Spring 2017 Report: Library Instruction Exit Slip Responses

Introduction

Spring 2017 saw a departure from the two-pronged library instruction exit slip we had used during the Fall of 2016, and a return to the use of one exit slip for all classes.

Through the course of the semester, library instructors worked with students from a wide spectrum of courses, including Writing 10, Upper Division Writing, and courses outside the writing program. At the close of each class session, students were asked to complete short exit slips administered through Qualtrics that evaluated various aspects of their library instruction. Exit slips were similar to those used during the 2015-2016 academic year and included both multiple choice and open-ended questions.

According to Qualtrics, 660 students completed exit slips during the spring semester.

Of these completed surveys, 374 listed their class as Writing 10, 244 listed Upper Division Writing courses, 40 identified unspecified other subject areas, and 2 claimed to be from Graduate Studies.

It is always possible that some students may have attended multiple library instruction sessions and completed each of the surveys multiple times. It is also possible that each survey respondent only completed one survey one time.

Survey Questions

All survey respondents were asked the following questions, though some chose to leave one or more question blank:

1) The resources described in this session are relevant to my assignment or research. (Strongly Agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree / Not Applicable)

2) Information in this session was presented in a way that I could understand. (Strongly Agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree / Not Applicable)

3) I feel confident in my ability to find and use library resources as a result of this session. (Strongly Agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree / Not Applicable)

4) What is one skill, strategy, or resource you learned about today that you plan to use this semester?
Multiple Choice Question Responses

**Question 1:** The resources described in this session are relevant to my assignment or research. (Strongly Agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree / Not Applicable)

Students indicated overwhelmingly that the resources described in the session were relevant to their assignment or their research. 511 students selected *Strongly Agree*, and 143 selected *Agree*. 2 students selected *Disagree*, and 1 chose *Strongly Disagree*.

**Question 2:** Information in this session was presented in a way that I could understand. (Strongly Agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree / Not Applicable)
Students indicated that information in the session was presented in a way they could understand. 500 students selected *Strongly Agree*, and 147 selected *Agree*; 4 students selected *Disagree*, 1 chose *Strongly Disagree*, and 1 chose *Not Applicable*.

**Question 3:** I feel confident in my ability to find and use library resources as a result of this session. (*Strongly Agree* / *Agree* / *Disagree* / *Strongly Disagree* / *Not Applicable*)

![Bar chart showing responses to Question 3]

There was slightly more variety in answers to this question, though students were still overwhelmingly positive in their response. This time 340 students chose *Strongly Agree*, 301 chose *Agree*, 7 chose *Disagree*, and 2 selected *Not Applicable*.

**Open-Ended Question Responses**

**Question 4:** What is one skill, strategy, or resource you learned about today that you plan to use this semester?

631 students responded to this question, which aligns with the fact that all students in library instruction this semester provided information using the same exit slip. Students overwhelmingly indicated that they plan to use databases, keyword searching strategies, and citation tools, such as RefWorks, as a result of the session. Most popular choices centered on how to find articles, strategies that might help students find and use them sooner, and being able to identify article types.

The most popular takeaway by far was using databases, though some respondents also referred to them as “search engines.” 150 students (24%) said they planned to use databases this semester, and 78 mentioned specific databases by name.

Students were also interested in the mechanics of searching. 46 students mentioned that they will use keywords as part of their search strategy; 58 mentioned they were interested in narrowing down their searches; 31 mentioned use of Boolean operators; and 36 mentioned using truncation or quotation marks.
Scholarly sources were a topic of interest, most likely because they are often required for use in research projects. 41 students mentioned the importance of finding and being able to identify scholarly sources.

Outside of search and databases, RefWorks garnered the most mentions, with 42 students indicating their plan to use it in the future.

Overall, these results indicate that students are interested in the practical applications of their library instruction sessions, and that they plan to use specific tools and strategies after attending.

The breakdown of responses is below.

