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## Creating an Outreach Story: Assessment Results, Strategic Planning, and Reflection

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# Creating an Outreach Story: Assessment Results, Strategic Planning, and Reflection

*Amy Wainwright and Rosan Mitola\**

## Introduction

Academic library outreach and student engagement initiatives often strive to connect students to learning spaces, resources, and experts. Librarians do this work to raise awareness of services and to remove barriers so students feel more comfortable seeking help. Additionally, these activities promote the academic library as a hub of engagement, innovation, and continual learning to various user groups. Unfortunately, because these learning experiences can often be unique or serendipitous, measuring how these efforts are contributing to the library's teaching, learning, and research missions can be difficult. This paper focuses on how academic librarians can align their outreach to strategic goals and utilize assessment data to evaluate and share the impact of their work. Case studies from two institutions will provide a structure for other institutions. Additionally, this paper will share examples of qualitative and quantitative assessment, which can be adapted and modified for a variety of uses.

## Literature Review

Assessing, evaluating, and articulating the impact of student engagement and outreach efforts is a growing trend. Surprisingly, there are not robust examples in the library literature of assessing co-curricular outreach activities and programs. Farrell and Mastel share a number of assessment tools to evaluate event goals and measure impact, but a gap remains in the scholarly conversation around quantitative and qualitative assessment of student learning outside of the library instruction classroom.<sup>1</sup> A survey of libraries involved in exam week programming found that only 9 percent of respondents used an assessment method beyond counting number of event attendees and utilizing surveys and social media to gather feedback.<sup>2</sup> Even though librarians are able to identify the general benefits of outreach activities, a recently published national survey found that very few assess their efforts.<sup>3</sup>

German and LeMire also acknowledge the literature gap surrounding programmatic outreach assessment, and suggest it may exist in part due to the broad definition that outreach encompasses.<sup>4</sup> The authors posit that in many recent articles sharing “creative and innovative outreach success stories, a number of them fail to discuss substantive strategies for assessing the impact and efficacy of the outreach.”<sup>5</sup>

In 2018, the Association of Research Libraries published a SPEC Kit on outreach and engagement. The executive summary shared survey findings from 55 responding institutions and noted that “libraries employed a variety of assessment methods, but the most common types were headcounts (55 respondents, or 98%), observations (53 respondents, or 95%), feedback from outreach volunteers or partners (49 respondents, or 88%), and collecting comments (46 respondents, or 82%). Some types of assessment methods were uncommon, including minute papers (11 respondents, or 20%), interviews (16 respondents, or 29%), and focus groups (21 respondents, or 28%).”<sup>6</sup>

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Although libraries are beginning to publish assessment findings of their outreach events, larger-scale, programmatic assessment remains an area of growth for the library literature. Librarians at the University of Washington developed an assessment framework in order to demonstrate value and impact, as well as measure if they were “creating strategic, sustainable, and scalable outreach programs.”<sup>7</sup> Additionally, LeMire and Graves used curriculum mapping techniques to develop outreach learning outcomes, create a framework to measure instruction and outreach goals, and scaffold programming.<sup>8</sup> They found that “curriculum mapping proved a useful method for creating strategic and intentional instruction and outreach programs that complement rather than compete with each other.”<sup>9</sup> Aligning outreach to organizational or institutional goals and priorities is one pathway to expanding programmatic assessment efforts.

## Case Studies

The two libraries featured in our case studies seem to be at opposite ends of the spectrum of academic libraries. John Carroll and University of Nevada, Las Vegas are institutions with different strategic plans, diverse types of students, and are even geographically very distinct. However, in order to provide students with adequate support in their academic career, librarians have devised ways to assess co-curricular activities and wellness support.

### *John Carroll University*

John Carroll University is a small, Jesuit, masters-granting institution just outside of Cleveland, Ohio. John Carroll (JCU) is a fairly traditional campus; most students live on campus and are traditional-aged. JCU’s average full-time enrollment is roughly 3,700 undergraduates and graduate students combined. As a Jesuit institution, John Carroll is mission-driven and integrates Ignatian pedagogy into many levels of student experience with a special focus on reflection and care for the whole person—*cura personalis*.

In John Carroll’s library, Grasselli Library and Breen Learning Center, students find spaces that accommodate their needs, whether for group projects, quiet study, or wellness support. Grasselli Library has the honor of being the most used building on campus and because of this, outreach and engagement activities are not focused on bringing students into the library, but instead target library anxiety, academic stress, and other wellness initiatives. The Learning Commons, housed in the lower level of the library, provides academic and wellness support and is the space where many outreach activities are provided. In 2014, JCU created the Outreach and Student Engagement librarian to coordinate co-curricular support, market services, and create welcoming spaces for students in Grasselli.

When I was hired as the Outreach and Student Engagement Librarian, it signaled a shift in priorities at Grasselli. It was the latest step toward bringing together the university mission and library goals. A part of my job as the Outreach Librarian is to oversee the Learning Commons which serves as the library’s hub of academic and wellness support. Academic support happens largely through subject-specific study tables, with paid Peer Learning Facilitators (PLFs) that are recommended by their faculty because they have taken the appropriate classes, achieved good grades, and are knowledgeable about the topic they will be facilitating. The Learning Commons currently offers 18 subject study tables (Biology, Computer Science, Accounting, Political Science, Philosophy, etc.) and provides satellite services from the Writing Center and Career Services. As mentioned, wellness support is considered equally important in the Learning Commons. Currently, the Learning Commons offers a regularly scheduled series of study breaks called Wellness in the Stacks, houses a Relaxation Room, and offers a variety of workshops and other study breaks throughout the semester.

