

()

## Library Assessment Tips & Techniques

Assessment Plans > (<https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/plans>)

☰ Outline ▾

The following [subject guide\\*](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips#sabb) (<https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips#sabb>) provides guidance to those new to library assessment. In addition to a brief overview of assessment in general, one can also find specific help in the planning process, including obtaining approvals, selecting the population, and various assessment methodologies for assessing information literacy as well as library services. Recommendations are also provided on interpreting and reporting results to encourage libraries to “close the loop” and take action on assessment findings. Further readings are provided, too. (Library collections assessment and web usability studies are complex processes that will not be covered in this guide as they were not the main focus of the Oviatt Library’s former assessment coordinator.)

The following are some general questions to consider before undertaking any assessment project:

- How much do you know about formal assessment? Consider reading a brief [overview of program assessment](http://www.csun.edu/assessment/docs/Program%20Assessment%20Guide.doc) (<http://www.csun.edu/assessment/docs/Program%20Assessment%20Guide.doc>), learning some of the key [vocabulary of assessment terms](http://www.csun.edu/~assess/docs/assess_defs.doc) ([http://www.csun.edu/~assess/docs/assess\\_defs.doc](http://www.csun.edu/~assess/docs/assess_defs.doc)), and skimming some [basic readings](http://library.csun.edu/About/Assessment/Resources) (<http://library.csun.edu/About/Assessment/Resources>). The time you take to do this will save you time (and frustration) in the long run.
- Begin with the end in mind (i.e., *Goals*): what do you hope to accomplish by conducting this assessment project?
- What are your measurable outcomes (i.e., *Objectives to meet your goals*), which may be related to student learning and/or service/collections?
  - [Writing Student Learning Outcomes](http://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/student-learning-outcomes/) (<http://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/student-learning-outcomes/>). (Texas A&M University)
  - Writing Measurable Objectives (ACRL)
  - [Demonstrating Success: User Friendly Evaluations . . .](http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/ohd/grant/HDGPEvaluationTraining.pdf) (<http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/ohd/grant/HDGPEvaluationTraining.pdf>). (Colorado Dept. of Public Health)
- Do you plan to publish the results of the assessment?
  - If yes, your methodology needs to be much more rigorous than what is typically required by campus for assessment. If so, read about [Human Subjects](http://library.csun.edu/Guides/LibraryAssessmentTips/Approvals) (<http://library.csun.edu/Guides/LibraryAssessmentTips/Approvals>) before you do anything.
  - If no, your methodology does not need to be as rigorous, but it is still a good idea to consider how useful small studies will be for “closing the loop,” i.e., making any changes to library services other than for a narrowly defined patron base, e.g., a librarian changing his/her style of teaching for a particular course.
- Have you consulted library colleagues potentially most affected by the results of the assessment as to what they hope to learn about their patrons, collections, employees, etc.?
  - Buy-in is essential otherwise the data is only useful for a publication and/or campus report.
- Have you considered the ramifications, fall-out, expectations that could be generated by your assessment project?
  - Example: Are the library colleagues/department most affected by the assessment results willing to work with negatives as well as positives?
  - Example: If you ask students if the library should be open 24/7 year-round, but there is no money for that, what is the point of asking? It is better to ask students to tell you what schedule they need at a minimum to meet their needs for study space, etc.

### Bottom line:

Assessment is a political process and despite assuming that everyone thinks of the results as objective data and that one shouldn't shoot the messenger, assessment coordinators/teams can become targets on everything from what was assessed to the methodology used. In other words, everyone becomes an assessment expert when the results are not to their liking!

*\_\*This subject guide came out of the Spring 2012 sabbatical project of [Katherine S. Dabbour](http://library.csun.edu/kdabbour) (<http://library.csun.edu/kdabbour>), former Library Assessment Coordinator at the Oviatt Library, California State University, Northridge, who is solely responsible for the content and opinions expressed herein.*





.

