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Faculty Expectations of a University Library and Writing Center in Preventing Plagiarism

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Introduction

Like many educational institutions, the University of South Alabama has seen a recent uptick in academic misconduct, especially plagiarism. To better understand and work toward solving this issue, the University’s Library and Writing Center conducted a survey of faculty across disciplines. The survey elicits part-time and full-time faculty perspectives on the Library and Writing Center’s roles in providing information literacy instruction and preventing plagiarism.

Libraries and writing centers are uniquely situated to assist with preventing plagiarism. For example, academic libraries adhere to the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, the tenets of which emphasize information literacy and understanding scholarship as a conversation, necessary theoretical underpinnings to academic integrity (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2016). Similarly, writing centers provide one-on-one guidance on how to work with sources, including paraphrasing, quoting, summarizing, and citation, to help students avoid plagiarism (Gruber, 1998). Through these approaches, libraries and writing centers have a shared investment in improving students’ critical literacy (Pagnac, Boertje, McMahon, & Teets, 2014). The instructional goals and methods of libraries and writing centers complement one another in this area and others, offering opportunities for fruitful collaboration (Cooke & Bledsoe, 2008).

To this end, the survey conducted by the South Alabama Marx Library and the University Writing Center offers an encapsulation of instructors’ expectations for these services regarding academic integrity. Survey questions sought opinions on the library and writing center's shared roles in information literacy and academic integrity instruction, the obligation to report plagiarism instances, and the necessity for instruction on tangential topics that improve students’ understanding of working with academic sources. The findings indicate a disconnect between faculty views about the causes of plagiarism, as well as the Library and Writing Center's roles in plagiarism prevention. Faculty respondents indicate strongly a belief that the Library and Writing Center should work to prevent and report plagiarism. However, the faculty simultaneously placed less emphasis on the actual instructional methods that both organizations employ to educate students about creating, interpreting, and exchanging information in academic culture, despite the fact that improving these skills contributes more to preventing plagiarism than strictly punitive measures.

Review of the Literature

Traditional methods of preventing academic misconduct are being challenged by the increased reliance on the internet for student research, administering exams, and conducting classes. However, many of the most significant problems with cheating have little to do with internet access (Germek, 2009). One of the most pressing concerns is addressing increased student complacency about plagiarism and other forms of cheating; a significant number of students see cheating as a victimless offense (George, Costigan, & O'Hara, 2013). In fact, many students seem to be unaware of what constitutes cheating, or they have ideas that are vastly different from what their institution considers to be cheating (Hulsart & McCarthy, 2011; George, Costigan, & O'Hara, 2013). This might be the result of poorly described institutional policies, which oftentimes do not clearly delineate what constitutes academic integrity (Gullifer & Tyson, 2014), as well as the constantly shifting, transitory nature of cheating itself (Hulsart & McCarthy, 2011); even the ACRL has been implicated for its imprecise definition of plagiarism (Germek, 2009).

Even if an institution’s policies are well-defined, students often become familiar with the details only after being charged with academic misconduct (Ellery, 2008), or perhaps from the vague wording of a professor’s syllabus (George, Costigan, & O'Hara, 2013). It can also be contributed to educators’ and administrators’ unwillingness to face the problem in a consistent manner. For example, Holbeck et al. (2015) found that a majority of instructors did not adhere to their institution’s official academic integrity protocol, which resulted in a multiplicity of approaches to plagiarism instances rather than a uniform response. Professors also tend to discuss cheating in largely negative and punitive terms (Wood, 2004; George, Costigan, & O'Hara, 2015), emphasizing the consequences of plagiarism without discussing the benefits of academic integrity, both to the individual student and the academic community as a whole (Wood, 2004; Stephens & Wangaard, 2016).

Faculty perceptions about the causes of plagiarism also vary widely. Roig (2001) reported disagreement among faculty on whether students’ verbatim use of one sentence
from an outside source constitutes plagiarism. This study also found that nearly one-third of college instructors reported having used five or more consecutive words directly from sources in the instructors’ own writing. Bennett, Behrendt, and Boothby (2011) surveyed 158 faculty members from online psychology teaching listservs in order to investigate whether there was commonality between instructors on what actions constitute plagiarism. The authors found agreement among faculty that submitting an assignment completed by someone else, copying information from the internet without attribution, and using verbatim wording without citation should be considered plagiarism. However, participants diverged on whether they would consider students reusing work from another class to be plagiarism.