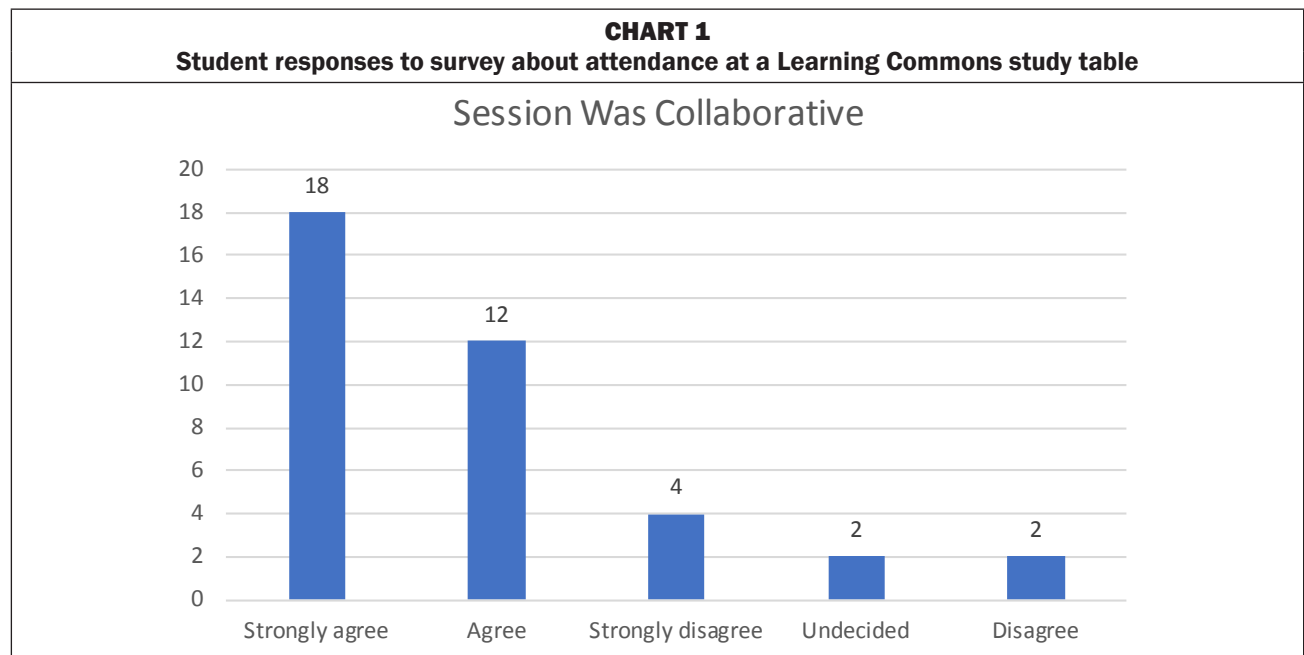
Initially, the only data that was being collected in the Learning Commons was strictly head counts/attendance numbers. In order to better assess the Learning Commons, I decided to use the established University Learning Goals as the structure for my outcomes.<sup>10</sup> This work helps ensure the Learning Commons is in line

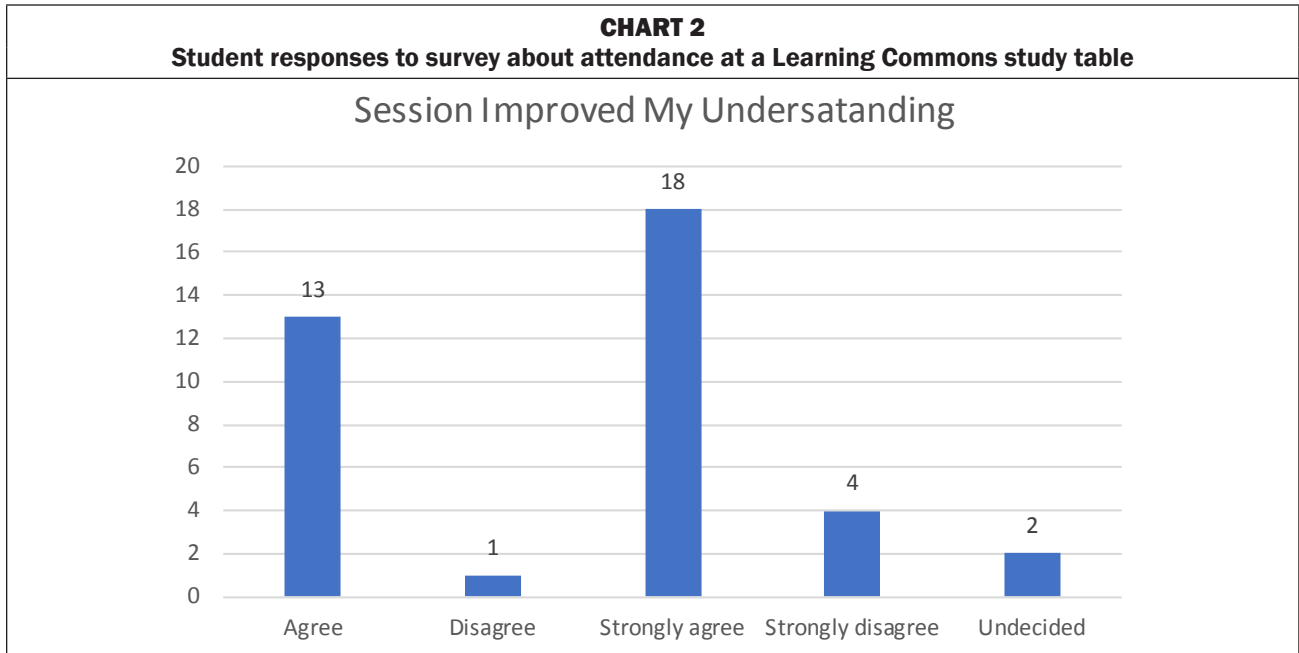
with university goals and the library’s mission. The University Learning Goals focus on four main components—Leadership, Character, Service, and Intellect. Each goal includes sub-categories that give a more complete picture of the concept. During the process of building a more robust assessment plan for the Learning Commons I created an inventory of all services and events. This inventory tracked key pieces of information for the co-curricular support services provided including: frequency/regularity of event, main point of contact for any collaboration (person or office), estimated or average attendance, and finally, which University Learning Goal aligned with the event. After this inventory was complete, it was easy to comprehend which goals were most often covered and which areas needed more attention. Intellect is the goal area that is addressed most often through the study tables and support from the Writing Center, Career Services, and Academic Coaches. The Service goal area, on the other hand, is rarely utilized and is a potential area for growth. This inventory was helpful, but I wanted to move the co-curricular assessment past the point of only head counts and assuming when events and services were meeting learning goals. In order to move into the next phase of the assessment plan, I used the language of the University Learning Goals to assess the effectiveness of activities in the Learning Commons. So far, I mostly utilize questions inserted into surveys and established feedback tools. The examples below share a range of events where we have utilized this form of assessing outreach.