## Approvals

---

[← Assessment Plans \(https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/plans\)](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/plans)

☰ Outline ▼

[up \(https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips\)](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips)

[Population > \(https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/population\)](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/population)

Before undertaking assessment, it is important to get feedback, buy-in, and/or formal approval, if required. There are many reasons to do this, but the most important is to have a centralized reporting structure wherein a committee or administrator knows what you are doing to avoid duplication of effort and/or competition for resources between projects.

- Consult with members of the Library Assessment Team, department chairs, colleagues, and/or the Dean, if needed.

Typically, unless you plan to publish the results, assessment undertaken for program improvement, such as satisfaction surveys and information competence testing, does not require review by the campus Institutional Review Board (IRB) since it is tied to the curriculum and will be kept private. See the link below for more information:

- [Activities That Require Human Subjects Approval \(http://www.csun.edu/research-graduate-studies/research-sponsored-programs/irbhuman-subjects-research\)](http://www.csun.edu/research-graduate-studies/research-sponsored-programs/irbhuman-subjects-research).

However, large scale surveys (aimed at a large sample or complete population), whether for program improvement assessment or not, which requires the [Information Technology \(http://www.csun.edu/it/helpdesk/\)](http://www.csun.edu/it/helpdesk/) (IT) department to generate temporary listservs of campus emails of a large group of students, faculty, or staff, do require approval.

- First, contact the IT department to ascertain if any other large scale surveys are planned by them or other campus departments. For example, every spring semester, IT sends out a survey link to faculty on their technology needs. In addition, Institutional Research (IR) conducts the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) in the spring, too. To prevent "survey fatigue," IT will try to create different samples so that the same folks are not bombarded by multiple email requests to take surveys.
- Second, IT will direct you to the [Office of University Advancement \(mailto:university.advancement@csun.edu\)](mailto:university.advancement@csun.edu) for their approval, which is typically a brief email from you describing the project, sample, and timing. Once you have their approval, forward the email to IT, and they will generate the email address for your sample.

.).

## Population

---

[← Approvals \(https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/approvals\)](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/approvals)

☰ Outline ▾

[up \(https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips\)](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips)

[Surveys/Tests → \(https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/surveys\)](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/surveys)

Determine who you are going to assess, whether it is a sample or the whole population. Also, consider whether or not to follow a particular population over time (cohort).

### Sample Population:

There are two types of samples: "simple" and "heterogeneous." A simple sample assumes that each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected, therefore, all are treated equally, such as taking a random sample of all students. This is useful for studies with hypotheses that do not require the data to be more granular. In contrast, a heterogeneous sample splits the population into different groups but asks the same question, such as sampling undergraduates and graduate students so their responses can be compared, or testing students enrolled in a gateway course and capstone course within a major to test for differences in skills, attitudes toward libraries, etc.

To do a survey of a large population (>/=500 persons), where you know its actual size (e.g., number of freshman students enrolled in fall 2012) you only need a sample to produce generalizable data that you can apply to that entire population (hypothesis testing). Use a sample size calculator or chart such as that provided by SurveyMonkey to determine how many emails you need gathered for the sample to produce generalizable data. It is also a good idea to over sample to allow for bounced emails. There are many such freebies on the web. Google it to find others.

- [Sample Size Calculator \(http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm\)](http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm)
- [SurveyMonkey Help Center: How Many Respondents Do You Really Need? \(https://www.surveymonkey.com/curiosity/how-many-people-do-i-need-to-take-my-survey/\)](https://www.surveymonkey.com/curiosity/how-many-people-do-i-need-to-take-my-survey/)

### Whole Population:

Assessment or evaluative research studies can also look at a whole population, e.g., a group of students in one class, chemistry faculty, etc. Therefore, you would need to survey the whole population (unless it happens to be >/=500 persons, in which case, sampling is recommended). For the goals of program assessment, this is enough to generate usable data if you only care to report on a single group. For some journals, this may be enough as well. If publication is intended, it is best to read through the assessment related articles in targeted journal(s) to see what types of populations are assessed.

