Don't wait for them to come to you: Partnering with student support services

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Don’t wait for them to come to you: Partnering with student support services

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Inquiry Question
What is the effect of having a librarian embedded in a student support services office on student confidence when conducting research, and on their use of and attitudes toward library resources and staff?

Methodology
• Project Achieve (PA) is a Federal TRIO Student Support Services Program at UNO serving a group of students qualifying as first generation, limited income, or disabled. During the 2014-2015 academic year the PA program supported a total of 190 students.
• A librarian provided roving research assistance at the Project Achieve office 3 hours per week.
• Pre- and post-assessment surveys were sent out to PA students. 55 surveys were collected in the Fall and 36 were collected in the Spring. Significance and correlation were examined via a dependent sample t-Test and Pearson’s Correlation analysis.

Results
A roving librarian is not correlated with increased use of library resources or staff.

Satisfaction with research services staff is correlated with confidence in research abilities.

I am confident in my ability to find sources for a research paper.

Roving Statistics for Academic Year 2014-2015

Key Findings from the Literature
• Libraries need to demonstrate the value of their services. Meeting users where they work is one way to do this (Solorzano 2013).
• When looking to partner with target groups outside traditional subject areas, it is critical to take into account the strategic plan and any unmet needs of the campus (Dahl 2007).
• This type of program works best when the coordinators at the partnering office deliver a high level of support to students; they are then primed to take advantage of any offered services (Love 2009).

Conclusions
• High satisfaction with research services staff is correlated with an increase in student confidence when conducting research, therefore customer service should be a top priority for library staff.
• Students in the Project Achieve program reported higher confidence in finding and using resources after a librarian was embedded in the PA office.
• Roving services are more successful when partnered closely with other campus staff. Four librarians held roving hours during the 2014-15 academic year; this project accounted for nearly 1/3 of all roving statistics during that time period.

This project is part of the program “Assessment in Action: Academic Libraries and Student Success” which is undertaken by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) in partnership with the Association for Institutional Research and the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities. The program, a cornerstone of ACRL’s Value of Academic Libraries initiative, is made possible by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.