

Building an Assessment Program at the UIUC Library  
A Proposal from the Services Advisory Committee  
November 22, 2005

This document is in response to an invitation by EC to submit a proposal for developing an assessment program at the Library.

In order to develop an assessment program, the ARL program officers suggested that we:

- Have an individual or group responsible for carrying out an assessment program
- Identify and prioritize assessment needs
- Develop an assessment plan
- Identify what skills are needed to carry out effective assessment Library-wide
- Develop a plan to promote the culture of assessment
- Initiate assessment activities that address priorities and which can be accomplished in a timely fashion
- Develop a plan to evaluate the success of an assessment program

The Services Advisory Committee has discussed this matter recently at length and has been dealing with several aspects of it for some time. For example, in 2004, we carried out a survey of statistics that were generated, collected and monitored in individual Library units. In order to create a data-driven culture of assessment, we need to rely on a set of uniform statistics that can be reliable and reasonably easy to collect. In as many ways as possible we should collect and generate needed statistics automatically. In addition, in 2001 and 2002, we participated in the LibQual surveys and in 2004 and 2005 we have developed and carried out more customized surveys of our graduate student populations and our undergraduate populations. This spring a similar survey will be administered to all faculty and academic staff. We are now at the point where we need to move beyond surveys and collection of statistics to actual assessment. With the Executive Committee's strong support, this will be possible.

What we propose for the remainder of the 2005-2006 academic year is that:

- SAC be designated as that body responsible for launching this program. That is, SAC will function as an assessment group for the immediate future. Its role in assessment will be reevaluated as this project develops. At some point in the future we may want to create a separate assessment group, but this charge conveniently fits well with SAC's charge at the present time. The work from January 16 through August 16 will focus on setting up an infrastructure for carrying out this program and responding to the ARL program officers' suggestions;
- EC and the Budget Group authorize the hiring of a 25% graduate assistant to help us pursue the prerequisites for an assessment program, noted above. This graduate assistant will be appointed within the Office of Services and for the time being supervised by Lisa Hinchliffe, ex officio member of the Services Advisory

- Committee who has space in her office for the GA to work. The cost for this 7 month GA will be approximately \$4,400 (Jan 16-Aug 15);
- Feedback be sent to EC by June 1 by SAC, reporting what has been accomplished by that time and be accompanied by a proposal for next steps.

Expected Outcomes:

By August 16 we hope to carry out some of the suggestions by the ARL Program Officers. That is:

- Identify and prioritize assessment needs
- Develop an assessment plan
- Identify what skills are needed to carry out effective assessment Library-wide
- Develop a plan to promote the culture of assessment
- Develop a plan to evaluate the success of an assessment program

So by next Fall with this infrastructure in place we can hopefully initiate assessment activities that address priorities and which can be accomplished in a timely fashion.