### Cohort Population:

A cohort is a single group that is followed from a fixed point in time until another fixed point in time. For example, students enrolled in a program who share a common course of study. This can involve sampling, such as asking a random sample of freshman students to take a survey or test at the beginning of their studies, then ask the same group again as sophomores, juniors, and graduating seniors, e.g. It can also involve a whole population, such as Bridge or Stretch cohorts that already exist. Other uses include using embedded assessment techniques to track student work after provision of tiered library instruction to test for increasing sophistication in resource choice, etc. In any case, cohort populations require participation from faculty, and attrition must always be accounted for due to lack of student persistence or programmatic changes.

.).

## Surveys/Tests

[◀ Population \(https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/population\)](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/population)

☰ Outline ▼

[up \(https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips\)](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips)

[IL Assessment Methods ▶ \(https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/information-literacy\)](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/information-literacy)

**Surveys** are often used to assess information literacy, library services, and collections (patron satisfaction), and can be online or in paper, but online is preferred. In the realm of information literacy assessment, surveys of general knowledge without an intervention in the form of targeted library instruction, would be considered **indirect** assessment. Tests are used to assess knowledge, skills, and abilities and can take the form of pretests/posttests to measure the efficacy of an intervention, such as an instruction session. For the purposes of instructional program assessment, test results are aggregated and reported as such. **Pretest/posttest** assessment is considered a **direct** assessment of student learning when it is targeted to a specific instructional intervention.

The following steps are meant to guide you in your decision to use surveys/tests and collect meaningful data. See also: IL Assessment Methods and Other Methods .

### Step One: Determine the Purpose of the Survey

- Library Assessment Tips & Techniques: Introduction

### Step Two: Write the Survey Questions

Writing survey questions is harder than it seems! A poorly written question is useless, no matter how many responses your survey generates. The following tips and resources provide easy to follow guidance on question construction and organization.

- [8 Tips for Writing Effective Survey Questions \(http://www.constantcontact.com/learning-center/hints-tips/ht-2007-11os.jsp\)](http://www.constantcontact.com/learning-center/hints-tips/ht-2007-11os.jsp)
- [Best Practices in Survey Design \(http://arden-oths.wikispaces.com/file/view/survey+design.pdf\)](http://arden-oths.wikispaces.com/file/view/survey+design.pdf)
- [Survey Design-How to Begin your Survey Design Project \(http://www.surveysystem.com/sdesign.htm\)](http://www.surveysystem.com/sdesign.htm)

### Step Three: Create the Survey

There are many tools for creating a survey or test. Print, Scantron, and web-based are the most obvious choices. There are many web-based tools available, either free or subscription. Often, this step influences step two (writing the questions), depending on how your survey software handles certain question types. The following websites provide many examples and comparisons of survey tools:

- [Surveys and Other Qualitative Measures \(http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~tsm/dh450/class/methods/surveys/lesson2-2-1.html\)](http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~tsm/dh450/class/methods/surveys/lesson2-2-1.html)
- [Polling & survey Tools \(http://sdst.libguides.com/content.php?pid=184760&sid=1711016\)](http://sdst.libguides.com/content.php?pid=184760&sid=1711016)
- [Quizzing and Survey Tools \(http://wikis.ala.org/acrl/index.php/Quiz\)](http://wikis.ala.org/acrl/index.php/Quiz)

### Off the Shelf Surveys and Tests

If you don't have the time or expertise, but have the money; and/or if you desire **benchmarked** data (allows the comparison of your results to other libraries' data), there are many products available for information competence, service satisfaction, and collections assessment. One has to weigh the advantages of using off the shelf vs. home made products in terms of specificity requirements for your library and/or customization options, in addition to cost, sampling requirements, and requirements for access to student data via identifying information. The following websites provide examples of off the shelf surveys/tests:

- Service Quality: [LibQUAL+ \(R\) \(http://libqual.org/about/about\\_lq\)](http://libqual.org/about/about_lq)
- Information Literacy: Blevens, C.L. (2012). [Catching up with information literacy assessment: Resources for program evaluation \(http://crlin.acrl.org/content/73/4/202.full.pdf+html\)](http://crlin.acrl.org/content/73/4/202.full.pdf+html). *College & Research Libraries News*, 73(4), 202-206.