Foltýnek, Rybička, and Demoliou (2014) analyzed a wide range of questionnaire data collected under the Impact of Policies for Plagiarism in Higher Education Across Europe (IPPHEAE) project. Respondents agreed that European Union students receive proper education in the process of academic writing. Students in this study indicated their greatest difficulty was finding quality sources, while faculty believed that students struggle with citation formats. Respondents also disagreed on the reasons that students plagiarize, with faculty reporting that students plagiarize because of laziness and apathy, while students responded that deadline pressures, stress, and insecurity about their writing skills were the primary reasons. Likewise, Wilkinson (2009) found that undergraduate nursing students and corresponding faculty disagreed on why students engaged in academic misconduct such as cheating and plagiarizing. Faculty in the study expressed that students engaged in academic misconduct because they did not understand the rules against such activities, while students indicated that desire for better grades and being overwhelmed by their workload were the strongest contributors to improper academic conduct.

In terms of penalties for plagiarism and other misconduct, Sutherland-Smith (2005) states that instructors often ignore plagiarism violations, instead attributing such misconduct to a failure in their teaching. Robinson-Zaňartu et al. (2005) note that instructor actions regarding plagiarism are correlated to their perceived severity of the offense, with punitive actions being taken primarily in the most problematic instances. Greenberger, Holbeck, Steele, and Dyer (2016) found that faculty take three courses of action when encountering cases of poor paraphrasing and incorrect citation: coaching, requiring a rewrite of the assignment, and supplemental instruction through a plagiarism tutorial. This study reported coaching as the remediation strategy most often employed by faculty when confronted with student plagiarism. Coaching, according to Greenberger et al. (2016), took several forms, including teacher-student conferences, written feedback, and referrals to the writing center.

Strikingly, Hudd, Apgar, Bronson, and Lee (2009) found that part-time faculty predominantly held the belief that educating students about academic integrity is not an important topic of discussion in the college classroom, with a majority of participants holding the belief that high school properly prepares students to display proper academic conduct. This study correlates with Hard, Conway, and Moran (2006), who found that faculty who do not realize the frequency of academic misconduct at their institution largely do not play an active role in prevention and punishment of violators. Hudd, Apgar, Bronson, and Lee (2009) note that part-time faculty, in particular, are less likely to report instances of plagiarism and other academic misconduct; likewise, the authors contend that part-time faculty are also less likely to employ preventative strategies and dispense punishment for offenses.

Students and faculty differ in their perceptions of the appropriate penalties for academic misconduct. Tabsh, Abdelfatah, and El Kadi (2017) found that engineering faculty felt punitive approaches combined with exam proctors were the most effective deterrent against misconduct, while students in the same program favored more leniency in deadlines, less difficult exams, and tutorials to educate them about academic integrity. Wilkinson (2009) reported similar findings, noting that students in the study preferred lighter penalties and educational remediation that would have limited impact on their grades, while faculty preferred to follow their university’s policy on academic misconduct, which provided solutions such as significant grade reduction, official sanctions, course failure, and counseling by staff. Hudd, Apgar, Bronson, and Lee (2009) found that part-time faculty also tended to express trust in their university’s policy for handling issues of academic misconduct and educating students on proper conduct, resulting in a much lower likelihood that these faculty members included an academic integrity statement on their syllabi.

While students and faculty diverge on the causes and solutions to academic misconduct, a number of practitioners and researchers have found opportunities for libraries and writing centers to make positive contributions toward cultivating academic integrity. Auer and Krupar (2001) note that one-on-one conferences with faculty members offer opportunities for librarians to assist with assignment design and scaffolding in order to make it more difficult for students to plagiarize. To this end, Wood (2004) outlines six strategies librarians can utilize to promote academic integrity, including incorporating academic integrity into instructional services, cultivating partnerships with departments in order to disseminate information and materials about academic integrity, and working with faculty to orient assignments toward active learning and proper engagement with scholarly sources.