**Assessment Examples**

**Example 1: Peer Learning Facilitators and student attendees**

The most established assessment of the Learning Commons happens through the feedback from attendees at study tables and from training for the Peer Learning Facilitators (PLFs) who lead the study tables. Although this is not outreach in the typical sense, both of these examples align with our University Learning Goals of Intellect and Leadership and can be difficult to assess. Currently, students who visit a study table are asked to sign in with their campus ID and indicate whether they would be willing to give feedback about their experience at the study tables. There is not often a large response to this survey, which is issued to students after their study table session is complete; however, the responses that we have gathered indicate that study table attendees feel that they grow their understanding of the subject area in a collaborative way when working with a PLF (See chart 1 and chart 2).





After completing training to be a PLF, study table leaders are asked to reflect on their training. Training is provided by the Learning Commons Graduate Assistant in collaboration with the director of the Writing Center. Although the PLFs will lead study tables in specific subject areas, they are trained to work with students who may have different levels of learning, to encourage attendees to learn the subject areas (instead of doing work for them), and to recognize when attendees may need additional support outside of the study table (further academic or mental health support) and be able to provide resources to those students. Whether they are new or returning to the Learning Commons, PLFs receive training once a school year. PLFs that are returning and are not being trained for the first time indicate that there are skills they are learning on the job (how they could implement technology for their study sessions or the need for patience), but many things they learn in training are directly applicable in their study table sessions.

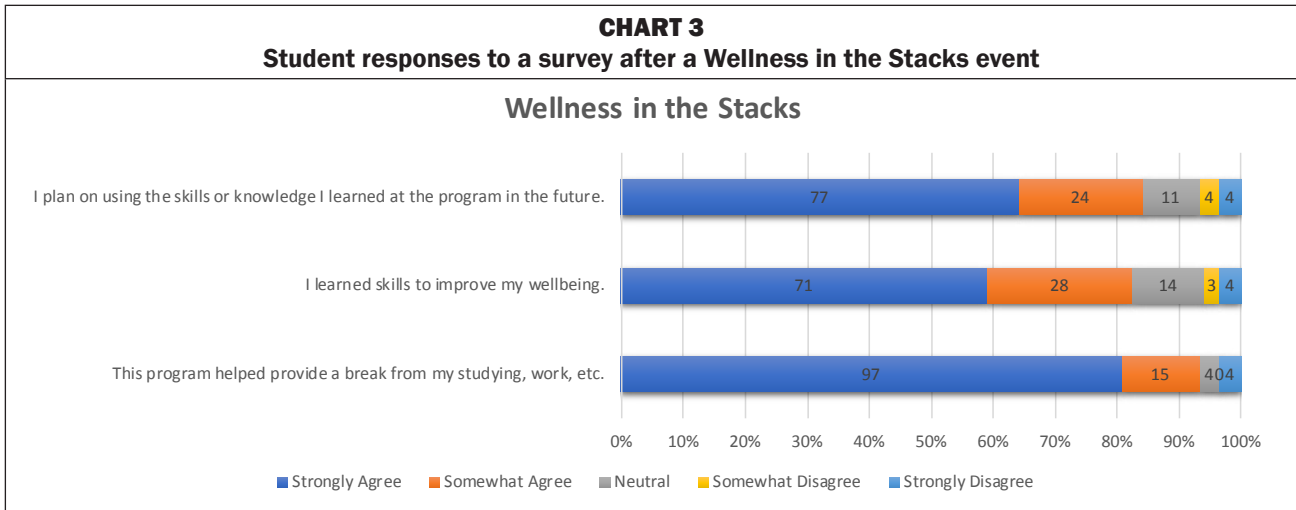
#### Example 2: Wellness in the Stacks

Wellness in the Stacks is a regularly scheduled study break that the library has hosted throughout the history of the Learning Commons. These study breaks are created, paid for, and staffed by our partners in Health and Wellness Promotion. The Learning Commons hosts these events for two hours on an established evening, roughly every other week throughout the semester, usually from 8:00 pm–10:00 pm. As is true for most events and services offered in the Learning Commons, Wellness in the Stacks is also peer-led by Peer Health Advocates that are employed by Health and Wellness Promotion. Each event is slightly different, but follows a similar pattern. Often there are crafts and snacks, sometimes there are therapy dogs, and each event includes some type of educational tie in. Examples of events include decorating water bottles with a focus on staying hydrated, assembling your own trail mix to emphasize healthy snacking, and making DIY room deodorizers in order to have a conversation about using essential oils to de-stress.

In years past, the data collected from these events was held by the Coordinator of Wellness Programming and only a headcount was shared with the library. More recently, after a job turnover, the new Coordinator agreed to work more closely with the library and Learning Commons. The Coordinator and I worked together to craft a new set of outcomes that were rolled out at the beginning of 2018. Students are asked how often they

visit the library, their stress levels, and whether they learned skills to improve their well being. These events are aligned to the Character University Learning Goal and more specifically to the concept of “Practice mature decision making and care for the whole person” (University Learning Goals, cite) or *cura personalis*.

According to the survey responses (see chart 3), students feel that they do have positive experiences at Wellness in the Stacks and are able to learn habits to support better mental health practices. This iteration of wellness assessment was adequate for a first try at using this new process, however, I am pushing us to do more authentic assessment in the future.



**Example 3: Poetry Reading**

In order to begin assessing regular events that are held outside of the confines of the Learning Commons, I distributed quick surveys throughout seating at a poetry reading. This poetry reading was held in conjunction with National Poetry Month and featured contributions from faculty and students. In an effort to include commuter students, faculty, and staff, this event was held during traditional lunch time, from noon–1:00. About 35 people, a mix of students, staff, and faculty attended the reading. The intended outcome from the event was, “attendees will understand, value, and respect their own and others’ talents, unique characteristics, and socio-cultural identities,” which is a subset of the University’s Character goal. In order to assess this goal, attendees were asked, “How important was this poetry reading to your experience as a member of JCU?” (See illustration 1). There

**ILLUSTRATION 1**  
**Sample poetry feedback form**

Grasselli Library and Green Learning Center

**Poetry Reading Feedback 4/23/18 Grasselli Library**  
Please help us improve our events! Questions? Contact Amy Wainwright, [awainwright@jcu.edu](mailto:awainwright@jcu.edu)

How important was this poetry reading to your experience as a member of JCU?