### Step Four: Gather the Data

When using online commercial survey software, such as [SurveyMonkey<sup>®</sup>](http://www.surveymonkey.com/) (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/>) or off the shelf surveys, this step is automatically handled by the system. Data is typically gathered in [comma delimited \(separated\) values](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comma_delimited) ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comma\\_delimited](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comma_delimited)) in rows, where each row represents a respondent and each column the question response, which means it can be imported into Excel, SPSS, SAS, and other statistical packages. Some WYSIWYG products, such as SurveyMonkey, provide basic descriptive data in an easy to read and share format, such as automatically creating tables and charts that illustrate the data that can be added to reports, etc. However, to make inferences from the data, such as determining cause and effect or impact, one has to import the data from the survey/test software into SPSS or another statistical package, which are described in Step Five, and analyze the data for [statistical significance](http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-statistical-significance.htm) (<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-statistical-significance.htm>).

## Step Five: Analyze the Data

---

## IL Assessment Methods

[Surveys/Tests](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/surveys) (<https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/surveys>).

[up](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips) (<https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips>).

☰ Outline ▾

[Other Methods](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/other-methods) ▸ (<https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/other-methods>).

### Curriculum Mapping

Curriculum mapping refers to the identification of which information literacy competencies or other student learning outcomes are covered by library instruction (whether delivered in person, online, or hybrid) for a particular department, program, course, or class level. Once the curriculum is mapped, courses etc. can be logically targeted for assessment. The following template, examples, and links provide more information:

- Sumsion, J. & Goodfellow, J. (2004). [Identifying generic skills through curriculum mapping: a critical evaluation](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0729436042000235436) (<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0729436042000235436>). *Higher Education Research & Development*, 23(3), 320-346.
- [Curriculum Mapping: What is It?](https://library.csun.edu/sites/default/files/users/kdabbour/documents/WhatsCurricMapping.ppt.pdf) (.ppt) (<https://library.csun.edu/sites/default/files/users/kdabbour/documents/WhatsCurricMapping.ppt.pdf>).
- [Course Alignment Matrix/Planning Guide](http://www.csun.edu/~assess/docs/course_alignment_%20matrix_course_objectives_chart.doc) (template) ([http://www.csun.edu/~assess/docs/course\\_alignment\\_%20matrix\\_course\\_objectives\\_chart.doc](http://www.csun.edu/~assess/docs/course_alignment_%20matrix_course_objectives_chart.doc)).
- [General Education IC Map Survey of Librarians](https://library.csun.edu/sites/default/files/users/kdabbour/documents/geicmapsurvey.xls) (template) (<https://library.csun.edu/sites/default/files/users/kdabbour/documents/geicmapsurvey.xls>).
- [Information Competence Matrix](https://library.csun.edu/sites/default/files/users/kdabbour/documents/matrix.xls) (example) (<https://library.csun.edu/sites/default/files/users/kdabbour/documents/matrix.xls>).
- [Information Competence Matrix Report](https://library.csun.edu/sites/default/files/users/kdabbour/documents/ICcurriculummatrixspr08.doc) (example) (<https://library.csun.edu/sites/default/files/users/kdabbour/documents/ICcurriculummatrixspr08.doc>).