Elmborg (2005) suggests that writing centers and libraries can work cohesively to instruct students through the research and writing process. Buranen (2009) writes that librarians and writing center staff are uniquely positioned to assist students with maintaining academic integrity, especially helping students to avoid plagiarizing, due to operating in a safe place where students can experiment with synthesizing sources without fear of punishment for mistakes; instead, both librarians and writing center tutors work with students to identify such and improve
information literacy and writing skills before it becomes a problem in the classroom. Cooke and Bledsoe (2008) contend that libraries and writing centers share common goals in guiding students through the research process, helping students better understand assignments, teaching students to evaluate sources, and demonstrating how to properly incorporate outside sources into writing projects.

George, Costigan, and O'Hara (2013) found success in the library's implementation of two plagiarism prevention courses, one initially designed as remediation for students who had plagiarized and a subsequent course designed as a preventative measure for undergraduate and international students. Oldham (2011) also described the positive impact of a similar course, which the university's library deployed online. Likewise, Greer et al. (2012) describe a beneficial collaboration between their university's library and writing center to create an online academic integrity tutorial that incorporated elements of information literacy, academic integrity protocols, and citation requirements in APA, MLA, Chicago, and AMA. Kleinfeld (2016) had a positive experience with integrating citation analysis as part of her writing center's tutoring sessions, an initiative in which tutors are specially trained by librarians to assist clients with evaluating the quality of sources used in research papers. Graves, Anders, and Balester (2016) examined writing center logs to determine whether tutors provided information literacy instruction during consulting sessions; though information literacy was mentioned in only 13% of consultation logs, the authors found new opportunities for collaboration between the writing center and library to improve tutors' engagement with the Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education.

Methodology

Procedure

The research study was designed in response to the individual experiences of the University of South Alabama's Writing Center and the Marx Library, as well as a campus-wide initiative to address academic misconduct. Both the Writing Center and the Marx Library expressed a growing concern that faculty did not fully understand the roles played by the Writing Center and Marx Library in providing academic support, therefore making it difficult for faculty to use such support services effectively and for them to provide meaningful guidance for their students in using these resources. These miscommunications are especially common when it comes to the role of the Writing Center and Marx Library in addressing academic misconduct.

This problem was underscored by a 2016 campus-wide Academic Integrity survey of students, faculty, and staff, which revealed a severe disconnect between faculty and student definitions of academic misconduct, confusion about how to prevent and punish offenses, and unfamiliarity with the resources available to assist the University community in achieving its academic goals. In response, the researchers developed a survey to capture the perceptions of the university's faculty toward the Writing Center and the Marx Library, including, among other issues, expectations about their roles in preventing, identifying, and reporting plagiarism. The researchers hoped that the survey could help them identify the source of the faculty's misconceptions, in order to provide more effective writing and research services to faculty and students alike.

Method

This research utilized a survey method to explore how faculty at the University of South Alabama perceive the role of the Writing Center and the Marx Library as academic support services. Because the researchers sought to identify recurring themes in faculty members' attitudes, it was necessary to solicit a large number of both closed- and open-ended responses. Moreover, the university offers face-to-face, hybrid, and online programs, meaning many faculty are rarely or never physically on campus. Because of these factors, the researchers determined that an online survey would be the most appropriate choice for collecting data.

The survey was initially created with Google Forms and was then deployed using Class Climate software through the University’s Office of Institutional Effectiveness, which sends survey links directly to the official university email addresses of selected participants. The researchers selected this method because it allowed them to reach a large number of faculty and easily review the data compiled in a University report and as CSV files. Moreover, because Class Climate software is widely used at the institution, faculty are accustomed to receiving surveys and are generally comfortable participating.

Participants

The researchers chose to survey faculty at the University of South Alabama, as they were identified as the population most likely to encounter academic misconduct in students. Although staff and students also deal with academic misconduct in various capacities, faculty are usually held responsible for preventing, identifying, and reporting academic misconduct. Therefore, faculty were identified as the population most interested in academic integrity support provided by the Writing Center or Marx Library.

