of writing or arguments, but in terms of Information Literacy outcomes. We had been attempting to teach students how to access information, how to evaluate it, and how to incorporate it into their argument. However, this is too much to cover in the limited time we are given. We changed our curriculum to focus more on accessing and evaluating, and stopped addressing synthesizing. The rationale is that we have limited time, and that Comp II instructors are able to cover synthesizing and citing throughout the semester.

These lower "beginning" levels are about on par for what we would expect for freshman/sophomore Comp II students. We were happy to see that by adjusting our curriculum, it appears that students are doing a better job of accessing and evaluating information with many more students rating at "exemplary."

# MKT 3200 post-its

| Question | Fall 2015 | | Spring 2016 | | Fall 2016 | | Spring 2017 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **One item I want to learn** | Responses Avg | Percentage | Responses Avg | Percentage | Responses Avg | Percentage | Responses Avg | Percentage |
| APA/citations | 23.5 | 16% | 7 | 4% | 7 | 3% | 8.5 | 4% |
| How to use the database/search engines | 16 | 11% | 18.5 | 10% | 33.5 | 13% | 29 | 14% |
| Research strategies: fast/effective/good/keywords | 28 | 20% | 23.5 | 13% | 31.5 | 12% | 35.5 | 17% |
| Best database/Best business database | 11.5 | 8% | 27.5 | 15% | 19.5 | 8% | 17 | 8% |
| Database with... | 2 | 1% | 3.5 | 2% | 4.5 | 2% | 6 | 3% |
| Where do I find...?/Best place to find... | 16 | 11% | 25 | 14% | 30 | 12% | 19 | 9% |
| "Good"/Credible/Reliable information | 13.5 | 9% | 11.5 | 6% | 9 | 4% | 14.5 | 7% |
| Assignment-related/picking a topic | 9.5 | 7% | 6 | 3% | 4.5 | 2% | 6.5 | 3% |
| Criss Library resources/What Criss has to offer | 23 | 16% | 59 | 33% | 116 | 45% | 78 | 36% |
| Total | 143 | 100% | 181.5 | 100% | 255.5 | 100% | 214 | 100% |
| **Type of info I need** | Responses Avg | Percentage | Responses Avg | Percentage | Responses Avg | Percentage | Responses Avg | Percentage |
| Info specific to topic | 34 | 20% | 82 | 30% | 71.5 | 32% | 122 | 45% |
| Statistics | 41.5 | 24% | 43 | 16% | 60.5 | 27% | 43 | 16% |
| Financial | 16.5 | 10% | 39 | 14% | 18 | 8% | 28.5 | 10% |
| Formal Reports | 4 | 2% | 7.5 | 3% | 3 | 1% | 5 | 2% |
| Company info | 6 | 3% | 28.5 | 10% | 13 | 6% | 7.5 | 3% |
| Finding sources/Getting started | 7 | 4% | 14.5 | 5% | 3 | 1% | 9.5 | 3% |
| Generic sources (book, journal article) | 16 | 9% | 19.5 | 7% | 11 | 5% | 14.5 | 5% |
| Interviews | 6.5 | 4% | 2.5 | 1% | 2 | 1% | 2 | 1% |
| Historial | 9.5 | 6% | 13 | 5% | 1 | 0% | 3.5 | 1% |
| Assignment-related info | 4.5 | 3% | 4 | 1% | 6 | 3% | 4.5 | 2% |
| Data | 8 | 5% | 6 | 2% | 4 | 2% | 5.5 | 2% |
| Other | 18 | 10% | 15 | 5% | 29 | 13% | 27.5 | 10% |
| Total | 171.5 | 100% | 274.5 | 100% | 222 | 100% | 273 | 100% |

For MKT 3200 the instructors wanted to refine the library session so students were better prepared to do research and knew what they should expect for the library session.

# MKT 3200 post–its

| Question | Fall 2015 | | Spring 2016 | | Fall 2016 | | Spring 2017 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **One thing I found useful** | Responses Avg | Percentage | Responses Avg | Percentage | Responses Avg | Percentage | Responses Avg | Percentage |
| APA | 4 | 3% | 2 | 1% | 4.5 | 2% | 2.5 | 1% |
| Citations | 2.5 | 2% | 1 | 0% | 3 | 1% | 3.5 | 1% |
| Research Guide/LibGuide/Business Website | 11.5 | 8% | 20 | 9% | 14 | 5% | 26 | 10% |
| Database(s)/Statista/ABI INFORM/Business Source Co | 50.5 | 34% | 54.5 | 24% | 101.5 | 35% | 78.5 | 29% |
| Search efficiently/Navigation/Keywords | 31 | 21% | 28.5 | 13% | 25 | 9% | 21.5 | 8% |
| JotForm/Game Plan Worksheet | 17.5 | 12% | 79 | 35% | 71 | 24% | 73 | 27% |
| Organizing topic | 6 | 4% | 16 | 7% | 20 | 7% | 28 | 10% |
| Library website/resources/librarian | 17 | 11% | 12 | 5% | 25 | 9% | 30 | 11% |
| Other | 10.5 | 7% | 10.5 | 5% | 30 | 10% | 7.5 | 3% |
| Total | 150.5 | 100% | 223.5 | 100% | 294 | 100% | 270.5 | 100% |
| **Questions I still have** | Responses Avg | Percentage | Responses Avg | Percentage | Responses Avg | Percentage | Responses Avg | Percentage |
| None | 9.5 | 22% | 74 | 52% | 95.5 | 62% | 118 | 66% |
| Database | 10.5 | 24% | 29 | 21% | 12 | 8% | 13.5 | 8% |
| Citations | 6.5 | 15% | 11 | 8% | 6.5 | 4% | 5 | 3% |
| Credibile sources/Credible source for... | 7 | 16% | 8 | 6% | 3.5 | 2% | 8.5 | 5% |
| Assignment-related | 2.5 | 6% | 8 | 6% | 11 | 7% | 8 | 4% |
| Other | 7.5 | 17% | 11 | 8% | 26.5 | 17% | 26.5 | 15% |
| Total | 43.5 | 100% | 141 | 100% | 155 | 100% | 179.5 | 100% |