### Specific Methods

#### Rubrics

[Rubrics](http://fmuellerruoy.noctrl.edu/toolbox/rubrics.htm) (<http://fmuellerruoy.noctrl.edu/toolbox/rubrics.htm>), are ranked measures of student learning outcomes presented in the form of a matrix of criteria and rankings, such as determining the quality of resources (authority, source, currency, breadth, depth, etc.) cited in an assignment and/or the efficacy of student search strategies as outlined in a search journal or another type of summary of how and from where resources were obtained. This is considered a **direct** as well as **authentic** assessment of student learning in that the focus is on actual student output. There are many information literacy related rubrics available on the Internet. Rubric examples:

- [AACU Information Literacy VALUE Rubric](http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/pdf/InformationLiteracy.pdf) (<http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/pdf/InformationLiteracy.pdf>).
- [Annotated Bibliography Rubric \(CSU San Marcos\)](http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=gradowski%20goodman%20gould&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CEoQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.scu.edu%2Fdocs%2FSCU%2FLibrary%2FOradre%2FservicGaX02wWB64GIAQ&usq=AFQjCNG_JpY4dyU4ZtgGnbz4LNUK-4jOTw) ([http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=gradowski%20goodman%20gould&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CEoQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.scu.edu%2Fdocs%2FSCU%2FLibrary%2FOradre%2FservicGaX02wWB64GIAQ&usq=AFQjCNG\\_JpY4dyU4ZtgGnbz4LNUK-4jOTw](http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=gradowski%20goodman%20gould&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CEoQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.scu.edu%2Fdocs%2FSCU%2FLibrary%2FOradre%2FservicGaX02wWB64GIAQ&usq=AFQjCNG_JpY4dyU4ZtgGnbz4LNUK-4jOTw)).
- [Information Competence Rubric \(CSUN\)](https://library.csun.edu/sites/default/files/users/kdabbour/documents/infocomprubric.doc) (<https://library.csun.edu/sites/default/files/users/kdabbour/documents/infocomprubric.doc>).
- [Information Literacy Guidelines for Rubrics \(Delaware Tech\)](https://library.dtcc.edu/wilmlib/infolitguide.pdf) (<https://library.dtcc.edu/wilmlib/infolitguide.pdf>).
- [Rubrics for Assessing Information Competence in the California State University](http://www.library.csun.edu/sites/default/files/users/kdabbour/documents/infocomprubric.doc) (reprint, see p. 7)
- [Rubric for Assessing Research Papers \(ACRL, CLIP Note #32\)](http://library.oglethorpe.edu/files/2016/08/UseofScholarlyResources_Rubric.pdf) ([http://library.oglethorpe.edu/files/2016/08/UseofScholarlyResources\\_Rubric.pdf](http://library.oglethorpe.edu/files/2016/08/UseofScholarlyResources_Rubric.pdf)).

#### Surveys/Tests

Surveys/Tests refers to close-ended, multiple-choice, forced choice (yes/no, true/false); or open-ended short answer or essay questions. This can be **direct** or **indirect** assessment of student learning, but the method is not **authentic** in that it does not measure actual student work or student search behaviors.

#### Embedded IL Assessment

The following table of assessment tools were borrowed from the results of a survey of departments at California State University Northridge conducted by the Coordinator of Academic Assessment and Program Review. The columns labeled "survey/test," "rubric," and "other" indicate methods to consider for information literacy assessment to be embedded or applied to these general tools. The advantage to this method is 100% return rate and the application of authentic IL assessment to actual student work.

Tool	Survey/Test	Rubric	Other
Term paper/speech outline, etc. (requires outside research, possibly research summary)		X	
Capstone course thesis/project/activity (requires outside research, possibly research summary)		X	
Embedded exam questions (objective or open-ended within a quiz/midterm/final)	X		
Portfolio (requires outside research, possibly research summary)		X	
Pretest/posttest	X		
Fieldwork/internship/student teaching evaluation (embedded research summary)		X	X
Interviews/focus groups (pre- or post-library instruction)			X
Self-rating skills or attitudes toward library research/instruction/use	X		X