The participants in this research were faculty members at the University’s College of Arts and Sciences, the Mitchell College of Business, the College of Education and Professional Studies, the College of Engineering, the College of Medicine, the College of Nursing, the School of Computing, and the College of Allied Health Professions. The survey included tenured, tenure-track but untenured, non-tenure track, and part-time or adjunct faculty. The only college that did not receive the survey was Allied Health, as neither the Writing Center nor the Marx Library serve these students. However, the Writing Center and Marx Library serve students and faculty from throughout the University, in both online and face-to-face classes, so the researchers did not want to exclude faculty members from any other college.

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However, the survey was self-limiting in several ways. First, participation was entirely voluntary, so participants self-selected by choosing whether to complete the survey. Second, it was not necessary to complete the entire survey in order to submit a response, so some participants answered some questions and not others. Third, because the survey was available for only one month, faculty who were on vacation or sabbatical, or otherwise not checking their email during this time, would have missed the opportunity to participate. In total, the researchers received survey responses from 138 faculty members.

**Survey Instrument**

The survey contained four major sections: Informed Consent, Faculty Demographics, Perceptions of the USA Writing Center, and Perceptions of the Marx Library. The first section elicited informed consent from participants, who were notified that any collected data would be stored in a password protected electronic format. Class Climate does not collect identifying information such as the participant’s name or IP address. Due to the nature of the how the surveys are delivered, the researchers could not guarantee that participants would remain entirely anonymous.

The second section asked participants to identify the college for which they teach. To control the vocabulary of the responses, participants were asked to choose a single option from a checklist including all colleges at the University of South Alabama. This list included an “other” option for any participant who might fall outside the included colleges, and the survey provided an open-ended box for the participant to explain the selection of “other.” This section also asked the participant to identify their current position at the University as full-time faculty, tenured; full-time faculty, tenure-track; full-time faculty, non-tenure track; adjunct or part-time faculty; or other.

The third section was divided into four parts and asked questions to gauge the faculty’s perceptions of the role of the University Writing Center in providing academic support. The first part included two questions to determine whether the participating faculty member had ever “required” or “encouraged” his or her students to use the Writing Center. The second part included a list of actual or perceived responsibilities of the Writing Center, from which the participant was asked to rank from “(1) MOST important to (7) LEAST important.” This paper will focus on the questions concerning the Writing Center’s role in educating students about plagiarism, and teaching citation styles such as APA or MLA. The third part used a six-point Likert Scale to allow the participant to express how much he or she agreed or disagreed with a particular statement concerning various aspects of the Writing Center’s responsibilities. This paper will focus on the responses concerning the Writing Center’s role in identifying and reporting plagiarism.

The fourth section followed the same model as the third section, but it asked questions concerning if and how the faculty require or encourage the use of the Marx Library’s resources, and their perceptions of the role of the Marx Library in providing academic support. This paper will focus on the questions concerning the Marx Library’s role in helping students evaluate the quality of source materials, educating students about plagiarism, and teaching citation styles such as APA or MLA.

**Results**

As discussed above, the researchers collected data on various aspects of faculty’s perceptions of the Marx Library’s and Writing Center’s support services. This section will discuss the three data sets that reveal the most about the perceived roles of these services in identifying, preventing, and reporting plagiarism.

When asked to report on what they considered the most important responsibilities of the Marx Library’s instruction librarians, respondents could rank a specific responsibility between one (most important) and seven (least important). Because there were seven responsibilities from which to choose, the researchers expected participants to assign a different ranking to each responsibility. However, due to a software limitation, the participants were able to identify more than one responsibility as most important. This lead to a total of 230 responses identifying a responsibility as most important, though there were only 133 participants for this particular question.

The results show that “Instructing students how to locate relevant books and journal articles” was ranked most important 75 times, “Helping students evaluate the quality of source materials” was ranked most important 45 times, followed by “Providing individualized assistance in student research consultations,” ranked most important 34 times. The participants assigned significantly lower rankings to the following responsibilities: “Educating students about plagiarism” (22), “Collaborating on faculty research projects” (17), “Teaching citation styles such as APA or MLA” (19), and “Developing and refining research topics” (18) (see Figure 1).