By observing students and analyzing the post-it responses, we refined and improved the effectiveness of instruction. For the last minute-slip prompt, "What questions do you still have?," the number of students replying "none" steadily increased semester-to-semester, from 22% to 52% to 62% and finally to 66%.
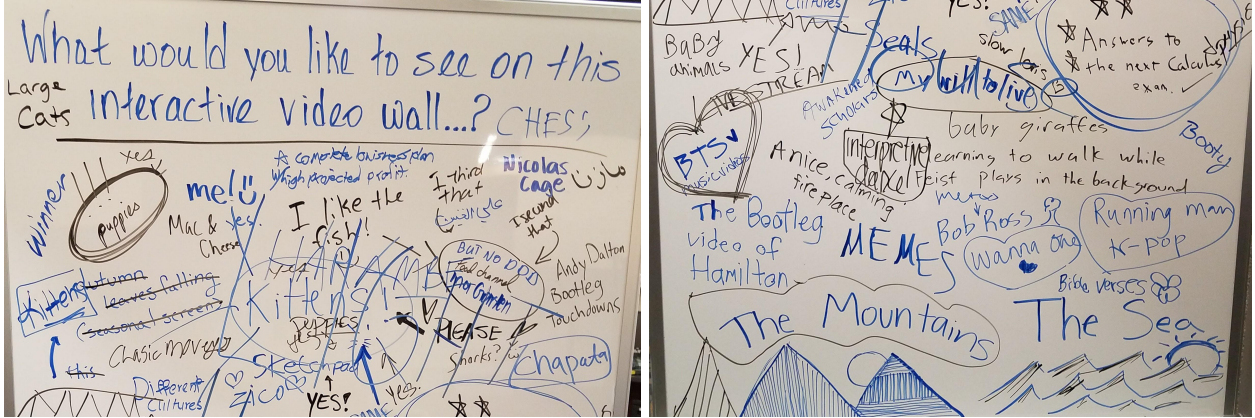
# Whiteboard Assessment
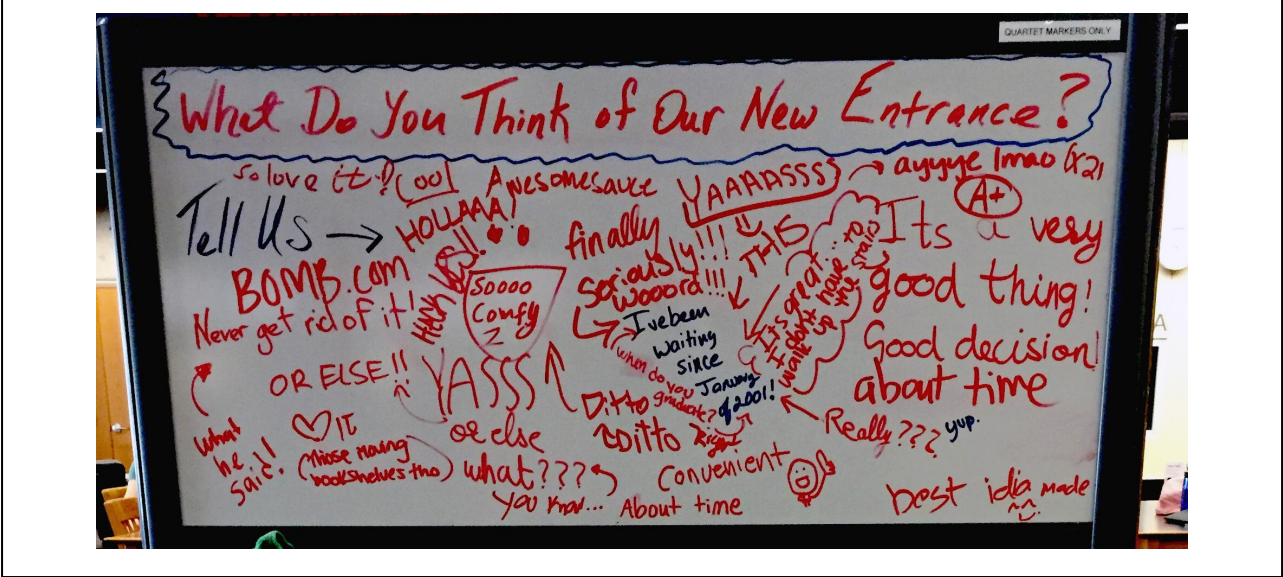


We started doing informal whiteboard assessment polls when we opened the lower level entrance.

