Assessing the 24/5 library: does data matter?

Ken Johnson & Kelly McCallister
Access Services Conference 2014
Objectives

★ 24/5 evolution through the lens of assessment
★ Headcount and activity data 2008-14
★ Data interpretation and perspective
★ Recession
★ Students a driving force
Appalachian State context

★ 18,000 students
★ Part of the UNC System
★ New library in 2005

★ Gate count > 1.2 million
★ 35 library faculty, 49 staff
Appalachian’s 24/5 model

★ Fall and Spring semesters
★ Sunday - Thursday nights
★ Close Friday at 9pm. Saturday 10am-6pm
★ 3 private security guards patrol building from 11pm-7:30am
★ At 2am:
  ○ Exterior doors lock - Student ID card swipe access
  ○ Student IDs checked
  ○ Community members depart
★ Headcounts completed each hour during rounds
★ $100K student funds provided to library
Our Assessment Cycle

1. Assessment Objective
2. Gather Evidence
3. Make Meaning of Evidence
4. Action Plan

24/5
1. Assessment Objective

The library will gather data in order to determine the value of $24/5$ operations.
2. Gather Evidence

★ Headcounts
★ Activities
★ Cost
★ Security incident reports
2. Evidence: Headcounts

![Average Headcounts during Semester 2008-2011](image)

- **Headcount** vs. **Hour**
  - **Beginning**
  - **Mid Terms**
  - **Finals**

The graph shows the average headcounts during the semester, indicating a decrease throughout the day, with a notable spike during finals.
2. Evidence: Headcounts

Data Table 2008-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>23:00</th>
<th>0:00</th>
<th>1:00</th>
<th>2:00</th>
<th>3:00</th>
<th>4:00</th>
<th>5:00</th>
<th>6:00</th>
<th>7:00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beginning</strong></td>
<td>216</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mid Terms</strong></td>
<td>414</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Finals</strong></td>
<td>456</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Evidence: Headcounts

Final Exam averages after 24/5 cancelled

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>HOUR</th>
<th>0:00</th>
<th>1:00</th>
<th>2:00</th>
<th>3:00</th>
<th>4:00</th>
<th>5:00</th>
<th>6:00</th>
<th>7:00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finals (Fall 2011) 2 weeks</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finals (Spring 2012) 3 weeks</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finals (Fall 2012) 3 weeks</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finals (Spring 2013) 3 weeks</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finals (Fall 2013) 2 weeks</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finals (Spring 2014) 2 weeks</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Evidence: Activities

2011-14 Final exams 3-7am

- Sleeping: 3.4%
- Social: 2.8%
- Study: 11%
- Laptop: 53.1%
- PC: 24.9%
- MAC: 5%
2. Evidence: Cost

★ 2008-2013
(4 guards @ $12.75 hr) x (8.5 hrs) x (160 days) = $69,360

★ 2014+
(3 guards @ $18 hr) x (8.5 hrs) X(160 days) = $73,440
3. Make Meaning of Evidence

★ Evidence shows the majority of use occurs late in the semester.
★ Activity counts show mostly computer use and studying. Inappropriate activities minimal and kept in check by the security guards.
★ Labor costs are sustainable from the library’s operating budget including the $100K allocated by the University for hours funding.
★ Action Plan: Library commits to 24/5 model based on evidence and funding.
★ Students thrilled. University administrators supportive.

Then it hits….the recession changes everything
3. Make Meaning: Recession

★ The recession driven funding cuts hit the University of NC system schools mostly in 2010/2011.
★ Does data matter anymore?
3. Make meaning: U Administrators

★ Effective use of monies
  ○ High cost per student ratio - too few students to justify the expense
  ○ “They didn’t believe that there were enough students using the library at 3 a.m., at 4 a.m., at 5 a.m.”

★ Appealing optics of reducing hours
★ Began to assume ownership of the decision

Is is worth it? No
3. Make meaning: Students

★ Thought they had been paying for it ($100K) all along
★ Understood that $100K gets lost in the morass of a 16% university budget cut and 30% cut to the library’s non-personnel budget
★ Data showed adequate use, but students felt the data didn’t represent their needs.
★ Big push in the SGA to keep the library open:
  ○ 88% of the students voted in favor of extending the hours and offered to pay extra tuition.
  ○ Planned protest and sit-in organized but ultimately cancelled.

Is it worth it? Yes
3. Make meaning: Library

- Feet in both camps - budget and providing for student needs balanced
- Supported SGA and U Admin through consultations, data, and research
- Expressed willingness to return to 24/5 operations when the timing was right
- Opinion in the library mixed on the value of 24/5 operations

Is it worth it?
Yes, but...
Following referendum, SGA will continue to work for 24/5 library

★ Ownership of the decision taken over by University Administration
★ Their interpretation of the data prevailed
★ Library supported and accepted the decision
★ Students not happy but accepted the decision, did not let the issue drop

24/5 cancelled
August 2011
Intervening years: 2011-2013

★ 24/5 during the 2-3 weeks of final exams
★ Security guards still counted heads and activity
★ Student Government Association kept the issue alive
Students: persistence pays off

- Student Government Association (SGA) worked the system and never let the hours issue drop
- In 2013 recession pressures were easing up
- The library expressed continued willingness to return 24/5 operations
- SGA pressed the issue
- University administrators changed their position and returned the decision to the library with support
- 24/5 operations reinstated on March 16, 2014
Our Assessment Cycle

1. Assessment Objective
2. Gather Evidence
3. Make Meaning of Evidence
4. Action Plan

24/5
Hours Odyssey 2005-14

★ 2005 - New building, student began advocating for 24 hours
★ 2007 - 24/5 in the library atrium and coffee shop areas
★ 2008 - Midterm and final exams 24/5 for the building
★ 2009 - Expanded to full 24/5 operations in Fall and Spring semesters, University allocated $100K for library hours
★ 2011 (August) - Recession driven funding cuts forced a cancellation of 24/5 hours except for 2-3 weeks around final exams
★ 2014 (March) - Full 24/5 operations returned
Lessons

★ Data matters, but perspective changes interpretation
★ Assessment and data gathering worthwhile
★ External events like a recession are uncontrollable
★ Cultivate a student relationship with your library - hours are an easy sell
★ Share what you learn through assessment
Thank You!

Please contact us with comments or questions.

Ken: johnsnkw@appstate.edu
Kelly: mccallisterkc@appstate.edu
Reference List

Sansoucy, S. (2013, December 6). Following referendum, SGA will continue to work for 24/5 library. The Appalachian.