When asked to report on which Writing Center responsibilities are most important, the participants were more evenly divided. The responsibility “Helping with
logic and organization” was ranked most important by participants 49 times, followed by “Conducting writing workshops” at 39, and “Helping ESL students” at 36. “Proofreading student papers,” “Educating students about plagiarism,” and “Teaching citation styles such as APA or MLA” were ranked within 1 point of each other, at 32, 31, and 30, respectively. The lowest, by far, was “Brainstorming and discussing ideas,” which was only ranked most important 14 times. As with the section about the library, participants were able to rank more than one responsibility with 1, resulting in a total of 231 responses identifying a responsibility as most important, though there were only 134 participants for this particular question (see Figure 2).

The researchers also asked a question specific to the Writing Center’s role in reporting plagiarism. Because the Marx Library’s instruction librarians rarely work with student texts in the way necessary to identify plagiarism, this question was not asked about the Marx Library. The question was in a series that asked the participants to identify whether they agreed or disagreed with a statement on a scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 6 (strongly disagree). Because participants could only select one answer for each question in this series, the number of responses reflects the number of participants (132).

The results show that 54 participants strongly agreed with the statement “The Writing Center tutors should report to faculty suspected cases of plagiarism in students papers,” with 22 agreeing (selecting two from the scale), and 24 agreeing weakly (selecting three from the scale). A total of 100 participants agreed, to various extents, that Writing Center tutors should report suspected cases of plagiarism. Significantly fewer disagreed; 12 participants strongly disagreed with this statement (selecting six from the scale). Ten participants disagreed (selecting a response of five on the scale), and nine participants disagreed weakly, selecting a response of four. Only 31 respondents disagreed with this statement to any extent (see Figure 3).

It is worth noting that the researchers did not offer a neutral “neither agree nor disagree” option, assuming that self-selecting participants would have an interest and opinion concerning this statement. However, open-ended responses to the survey indicate the need for such an option in future investigations.

Discussion

When reviewing the data, the researchers immediately noticed the faculty’s intense concern with plagiarism, with nearly 76% of survey participants agreeing that it is the Writing Center’s responsibility to report suspected incidents of academic misconduct. This finding is to be expected, considering that the University has experienced an upswing in all types of academic misconduct, especially plagiarism. In response, the University of South Alabama has formed an ad hoc Academic Integrity Committee, on which both researchers serve. This committee has identified numerous problems faced by faculty when trying to prevent, identify, report, and penalize academic misconduct. The results of the survey underscore these problems, especially concerning the effective prevention of plagiarism.

The results indicate that faculty have a poor understanding of both the day-to-day tasks and overarching goals of the Writing Center and the Marx Library instruction librarians, and how those goals are essential to preventing plagiarism. The results indicate an emphasis on providing immediate services to students, rather than providing instruction that addresses the underlying issues of plagiarism. Moreover, the results suggest that faculty do not understand the Library’s and the Writer Center’s larger pedagogical objectives to provide not quick-fixes but comprehensive training in information literacy and writing skills development. These findings correlate strongly with the experiences described by North (1984) and Leahy (1990), in terms of the misconception that tutors are primarily responsible for checking grammar and mechanics as opposed to helping clients brainstorm and facilitating discussions of ideas. Likewise, libraries are frequently expected to make it easier for faculty to help students,
without regard to librarians’ overarching instruction goals and stake in student success (Hartzel, 1997).

A prime example of this is that for the Marx Library instruction librarians, “Instructing students how to locate relevant books and journal articles” was ranked as the most important responsibility 75 times, nearly 33% of the total responses. Certainly helping students locate research materials is an important part of an instruction librarian’s work. Nevertheless, a large part of this requires simple “point and click” demonstrations of databases or the online catalog, which can be and are in practice largely provided by library staff rather than librarians, and which students can quickly learn to do on their own. Moreover, simply helping students find materials in the library does nothing to help them to understand the value of information or how to use the information appropriately. One of the responsibilities related to this goal, “Helping students evaluate the quality of source material,” did receive the second highest ranking, with almost 20% of responses ranking it as most important.