Not important                      Somewhat important                      Very important                      Essential

I would attend more events like this in the library in the future.

Strongly disagree                      Disagree                      Agree                      Strongly agree

were 22 responses, just over half (12) indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

Although not a part of the established outcome, attendees also responded to the prompt, “I would attend more events like this in the library in the future.” 21 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they would attend similar library events in the future.

The responses to this event were positive overall; however, after gathering the feedback there were a few lessons learned. In order to more accurately assess the learning outcome, the language of the survey question should more closely match the goal language.

### ***Librarian Reflections***

Although I am the sole librarian responsible for outreach and engagement, I am able to work with colleagues that are willing to support these events. These colleagues from around campus and in the library each bring unique skills and experiences to our outreach planning. As a Jesuit institution, there is a strong emphasis on reflection, and it is used regularly throughout the course of planning and implementation of outreach. This work aligns with the University Learning Goals as well and supports the Character goal to “Cultivate a habit of reflection.”<sup>11</sup> The library staff and faculty that I collaborate with mostly do our reflection in the form of email check-ins and post-event meetings. We do not use set prompts, but we all walk through our thoughts about the event, whether it will be repeated, and how it can be improved.

My student employees (Outreach Assistants) do receive formal reflection prompts at the end of each semester and are asked to consider their work contributions, things they have learned, and how the outreach experience can apply to their future career paths. Although our campus does not currently have a required university-wide student employee evaluation with reflection, I began implementing these exercises with my first hires in 2016. Outreach Assistants can be very creative with their reflections and often pull out surprising concepts from their work experience. For a list of questions that I have compiled, see Appendix A.

I practice this same habit of reflection for my outreach work. I take the time to write a reflection after each event. These thoughts are not often very organized, and after some events I am lucky remember to write down the barest few sentences. I have found that this practice has made event planning more streamlined. Sometimes the best ways to improve a recurring event can be identified during or immediately after the event and are possibly lost by the next planning session.

### ***Future Plans***

In order to do a more thorough assessment of my outreach, I plan to incorporate the actual language of the University Learning Goals more consistently. I also plan to use reflection in a more purposeful way for events where appropriate, instead of only with my employees and colleagues. Since the Coordinator of Student Wellness has been helpful with planning a new assessment launch, we have worked together to frame new goals and outcomes and identify ways to assess this work. We will launch this new assessment strategy in the fall and ask students to more regularly give us a gauge of their stress levels. With a baseline of this information, we will be able to compare their feedback before and after wellness events. We will utilize social media, emoji sticker boards, surveys, and reflection to ensure that we understand how students are responding to our interventions.

To fully close the loop of assessment, I will need to update and change my events, activities, and services. Some of the events that happen multiple times a semester or school year will benefit more quickly from the results of this assessment. However, I will not see the complete impact of this project until I have gone through a few iterations of assessment, update, and re-assess.

### *University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV)*

UNLV is a public, doctoral granting research university with a total headcount of over 30,000 students.<sup>12</sup> In Fall 2017, 25,282 students were enrolled in undergraduate programs, and for the past two years, UNLV has tied for first in U.S. News & World Report's annual listing of the most diverse universities for undergraduates.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, 40% of our undergraduate students self-identified as first-generation in Fall 2018. Since 1957, UNLV has grown tremendously into a thriving, urban university, with ambitious goals. In 2014, the campus developed the UNLV Top Tier Initiative with the aspiration that by 2025 UNLV will be recognized as a top tier public research university in research, education, and community impact.<sup>14</sup> In support of the UNLV Top Tier Initiative, the University Libraries aligned our Strategic Framework for July 2017—June 2019 with the university's five top tier goals: research, scholarship and creative activity; student achievement; academic health center; community partnerships; and infrastructure and shared governance.

Librarians engaged in co-curricular outreach collaborated on an outreach framework to align new activities and programs for undergraduate and graduate students with the Libraries' Strategic Framework and UNLV's Top Tier Goals. The plan informs and guides our strategic outreach programs, although not all of our work is documented, and we are not restricted to making our programs fit within these confines. Our purpose in developing this framework is to document our collective efforts to contribute to co-curricular student learning. It is a living document and includes guiding principles, which consists of an outreach mission statement, priorities for collaboration, and considerations for scaling programming. We articulate a commitment to holistic support of our students by devising activities that align with a range of wellness dimensions which address learning needs in intellectual, emotional, physical, social, occupational, and spiritual areas.<sup>15</sup> The document also considers if the activity supports any of the university's undergraduate learning outcomes, which define what skills and knowledge students should possess upon graduation. Additionally, the plan outlines a priority list of student audiences and campus offices and includes ongoing and existing activities. Finally, it provides a framework to align individual efforts to specific UNLV Top Tier Goals and elements from the Libraries' Strategic Plan.

Since drafting the framework, we use the document to track activities and collect key information including event date, expected outcome, a measurement of effectiveness, learning outcome, strategic plan item, wellness category(ies), library resources and/or services promoted, and staff responsible.<sup>16</sup> While co-curricular student learning can take place within all of UNLV's Top Tier Goals, the bulk of new activities developed align with the goals of student achievement and research, scholarship, and creative activity. The guiding document provides an intentional approach for new events and programs, while ensuring efforts are contributing to the whole student.

### ***Assessment Examples***

There is no one-size fits all method for collecting data and assessing the impact of outreach. Sometimes staffing or time restraints make data collection nearly impossible at an event or program. The following examples highlight some of the ways we have measured the impact of an outreach event, activity, or program.

#### Example 1: Survey

In partnership with several academic support offices, the Libraries offered incoming first-generation students and their guardians a two-day series of workshops prior to the start of their first semester. The collaborative bridge program intended to provide participants with the opportunity to develop a peer network, connect with campus resources, learn valuable information about UNLV, discuss the transition to college, and engage with faculty. The program was piloted in August 2017 and repeated, with small modifications, in August 2018.