Survey	X		X
--------	---	--	---

## Further Reading

- Knight, L.A. (2006). Using rubrics to assess information literacy. *Reference Services Review*, 34(1), 43-55. doi: [10.1108/00907320610640752](https://doi.org/10.1108/00907320610640752) (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00907320610640752>)
- Oakleaf, M. , & Kaske, N. (2009). Guiding questions for assessing information literacy in higher education. *Portal: Libraries & the Academy*, 9(2), 273-286. doi: [10.1353/pla.0.0046](https://doi.org/10.1353/pla.0.0046) (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/pla.0.0046>)
- Sobel, K. , & Wolf, K. (2011). Updating your tool belt: Redesigning assessments of learning in the library (<http://libproxy.csun.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=llf&AN=503013632&site=ehost-live>). *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, 50(3), 245-258.

.

## Other Methods

---

[◀ IL Assessment Methods \(https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/information-literacy\)](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/information-literacy)

☰ Outline ▼

[up \(https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips\)](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips)

[Statistical Analysis ▶ \(https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/statistical-analysis\)](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/statistical-analysis)

In addition to the information presented in the Surveys/Tests and IL Assessment Methods tabs, there are many other qualitative methodologies for assessing library services, resources, and impact. The following is a summary of other popular methods with quick links to more information.

### Interviews

- Turner, III, D.W. (2010). *Qualitative interview design: A practical guide for novice investigators* (<http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR15-3/qjd.pdf>). *The Qualitative Report*, 15(3), 754-760.
- Boyce, C. and Neale, P. (May, 2010). *Conducting in-depth interviews: A guide for designing and conducting in-depth interviews for evaluation input* ([http://www2.pathfinder.org/site/DocServer/m\\_e\\_tool\\_series\\_indepth\\_interviews.pdf](http://www2.pathfinder.org/site/DocServer/m_e_tool_series_indepth_interviews.pdf)). Pathfinder International Tool Series: Monitoring and Evaluation -- 2.

### Focus Groups

- Glitz, B. (1998). *Focus groups for libraries and librarians* (<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/40390466>). NY: Forbes.

### Unobtrusive Data Analyses (examples)

- Checkout data
- Library instruction attendance
- Gate Count
- Web page hits
- Electronic resource usage
- "Secret Shoppers"
- Correlating student retention and library use
- Return on Investment (ROI)

### Further Reading

- Matthews, J. R. (2007). *The evaluation and measurement of library services* (<http://suncat.csun.edu/record=b2148508>). Westport, Conn: Libraries Unlimited.

.

## Statistical Analysis

---

[Other Methods](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/other-methods/) (<https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/other-methods/>)

☰ Outline ▾

[up](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/) (<https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/>)

[Closing the Loop](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/reporting/) > (<https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/reporting/>)

### Introduction

There are two types of statistics required to analyze data generated by tests, surveys, and other quantifiable methodologies:

### Descriptive Statistics

- Reporting or describing summary data without drawing any conclusions, such as total number and percent who answered a question a certain way. Typically, descriptive data is presented in summary tables or graphs.

### Inferential Statistics

- After the use of appropriate tests and correlations, data is presented as predictive or causative of a certain behavior, generalized to a population, or confirming or dis-confirming a test of a hypothesis.

### Help with Statistical Analysis

- [CSUN IT Training Guides: SPSS](http://www.csun.edu/it/training/guides/) (<http://www.csun.edu/it/training/guides/>).
- [Tools to Help You Learn and Use SPSS](http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/spss/) (<http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/spss/>).
- [Simple Interactive Statistical Analysis \(SISA\)](http://www.quantitativeskills.com/sisa/) (<http://www.quantitativeskills.com/sisa/>).
- [Calculating Basic Statistical Procedures in SPSS: A Self-Help and Practical Guide to Preparing Theses, Dissertations, and Manuscripts](http://cnx.org/content/col11292/latest/) (<http://cnx.org/content/col11292/latest/>).
- [Excel for Statistical Data Analysis](http://home.ubalt.edu/ntsbarsh/excel/excel.htm) (<http://home.ubalt.edu/ntsbarsh/excel/excel.htm>).