# Whiteboard Assessment
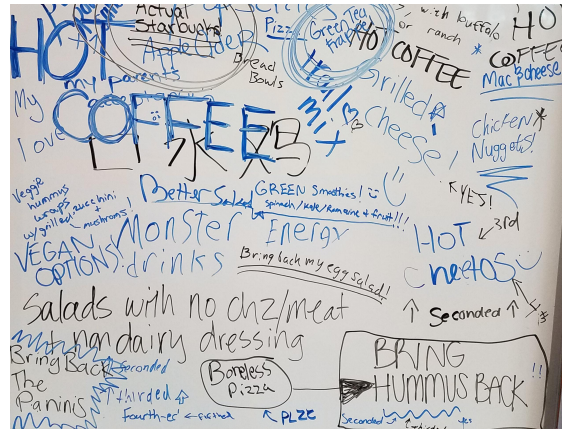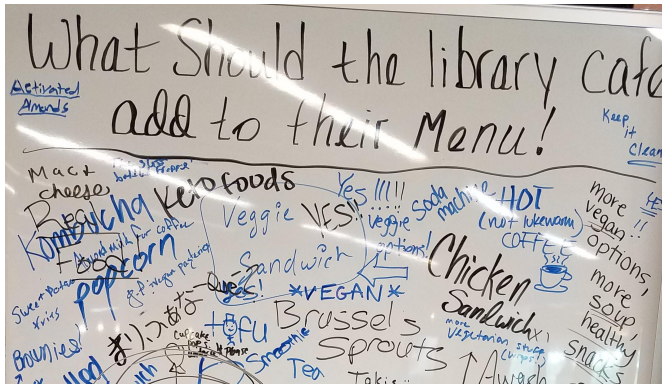


We ask both serious questions about services, and silly questions about food, hobbies, or anything that might impact students' daily lives.
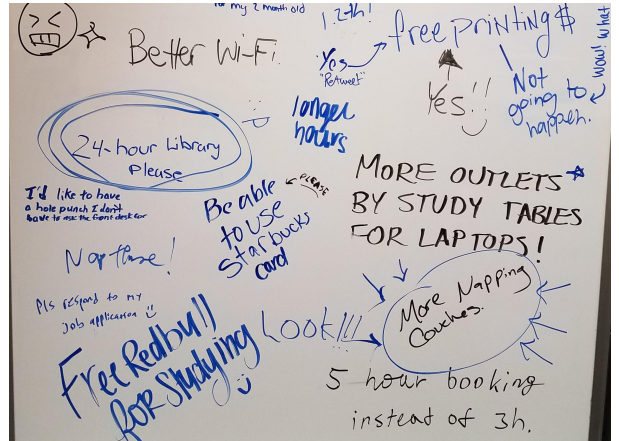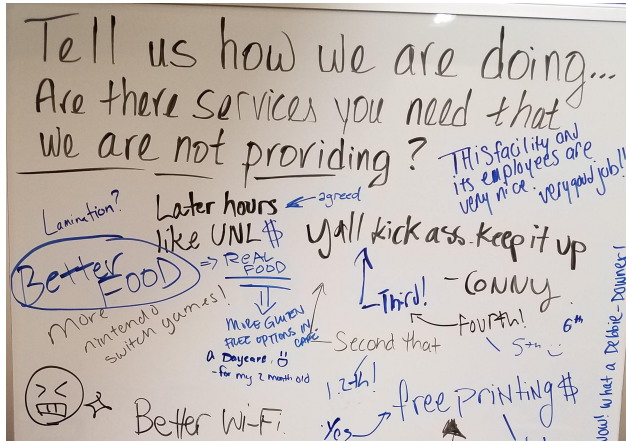
# Whiteboard Assessment



When we ask about library services we use the results to make changes. This poll resulted in more livestream feeds of puppies and kittens.

# Whiteboard Assessment



Acting on "sillier" whiteboard polls helps students trust us and shows them that we listen. We are currently working to update some of the library furniture to make it more appealing to students.

# Next Steps

- Needs assessment with Scott Campus Students
- Student library use study
- Assessment plan to map assessment activities to strategic plan

---

- A needs assessment with Scott Campus students will compare results from the strategic planning survey, and determine interest in a library presence on Scott Campus.
- An IRB application is being developed for a project that will compile IDs of students who use library resources and services. We will compare levels of library use with retention, credit hour completion, and GPA. The goal is to find out if library use correlates to an increase in student success.
- An assessment plan will explicitly track our assessment activities to our new strategic plan.

# Thank you

**Katie Bishop**

kbishop@unomaha.edu