However, the faculty largely ignored the types of services that truly help students engage with information and participate in scholarship as a conversation. For example, the responsibility for “Developing and refining student research topics,” was ranked most important only 18 times, a total of 7% of the responses. Working with a student to identify research interests is an extremely valuable practice, as it allows a librarian to identify the student’s information needs (Fister, 1993; Hook, 2005). More important to the prevention of plagiarism, working with a student in the early stages of a research project allows a librarian to guide the student toward original, interesting topics and engage in scholarly conversation in meaningful ways. In the survey, the faculty’s number one expectation of the instruction librarians was that they help students in the straightforward task of locating materials. However, the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education emphasizes training students to determine the quality of sources and working closely to help them discover their own approaches to research topics. Such instruction does much more to support information literacy and, therefore, the appropriate use of source material (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2016).

The responses concerning the Writing Center were similarly focused on providing immediate services. The researchers found it encouraging that 35 of the responses (around 15% of the total) considered “Helping with logic and organization” to be the most important priority. However, the lowest ranked responsibility was “Brainstorming and developing ideas,” which was ranked as most important responsibility only 15 times, around 6% of the total responses. As with the library, if faculty members expect the Writing Center to prevent plagiarism, tutors should be encouraged to provide assistance to students in the earliest stages of writing. However, faculty seem to prioritize intervention, giving higher rankings to services provided later in the writing process. For example, “Proofreading student papers” was ranked most important 32 times, around 14% of the total responses, more than twice that of brainstorming and developing ideas. Proofreading, however, is a lower order concern, to be done in the final stages of writing. Fixing mechanical, grammatical, and spelling errors does not address the misuse of outside sources that results in most plagiarism.

The high ranking given to “Teaching citations styles such as APA and MLA” also underscores a preference for intervention rather than prevention. However, students do not typically add citations during the early stages of the writing process, which is why the safe spaces provided by libraries and writing centers are particularly valuable for providing guidance in using sources without penalizing students for errors in early drafts (Buranen, 2009). In addition, a majority of respondents indicated a belief that the Writing Center should report instances of plagiarism; however, this would severely undermine students’ perception of the Writing Center as a space to learn without reprisal. These results are especially interesting in light of how many times the responsibility of “Educating students about plagiarism” was ranked most important (31 times, or about 13% of the total). It seems that faculty want the Writing Center to prevent plagiarism, but they seem unsure of the strategies and policies necessary to do so.

The survey results demonstrate a disconnect between faculty’s perceptions of academic support services and the actual goals of these services. In other words, students might receive assistance from the Marx Library instruction librarians or the Writing Center tutors, based on these services’ specific pedagogical objectives, which conflict with their professors’ expectations. This can be seen in a student who visits the library and receives excellent advice from a librarian on how to focus the paper topic and begin conducting research, only to disappoint the professor by not bringing in a copy of an article that meets an assignment’s exacting parameters. The librarian has succeeded by instilling in the student a better understanding of the research process, but to the professor, the librarian has failed by not providing a “quick fix” and simply handing the student the specified article. Similarly, a student might visit the Writing Center, where a tutor provides guidance on integrating source material through paraphrasing and quoting but does not provide lower order corrections of the student’s references page, leading to the professor expressing displeasure that the Writing Center did not “fix” the student’s paper. In both scenarios, a misunderstanding of the roles played the library and the Writing Center leads to disappointment on the parts of the student, the faculty member, and those providing the support service. When it comes to plagiarism, however, this miscommunication can result in more than frustration. The kinds of services faculty expect—such as locating a specific article or correcting a student’s mechanical errors—are not the same kinds of services that are most effective in preventing plagiarism.

Conclusion

The results of the survey indicate that faculty identify that the Marx Library instruction librarians and the Writing Center tutors have a role to play in preventing plagiarism, but the services and the faculty come to different
conclusions on exactly how to perform that role. The survey addressed faculty perspectives on many issues; the researchers were not expecting results so revealing of faculty attitudes toward plagiarism. In order to uncover more precise details on how faculty view the library and the Writing Center as agents in preventing and identifying plagiarism, the researchers hope to conduct further surveys with questions specifically about academic misconduct.