As a way to gather feedback and reflect on the program, we surveyed student and guardian participants. The 2017 cohort (66 students and 25 guardians) were surveyed a few days after the event via an emailed Qualtrics form. The response rate was low for guardians, so in 2018, we surveyed students via Qualtrics after the event while parents completed a paper survey on-site at the end of the day. This change resulted in a much higher participation rate of the guardian survey (35 of 50 guardians).

Both surveys asked satisfaction-based questions using a Likert scale, such as “overall, I was satisfied with my experience” and “I feel better prepared for college after attending.” We gathered feedback about the event to help with future iterations, such as “the length of the program was appropriate” and “overall, the event was well organized.” We used open-ended questions to find out the most helpful or interesting part of the program. We also asked open-ended questions regarding one thing they would keep and one thing they would change about the program for next year.

The feedback collected will shape the program for 2019. Additionally, we included survey responses in a report to university stakeholders to demonstrate perceived value from participants. Beyond the survey, we used growth in participation as a metric to communicate program reach.

#### Example 2: Post-event Reflection and Survey

At the conclusion of two Wikipedia Edit-a-thon Events in 2018, we utilized a Google form to gather event feedback and provide attendees with the opportunity to reflect on their experience. Our purpose in hosting Wikipedia Edit-a-thons are for attendees to identify gaps in representation on Wikipedia and to utilize library resources in order to improve pages. We tailored our questions and reflective prompts to address these event outcomes.

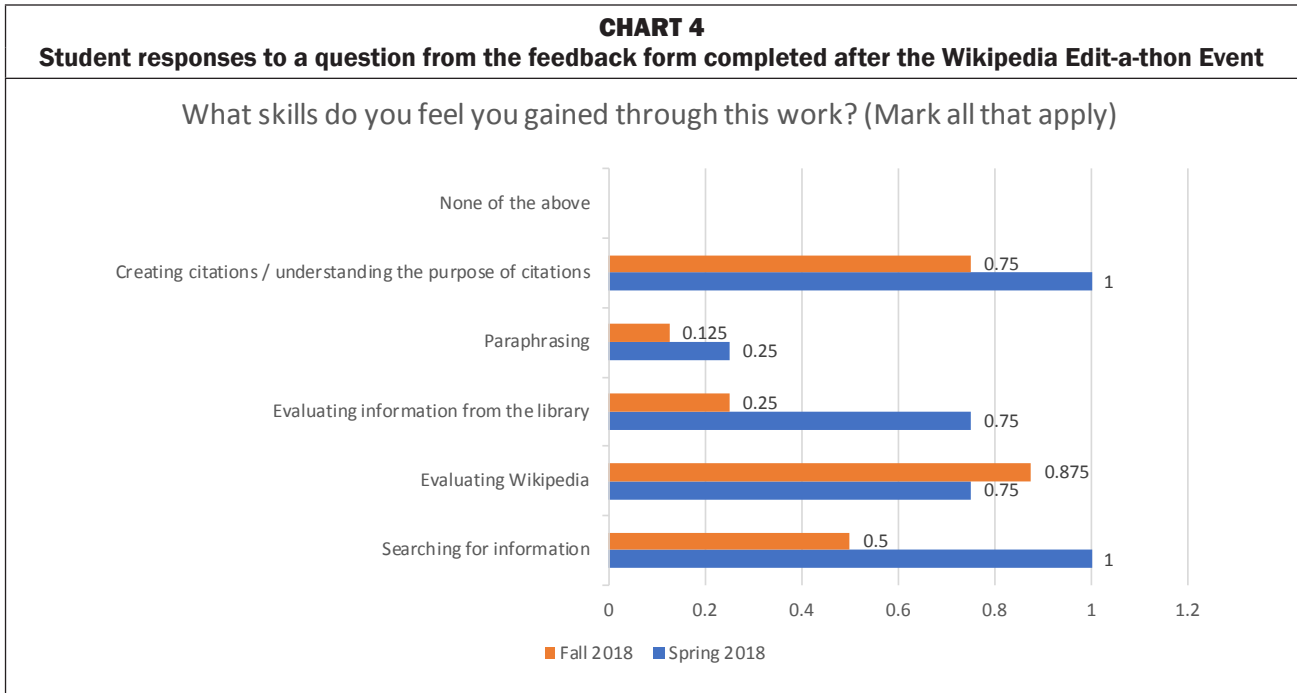
We asked attendees to respond to these questions prior to leaving the event:

- What surprised you the most about what you learned about Wikipedia today?
- What skills do you feel you gained through this work? Mark all that apply. (Searching for information, evaluating Wikipedia, evaluating information from the library, paraphrasing, creating citations / understanding the purpose of citations, and none of the above).
- How has this event changed the way you think about Wikipedia as an information source?
- Anything else you'd like to share?

The feedback provided data we can share about why this is a meaningful event for co-curricular and curricular student learning. Responses to the question “how has this event changed the way you think about Wikipedia as an information source?” help us understand if their views have shifted as a result of the event. Responses included: “definitely reliable”, “it is more opinionated but they are cited with some resourceful work”, “more respect for good editors”, “teachers have told me that it isn't a reliable source, but I would explain it as sort of a library everyone can use to see other sources and gain insights on topics they are working on”, and “I feel like it would be more useful if there were more citations.” The assessment tool also provided us with quantitative data to share. We are able to state that by editing Wikipedia pages attendees report learning multiple skills (see chart 4).

The assessment tool provided us with data we could share to articulate value and impact, and after collecting this feedback in March 2018, the librarians who organized the event met and determined this could become an assignment for first-year seminars or other courses in the fall. We used the skills that students reported learning as part of a message to teaching faculty and instructors, and several responded asking if we could create a class assignment for them to use. In Fall 2018, students were able to either attend the edit-a-thon to complete the assignment, or do a modified version on their own.

In addition to the post-event reflection and survey, we also collected data through a Wikipedia dashboard on the number of editors, articles created, articles edited, total individual edits completed, and words added.



**Example 3: Whiteboard Responses**

We utilize whiteboard prompts at many of our outreach events. Our primary event space has several whiteboards throughout the room, so we often design ways to utilize them. Whiteboard assessment can gather quantitative responses with polling questions, however our primary use is to collect qualitative feedback. They can be an interactive, reflective, and immediate way to ascertain perceived value.

