

Memorandum

by Alyssa Boardman

To: Dan Rooney, Communication Skills Instructor, Western Technical College
From: Alyssa Boardman, Western Technical College Student
Date: March 25, 2016
Subject: Library Usage on Western Technical College's La Crosse Campus
Research Document

Proposed Research Study

Within this research study, I propose to study on-campus library usage by students at Western Technical College. In order to drive this proposal, I plan to base my research on the question "How can Western enhance its library to more effectively create student success?" With the results from this study, I wish to present Western with this information to ensure that student's desires, specifically in a library setting, are being met in order to create the best learning environment possible for students.

Current Literature On This Topic

Though it can be examined that nearly every college in the country has a functioning academic library on its campus, this does not mean that students are utilizing these on-campus facilities. In my research on this this issue, I have found several credible sources that demonstrate that this issue is a concern nation-wide. The sources are as follows:

Ballard, Susan. "ALA Presidential Task Force: Focus On School Libraries." *School Library Monthly* 28.6 (2012): 15-17. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 23 Mar. 2016.

In this source, data presented by the American Library Association (ALA) proves that library usage around the United States is a major concern. It is cited in the source that schools without a functioning library program can have serious consequences, such as diminished student achievement levels, and even increased unemployment and criminal rates. In addition to listing concerns, this source lists goals which the ALA plans to follow in order to create more functioning libraries nation-wide. The information in this source applies to this research project in that it has credible statistical information on the negative aspects of low levels of library usage; this source clearly demonstrates that library usage truly contributes to student success.

Massengale, Lisa, Pattie Piotrowski, and Devin Savage. "Identifying And Articulating Library Connections To Student Success." *College & Research Libraries* 77.2 (2016): 227-235. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 23 Mar. 2016.

This source is a research study that proves that the more services an academic library offers, the more likely students are to use the library. It is cited that the studied population of library users that used several services in a library setting actually had a higher GPA than the general population of their fellow classmates who did not. In addition, this source demonstrates that students have different reasons as to why they utilize their campus library, and that this fact is a stepping stone in understanding how to increase usage. This information in this source will be useful in this research because it contains proven statistical data in regards to what services are used most commonly in a library setting, in addition to what services are used least.

Watson, Lemuel W. "How Do Students' Perceptions Of Their Library Usage Influence Their Educational Outcomes." *College Student Journal* 35.3 (2001): 366. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 23 Mar. 2016.

This source is a research study that depicts how college students perceive going to their on-campus library. The study was completed at an anonymous community college and surveyed students at every grade level. The results of the survey indicated that students who comfortably use the library on campus on a regular basis are more likely to have greater success than students who do not use the library. The source uses direct feedback given by students to demonstrate that students who willingly use the library are more likely to succeed than students who do not because of their personal desire for success. The direct feedback within this source will be useful in this research project because it demonstrates that if Western desires to enhance its academic library, then its students' perspectives of the library must first be understood.

Process Of Completion

In order to complete this research study as efficiently as possible, I have created a series of steps to follow. The first step has already been completed in this research study. The steps are as follows:

1. Select a topic of interest, and conduct secondary research on the topic. Use the sources found in this research to create an annotated bibliography. Completion of this step should be no later than Saturday, March 26.

2. Complete primary research of the topic by conducting an online survey that applies to both students and staff at Western. The purpose of this research is to gain understanding of library usage here at Western, as well as how to increase it. Completion of this step should be no later than Thursday, March 31.

3. Create a formal report using the information gathered from both the primary and secondary research that gives potential answers to the proposed research question. This step should be completed no later than Thursday, April 14.

4. Create a presentation that covers the information found during research. This presentation should be completed in Microsoft PowerPoint, and should be completed no later than Thursday, April 21.

5. Create an informal document that reflects on the research study as a whole. This step is to be completed by Wednesday, April 27.

Concluding Thoughts

The information found within this study will not only be beneficial for Western to acknowledge and understand, but it will also be beneficial in the sense that it will allow the college the proper information on increasing library usage on campus. In all, this study will provide information that would only allow the academic library on campus to grow and change for the betterment of both students and staff.