In the meantime, the best way to address faculty misconceptions is to maintain open and comfortable communication with faculty members (Auer & Krupar, 2001; Goddu, 2011). Thus, the Marx Library and the Writing Center should do more than serve students one-on-one. These support services should also seek out ways to collaborate with faculty, by helping them design research projects, providing in-class instruction sessions and workshops, and embedding librarians or tutors in online course sites. By providing comprehensive support for both faculty and students, the Marx Library and the Writing Center can move away from the notion that they just do quick fixes and instead accentuate their ultimate goals of providing information literacy instruction and guiding students in the appropriate and meaningful use of source materials.

References


Appendix A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
April 14, 2017

Principal Investigator: Stephanie Ard, MA, MLIS
IRB # and Title: IRB PROTOCOL: 17-109
[1047314-1] Faculty Perceptions of Instructional Support Services
Status: APPROVED Review Type: Exempt Review
Approval Date: April 14, 2017 Submission Type: New Project
Initial Approval: April 14, 2017 Expiration Date:
Review Category: Category 45 CFR 46.101 (2):
Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior

This panel, operating under the authority of the DHHS Office for Human Research and Protection, assurance number FWA 00001602, and IRB Database #00000266, has reviewed the submitted materials for the following:

1. Protection of the rights and the welfare of human subjects involved.
2. The methods used to secure and the appropriateness of informed consent.
3. The risk and potential benefits to the subject.

The regulations require that the investigator not initiate any changes in the research without prior IRB approval, except where necessary to eliminate immediate hazards to the human subjects, and that all problems involving risks and adverse events be reported to the IRB immediately!

Subsequent supporting documents that have been approved will be stamped with an IRB approval and expiration date (if applicable) on every page. Copies of the supporting documents must be utilized with the current IRB approval stamp unless consent has been waived.

Notes:
Appendix B

Faculty Perceptions of Instructional Support Services

* Required

Implied Consent Form

Implied Consent Form for Survey: Faculty Perceptions of Instructional Support Services

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: Stephanie Evers Ard, MLIS, MA; Franklin Ard, MFA, MA

INTRODUCTION: You are invited to participate in a web-based online survey on the faculty perceptions of instructional support services, specifically the USA Writing Center and the USA Marx Library. This is a research project being conducted by Stephanie Evers Ard, Social Sciences Librarian at the USA Marx Library, and Franklin Ard, the manager of the USA Writing Center. It should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

PARTICIPATION: Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time without penalty.

BENEFITS: You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, your responses may help us learn more about how faculty perceive the services provided by the USA Writing Center and the USA Marx Library.

RISKS: There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this study other than those encountered in day-to-day life.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Your survey answers will be collected by ClassClimate, where data will be stored in a password protected electronic format. ClassClimate does not collect identifying information such as your name, email address, or IP address. Therefore, your responses will remain anonymous. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study.

CONTACT: If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the principal investigators, Stephanie Evers Ard, at (251) 414-8178 or seeners@southalabama.edu, or Franklin Ard, at (251) 414-8051 or franklinard@southalabama.edu.

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or that your rights as a participant in research have not been honored during the course of this project, or you have any questions, concerns, or complaints that you wish to address to someone other than the investigator, you may contact the University of South Alabama Research Compliance & Assurance Department at (251) 460-6625, Room CSAB 120, or by email at djayton@southalabama.edu.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: You may print a copy of this consent form for your records. Clicking on the “Next” button indicates that:

- You have read the above information
- You voluntarily agree to participate
- You are 18 years of age or older

Faculty Perceptions of Instructional Support Services
1. For which college do you teach?  
Mark only one oval.

- [ ] College of Arts and Sciences
- [ ] Mitchell College of Business
- [ ] College of Education
- [ ] College of Engineering
- [ ] College of Medicine
- [ ] College of Nursing
- [ ] School of Computing
- [ ] College of Allied Health Professions
- [ ] Other
2. Which discipline best represents your area of research?

Mark only one oval.