*Use Databases Generally:* 150

*Specific Databases:*
- CREDO – 13
- EBSCO (general) – 13
- Academic Search Complete – 9
- Science Direct – 8
- Web of Science – 7
- PubMed – 6
- PsycARTICLES – 2
- Science Daily – 2
- The Arts – 1
- Compendex – 1
- Engineering Village – 1
- Google Scholar – 1
- Newsbank – 1
- Opposing Viewpoints – 1
- PsycINFO – 1
- Ulrich’s – 1

*Search Strategies:*
- Narrowing search results – 58
- Keywords – 46
- Boolean Operators – 31
- Quotation marks – 21
- Refining search results – 15
- Truncation – 15
- Limiting search results – 10
- Using subject terms -- 3

*RefWorks:* 42

*General Citing* – 18
References (general) – 8

Use Other Resources & Tools:
Library website – 17
VPN -- 8
Request materials through ILL – 6 (UC-eLinks specifically – 2)
Melvyl – 3

In-person Assistance:
Use 24/7 chat – 6
Make an appointment with a librarian – 3

Working with Sources:
Finding scholarly or peer-reviewed sources – 31
Distinguishing between popular and scholarly sources – 12
Finding articles generally -- 10
Finding sources in Spanish – 3

Responses to this question and the other questions asked on the exit slip have been separated by library instructor initials and can be found as separate sheets in the Research and Learning Services > Assessment > Exit Slip Results Spring 2017 folder on Picon.

Trends and Thoughts

In particular, the results to this question indicate that students are looking for practical strategies that will help them accomplish their research goals. Some of this is dictated by the question itself – we are asking them to comment on tools that they will use in order to be successful.

While a stereotype of students conducting research is that they will just go to Google, the results presented here suggest that students want to be able to use good sources, and are looking for resources and assistance that will help use them. Several student responses commented that they had been confused about using library resources prior to the session, or that they were unaware of the types of materials available to them. These comments underscore the importance of library instruction and the need to continue to inform students of how the library can help them and of the resources that are available.

Question 5: Additional comments or suggestions?

These responses varied by library instructor and class, though most were positive (e.g. “Good job!”; “awesome presentation!”). Some pointed out issues that students had with their research (“Please fix some links because they say and they say (sic) an article is available and sadly its not”), and others discussed time and a desire for more interactivity in the library session. As in the past, library instructors continue
to work to provide helpful information students can use in an interactive and engaging way – however, there is always room for improvement.

Comments broken down by instructor can be found in the Research and Learning Services > Assessment > Exit Slip Results Spring 2017 folder on Picon.

**Question 6:** Who was your instructor for the session?

Sara, Lindsay, and Elizabeth M-T taught the greatest number of the classes represented by these exit polls, with Lindsay in the lead at 250 responses out of 640 recorded entries.

It may be worthwhile to note, however, that these exit slips were not used with RefWorks workshops, news evaluation drop-ins, and other instruction offered during the spring 2017 semester.

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<th>Field</th>
<th>Clicks Count</th>
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<td>Emily Lin</td>
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<td>Elizabeth McMunn-Telegaro</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Salmon</td>
<td>640</td>
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**Question 7:** Select which option best describes your class.

Course breakdowns show that the vast majority of respondents were enrolled in Writing classes.

361 respondents came from Writing 10, and 245 from Upper Division Writing courses, whereas only 40 hailed from classes in other subjects, and only 2 came from Graduate Studies.
Conclusions

Library instruction during the spring semester of 2017 continued to focus on introducing students enrolled in a variety of courses to library resources and materials. In the spring of 2017, we were able to meet with a variety of class sessions and introduce students to a plethora of library materials. Exit slip assessments indicate that students find these sessions to be helpful to their research and that they find them valuable.

Library instructors have at times questioned if students are learning more than is indicated by the exit slips, or if there are other questions that we are not hearing because of the structures inherent in the system of one-shot library instruction. We continue to have these conversations and to work to provide library instruction and resources to our campus community.