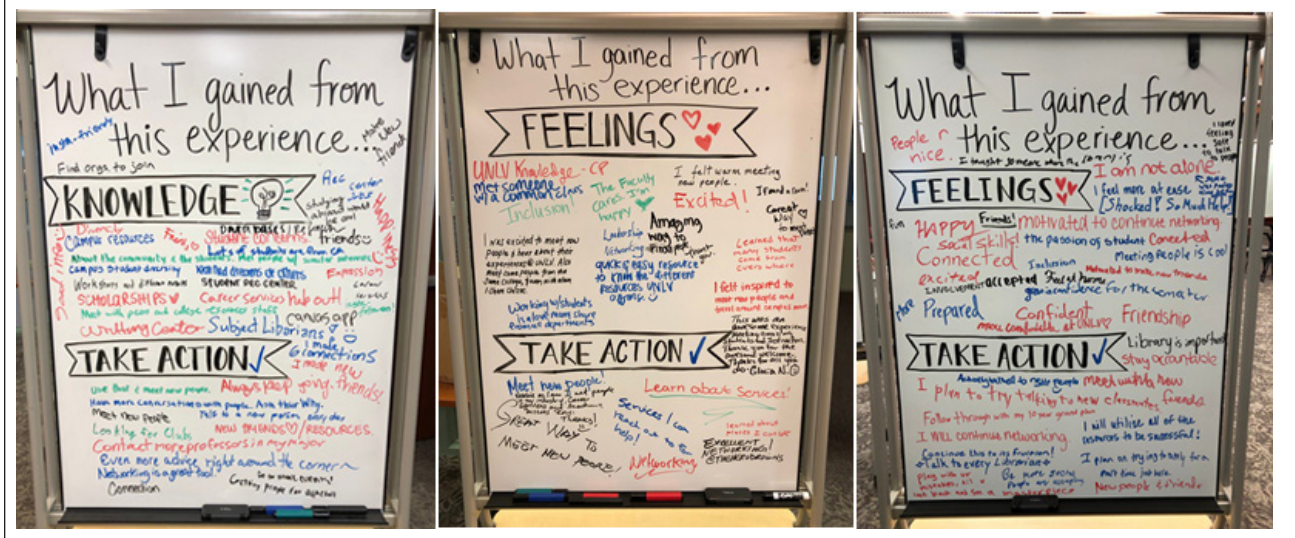
We have found a series of prompts to be both effective at gathering data and meaningful for respondents. Using an adapted model by Scannel, Mulvihill, and Schlosser, participants briefly reflect and respond to two sets of prompts on a whiteboard.<sup>17</sup> One white board asks: “What I gained from this experience: Knowledge” and how they will take action. The second whiteboard queries: “What I gained from this experience: Feelings” and asks how they will take action. Depending upon the event, the prompt could be tailored to other forms of learning, replacing feelings and knowledge with ideas or skills. We have utilized this assessment at several event types. See illustration 2, 3, and 4 for examples from our Fall 2018 Transfer Student Mixer.

To increase responses, we identify a volunteer librarian or one of our undergraduate peer coaches to encourage attendee participation. We have found it is helpful to have someone prompt students to complete the assessment as they’re departing from an event. We also have incentivized participation by giving away a modest library-branded promotional item (e.g., water bottle, notebook, highlighter).

For the Transfer Student Mixer event, this assessment approach was very helpful. It was the first time we hosted a social event for transfer students, and we used the responses to evaluate if our event outcomes were met. We wanted transfer students to discuss their previous academic and life experiences with other transfer students in order to develop a connection to current students and the university. We also planned the event in order for transfer students to identify services and resources available to them at the university. The responses included gaining knowledge of “diversity,” “campus resources,” “workshops and different events,” “about the community and students ...met people with similar interests,” “subject librarians!,” and “I made new friends.” Transfer students’ responses to how they would take action included: “talk to a new person everyday,” “contact more professors in my major,” and “meet new people.” For feelings gained, responses included “I felt warm meeting new

people,” “the faculty cares, I’m happy,” “I felt inspired to meet new people and travel around campus more,” “people are nice,” “I’m not alone,” and “I loved feeling safe talking to people.” Students shared that they would take action similarly to knowledge gained, by “meet[ing] with new friends” and “talk[ing] to people.” Additionally, students would “learn about services,” “I will utilize resources to be successful,” and “talk to every librarian.”

**ILLUSTRATION 2, 3, AND 4**  
**Student response to a whiteboard polling activity after the 2018 Transfer Student Mixer**



There are times when we do not have additional event staff to mediate the whiteboard assessment; however we have collected qualitative responses using shorter questions. To gather broad event feedback, we ask students to “tell us what you think.” For our exam weeks programming designed to assist students with managing stress, which is a mix of therapy dog, yoga, guided meditation, and arts and crafts sessions, we ask questions to understand how the activity contributed to their well being. We have tried several variations of these questions: “How are you feeling?”; “How has this event improved your day?”; and “How is this event making a difference in your week?” For our popular “Paws” for a Study Break sessions, we’ve noticed that regardless of what we ask, often times students will draw pictures or focus on their favorite therapy dog, instead of responding to the question. However, even in the midst of some of those comments, there can be ones that show how meaningful the event is for our students (see illustration 5 & 6).