### Further Reading

- Matthews, J. R. (2007). *The evaluation and measurement of library services* (<http://suncat.csun.edu/record=b2148508>). Westport, Conn: Libraries Unlimited.
- Vaughan, L. (2001). *Statistical Methods for the Information Professional: A Practical, Painless Approach to Understanding, Using, and Interpreting Statistics*. (<http://suncat.csun.edu/record=b1831008>). Medford, N.J.: Published for the American Society for Information Science and Technology by Information Today.

).

## Closing the Loop

---

[← Statistical Analysis \(https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/statistical-analysis\)](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/statistical-analysis)

☰ Outline ▾

[up \(https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips\)](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips)

[Further Reading > \(https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/further-reading\)](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/further-reading)

"Closing the loop" refers to the generation of reports and other methods for communicating the results of an assessment plan or project to publicize results as well as encourage changes in library services, funding, etc. Often these are shared on library web sites. Here are some examples:

### Background

- [Reporting Assessment Results \(school library focus, but relevant\) \(http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/methods/assment/as600.htm\)](http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/methods/assment/as600.htm).
- [USC Institutional Assessment and Compliance: Assessment Toolbox \(examples of plans and reports\) \(http://www.ipr.sc.edu/effectiveness/toolbox/\)](http://www.ipr.sc.edu/effectiveness/toolbox/).

### Examples of Reports

- [2009-2010 Hartfield Library Assessment Report, Henderson Community College \(http://henderson.kctcs.edu/en/academics/library/~media/Henderson/Academics/Library/Unit%20Library%20Services%20PAI%20Report%20200910.ashx\)](http://henderson.kctcs.edu/en/academics/library/~media/Henderson/Academics/Library/Unit%20Library%20Services%20PAI%20Report%20200910.ashx).
- [Oviatt Library Assessment Annual Reports to Campus \(https://library.csun.edu/About/Assessment#jumpprojects\)](https://library.csun.edu/About/Assessment#jumpprojects).
- [Triennial Surveys--University of Washington Libraries \(http://www.lib.washington.edu/assessment/surveys/triennial\)](http://www.lib.washington.edu/assessment/surveys/triennial).

### Examples of Library Assessment Web Sites

- [Oviatt Library Assessment \(https://library.csun.edu/About/Assessment\)](https://library.csun.edu/About/Assessment).
- [Duke Libraries Assessment \(http://library.duke.edu/about/assessment/\)](http://library.duke.edu/about/assessment/).
- [Library Assessment @ Illinois \(http://www.library.illinois.edu/assessment/\)](http://www.library.illinois.edu/assessment/).
- [Libraries Assessment--University of Washington \(http://www.lib.washington.edu/assessment/\)](http://www.lib.washington.edu/assessment/).

()

## Further Reading

[← Closing the Loop \(https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/reporting\)](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/reporting)

☰ Outline ▾

[up \(https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips\)](https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips)

The following is a highly selective bibliography of useful books, specific journals, articles, websites, and other resources offering help with library assessment.

### Books:

- Beck, S. E., & Manuel, K. (2008). *Practical research methods for librarians and information professionals* (<http://suncat.csun.edu/record=b2312947>). New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers.
- Cook, D., & Farmer, L. S. J. (Eds.). (2011). *Using qualitative methods in action research: How librarians can get to the why of data*. (<http://suncat.csun.edu/record=b2699775>) Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries.
- Hernon, P., Dugan, R. E., & Nitecki, D. A. (2011). *Engaging in evaluation and assessment research*. (<http://suncat.csun.edu/record=b2699784>) Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited.
- Matthews, J. R. (2007). *The evaluation and measurement of library services* (<http://suncat.csun.edu/record=b2148508>). Westport, Conn: Libraries Unlimited.
- Neely, T. Y. (2006). *Information literacy assessment: Standards-based tools and assignments*. (<http://suncat.csun.edu/record=b2041712>) Chicago: American Library Association.
- Radcliff, C. J., Jensen, M.E., Salem, Jr., J.A., Burhanna, K.J., & Gedeon, J.A. (2007). *A practical guide to information literacy assessment for academic librarians* (<http://suncat.csun.edu/record=b2624517>). Westport, Conn: Libraries Unlimited.
- Sproull, N. L. (1988). *Handbook of research methods: A guide for practitioners and students in the social sciences* (<http://suncat.csun.edu/record=b1572245>). Metuchen, N.J: Scarecrow Press.