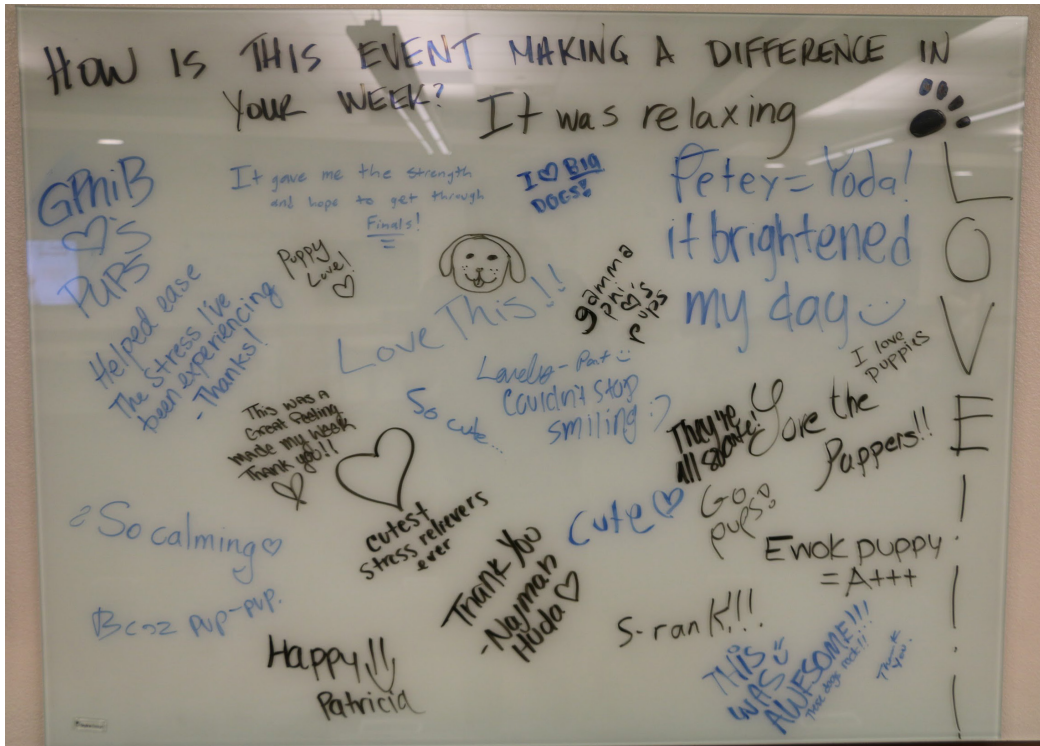
Through repeated use of these whiteboard prompts (since 2014), we have years of feedback that students love and value our therapy dog program. Additionally, our therapy dog owners and volunteers appreciate seeing the positive impact they make by donating their time and visiting UNLV on a regular basis.

**Example 4: Interactive Voting Chart**

In addition to the whiteboard assessment mentioned above, we have collected pre- and post-event stress levels at our therapy dog event. We asked students to indicate their current level of stress before visiting our therapy dogs and as students exited the event, we asked them to mark their current stress level (see illustration 7). While this may not be the most robust way to measure impact and articulate value, it is a quick, easy method for visually capturing responses to a question and does not require mediation by staff. Coupled with other methodologies, this is a way to expand quantitative assessment beyond headcounts. Additionally, if you have enough participation, and the feedback shows a positive response to the prompt (in this case reduced stress levels), this can be

**ILLUSTRATION 5**

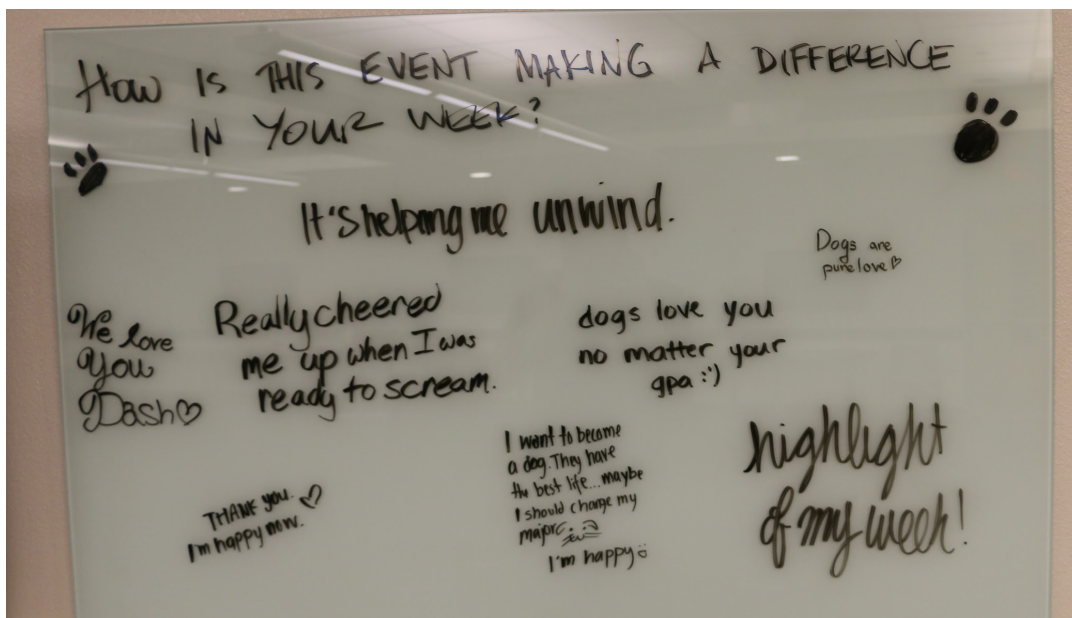
**Student responses to a whiteboard polling activity after a therapy dog event**



Highlighted responses: “Helped ease the stress I’ve been experiencing, thanks!”, “This was a great feeling. Made my week. Thank you!!”, “So calming”, “It gave me the strength and the hope to get through finals!”

**ILLUSTRATION 6**

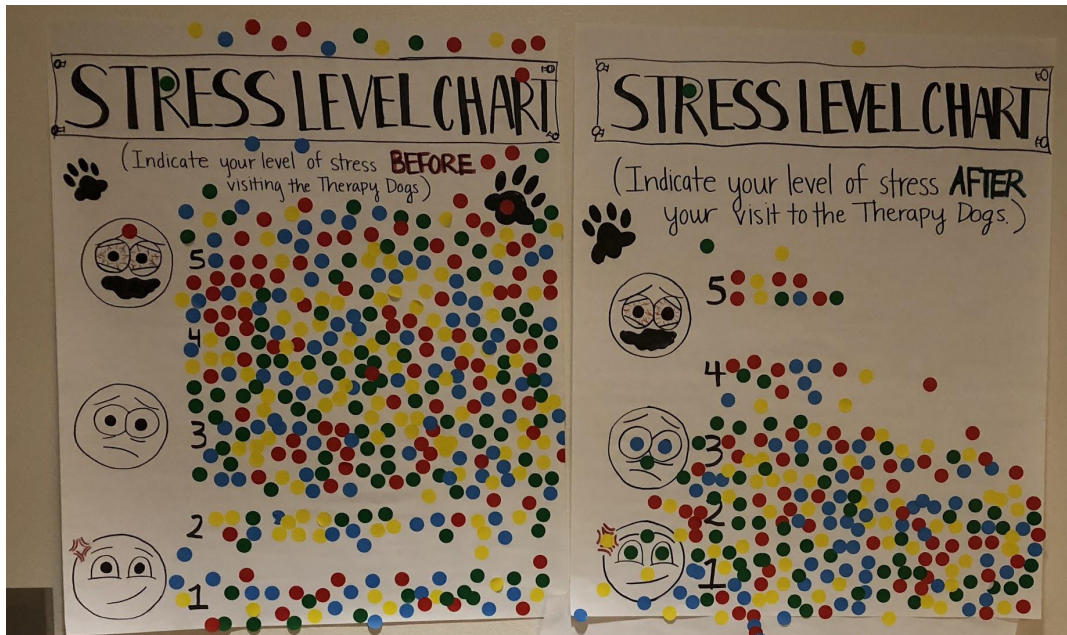
**Student responses to a whiteboard polling activity after a therapy dog event**



Highlighted responses: “Really cheered me up when I was ready to scream.”, “Dogs love you no matter your GPA :)”, “It’s helping me unwind”, “Thank you. I’m happy now”

shared immediately on social media. Since our therapy dog program is always well attended and known across campus, we posted a photo of the stress level charts on social media immediately following the event, which also garnered high engagement from followers. We have also utilized this assessment technique following our yoga, meditation, and art therapy programs offered during study week.

**ILLUSTRATION 7**  
Student responses to a polling activity after a therapy dog event



Written text: Stress Level Chart: Indicate your level of stress BEFORE visiting the therapy dogs. Stress Level Chart: Indicate your level of stress AFTER your visit to the therapy dogs

### *Future Assessment*

We are in the process of completing our initial two-year plan cycle. Before Summer 2019, we intend to contact participants from several events (e.g., Transfer Student Mixers, First-Generation Two-Day Workshop Series, Wikipedia Edit-a-thons) to participate in focus groups and semi-structured interviews to pursue further inquiry in the contributions these events have on their experience at UNLV. We will also seek volunteers from attendees at our upcoming study and finals week programs.

This assessment project, along with self-reflection and discussion among our department will contribute to another cycle of co-curricular outreach planning for July 2019-June 2021, in support of our next library strategic plan.

### **Recommendations & Conclusion**

Assessment and outreach are two words that are not yet regularly paired meaningfully with each other. As is established in the literature review, many librarians are not assessing their work through robust quantitative and qualitative methods. In order to move beyond head counts, librarians should consider creating an assessment plan tied to broader goals and outcomes and employing mixed-methodologies to evaluate their efforts. When possible, it may be beneficial to utilize or incorporate institutional or organizational goals and outcomes. Additionally, the authors have found it beneficial to align outreach work with an assessment and reflection practice in order to evaluate and measure impact. By taking the time to articulate goals, gather data, and reflect on co-curricular learning, librarians can ensure students are gaining knowledge, skills, and support from outreach and engagement activities/programs.

# Appendix A. Outreach Assistant Reflection Prompts (Wainwright, 2019)

## Fall 2018

1. If you could re-write the Outreach Assistant's job description, what would it look like?
2. What is one thing I can do better to help you learn?
3. What's your favorite thing you learned or project you worked on from this semester?
4. What do you think is the strongest skill that you bring to this job?

## Spring 2018

1. What are some projects you thought were the most successful? Least successful?
2. What were some challenges you faced this semester?
  - a. What are some possible solutions to these challenges?
3. What was one new skill or idea you learned this semester? Can you describe how it will or won't help you in your future career?
4. What is the 1-2 sentence description that you use to describe what you do to your friends/family?

## Fall 2017 prompts

1. What project or activity were you most proud of this semester?
2. What were some challenges you faced this semester?
  - a. What are some possible solutions to these challenges?
3. What project or activity do you look forward to working on next semester?
4. What is one work-related goal you have for yourself for next semester?

## Spring 2017 prompts

1. What has changed for you this semester (for better or for worse)?
2. What aspects of the job do you like best?
3. What aspects of the job do you like least?
4. What are some projects you thought were the most successful? Least successful?
5. Are there things you still would like to do more of next semester? This can be projects/tasks that you still haven't tried or if you have goals you would like to achieve.

## Fall 2016 prompts

1. What did you expect this job to be like? Did the reality meet your expectation?
2. What aspects of the job do you like best?
3. What aspects of the job do you like least?
4. What are some projects you would like to work on but haven't been assigned yet?
5. Would you recommend working in the library to your friends?
6. What aspects of this job will help you in your future career?

## Endnotes

1. Shannon L. Farrell and Kristen Mastel, "Considering Outreach Assessment: Strategies, Sample Scenarios, and a Call to Action."
2. Borchard and Meyers-Martin, "The Finals Stretch: Exams Week Library Outreach Surveyed."
3. Wainwright and Davidson, "Academic Libraries and Non-Academic Departments: A Survey and Case Studies on Liaising Outside the Box."
4. German and LeMire, "Sharing the Value and Impact of Outreach: Taking a Multifaceted Approach to Outreach Assessment."
5. German and LeMire, 67.
6. Sarah LeMire et al., "Outreach and Engagement. SPEC Kit 361.," 8.
7. Amanda Hornby and Emilie Vrbancic, "Creating a Strategic and Flexible Assessment Framework for Undergraduate Student Outreach."
8. LeMire and Graves, "Mapping out a Strategy: Curriculum Mapping Applied to Outreach and Instruction Programs."
9. Sarah LeMire et al., 24.
10. Carroll, "John Carroll University Learning Goals."
11. Carroll.
12. University of Nevada, Las Vegas, "UNLV Facts and Stats."
13. US News and World Report, "Campus Ethnic Diversity (National Universities)."
14. University of Nevada, Las Vegas, "Top Tier."
15. Hinchliffe and Wong, "From Services-Centered to Student-Centered: A 'Wellness Wheel' Approach to Developing the Library as an Integrative Learning Commons."
16. Mitola, "University Libraries Co-Curricular Outreach Plan July 2017–June 2019."
17. Scannell, *The Big Book of Team Coaching Games : Quick, Effective Activities to Energize, Motivate, and Guide Your Team to Success*.

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