### Journals:

In addition to the peer reviewed journals in library science, the following journals have practical articles on assessment.

- *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education* (<http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/caeh20/current>)
- *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice* (<https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/ebliip/index.php/EBLIP>)
- *Practical Assessment, Research and Evaluation* (<http://pareonline.net/>)
- *Research & Practice in Assessment* (<http://www.virginiaassessment.org/rpa.html>)

### Articles:

- Hernon, P. & Schwartz, C. (2012). The assessment craze. *Library & Information Science Research*, 34(2),79. doi: [10.1016/j.lisr.2012.01.001](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.lisr.2012.01.001) (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.lisr.2012.01.001>)
- Oakleaf, M. (2008). Dangers and opportunities: A conceptual map of information literacy assessment approaches. *Portal: Libraries & the Academy*, 8(3), 233-253. doi: [10.1353/pla.0.0011](http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/pla.0.0011) (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/pla.0.0011>)
- Sundberg, Marshall D. (2002). Assessing student learning. *Cell Biology Education, Spring-Summer (1)*, 11–15. doi: [10.1187/cbe.02-03-0007](http://dx.doi.org/10.1187/cbe.02-03-0007) (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1187/cbe.02-03-0007>)

### Reports:

- Ewell, P., Paulson, K., and Kinzie, J. (2011). *Down and in: Assessment practices at the program level* (<https://library.csun.edu/kdabbour/library-assessment-tips/catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/student-learning-outcomes/>). National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

### Websites:

- [AAC&U Resources | Assessment \(http://www.aacu.org/resources/assessment/index.cfm\)](http://www.aacu.org/resources/assessment/index.cfm)
- [Value of Academic Libraries Toolkit, ACRL \(http://www.ala.org/acrl/issues/value/valueofacademiclibrariestoolkit\)](http://www.ala.org/acrl/issues/value/valueofacademiclibrariestoolkit)
- [Office of Academic Assessment, CSUN \(http://www.csun.edu/assessment/\)](http://www.csun.edu/assessment/)
- [Assessment, University of Connecticut \(http://assessment.uconn.edu/index.html\)](http://assessment.uconn.edu/index.html)
- [Internet Resources for Higher Education Outcomes Assessment \(http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/resource.htm\)](http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/resource.htm)
- [University of Washington Libraries Assessment \(http://www.lib.washington.edu/assessment/\)](http://www.lib.washington.edu/assessment/)
- [Research Methods Knowledge Base \(http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/contents.php\)](http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/contents.php)

- [Reporting Statistical Results in Your Paper \(http://abacus.bates.edu/~ganderso/biology/resources/writing/HTWstats.html\)](http://abacus.bates.edu/~ganderso/biology/resources/writing/HTWstats.html).
- [National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment \(http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/index.html\)](http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/index.html).

**Social Media:**

- [libraryassessment.info \(blog\) \(http://libraryassessment.info/\)](http://libraryassessment.info/).

**Conferences:**

- [Library Assessment Conference: Building Effective, Sustainable, Practical Assessment \(http://libraryassessment.org/\)](http://libraryassessment.org/).
- [International Conference on Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Libraries \(http://www.qqml.org/\)](http://www.qqml.org/).

**Professional Organizations:**

- [Association of Research Libraries \(http://www.arl.org/\)](http://www.arl.org/).
- LLAMA Measurement, Assessment, and Evaluation Section (MAES)