- Accounting
- Adult Health Nursing
- African-American Studies
- Air Force Studies (AFROTC)
- Anthropology
- Audiology
- Biology
- Biomedical Sciences
- Business
- Cardiorespiratory Care
- Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering
- Chemistry
- Civil Engineering
- Classical Languages
- Communication
- Community/Mental Health Nursing
- Computer Science
- Cooperative Education and
- Criminal Justice
- Cyber Assurance
- Developmental Studies
- Dramatic Arts
- Economics and Finance
- Education
- Electrical and Computer Engineering
- Emergency Medical Services Training
- English
- English as a Second Language
- Gender Studies
- Geography
- Geology
- Gerontology
- Health Informatics
- Health, Kinesiology and Sport
- History
- Hospitality and Tourism Management
- Information Systems
- Information Technology

https://docs.google.com/a/southalabama.edu/forms/d/1Ysl68tCfBY35Kj3sa7l1HqCIhRzCyL6id0JXa0cA4Y5dox/
4. Have you encouraged students to visit the USA Writing Center?  
   Mark only one oval.
   ☐ Yes  ☐ No

5. Have you ever made it mandatory for your students to visit the USA Writing Center?  
   Mark only one oval.
   ☐ Yes  ☐ No

6. Have you offered incentives (such as bonus points) for students to visit the USA Writing Center?  
   Mark only one oval.
   ☐ Yes  ☐ No

7. Please rank the following responsibilities of the USA Writing Center from (1) MOST important to (7) LEAST important.  
   Mark only one oval per row.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helping ESL students.</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proofreading student papers.</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educating students about plagiarism.</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching citation styles such as APA or MLA.</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brainstorming and discussing ideas.</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping with logic and organization.</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conducting writing workshops.</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Which group of clients should Writing Center instruction prioritize? Please rank from 1 (highest priority) to 8 (lowest priority).  
   Mark only one oval per row.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Composition students</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underclassmen (freshmen &amp; sophomores)</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upperclassmen (juniors &amp; seniors)</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate students</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nontraditional students</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as a Second Language students</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online students</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How strongly do you agree with the following statement?
3. What is your current position?

Mark only one oval.

- Full-time faculty, tenured
- Full-time faculty, tenure-track
- Full-time faculty, non-tenure track
- Adjunct or part-time faculty
- Other:

Instructional Support Services: USA Writing Center

Please answer the following questions about the USA Writing Center.

https://docs.google.com/a/southalabama.edu/forms/d/1Yts6GcLP0F5k3Ds87IHobFHyFhJkXf%254bA5Y75d/
Faculty Perceptions of Instructional Support Services

(1 - very strongly agree, 2 - strongly agree, 3 - agree, 4 - disagree, 5 - strongly disagree, 6 - very strongly disagree)

9. Writing Center tutors are responsible for correcting all errors in a student's paper.
   Mark only one oval.

   1 2 3 4 5 6
   very strongly agree   very strongly disagree

10. Writing Center tutors should report to faculty suspected cases of plagiarism in student papers.
    Mark only one oval.

   1 2 3 4 5 6
   very strongly agree   very strongly disagree

11. Students should be required to visit the Writing Center at least once during their time at USA.
    Mark only one oval.

   1 2 3 4 5 6
   very strongly agree   very strongly disagree

12. My students' writing improves after they visit the Writing Center.
    Mark only one oval.

   1 2 3 4 5 6
   very strongly agree   very strongly disagree

13. Writing Center tutors should be English majors.
    Mark only one oval.

   1 2 3 4 5 6
   very strongly agree   very strongly disagree

14. Do you have any other comments or thoughts you would like to share about the responsibilities of the USA Writing Center?

   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

The Southeastern Librarian
Faculty Perceptions of Instructional Support Services

19. Which group of clients should the Marx Library INSTRUCTION librarians prioritize? Please rank from 1 (highest priority) to 8 (lowest priority). "Mark only one oval per row."

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
English Composition students |
Underclassmen (freshmen & sophomores) |
Upperclassmen (juniors & seniors) |
Graduate students |
Nontraditional students |
English as a Second Language students |
Online students |
Faculty |

How strongly do you agree with the following statements? (1 - very strongly agree, 2 - strongly agree, 3 - agree, 4 - disagree, 5 - strongly disagree, 6 - very strongly disagree)

20. Students should be required to receive library instruction at least once during their time at USA. "Mark only one oval."

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
very strongly agree |
very strongly disagree |

21. The quality of my students’ research improves after receiving library instruction. "Mark only one oval."

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
very strongly agree |
very strongly disagree |

22. I should have the final say as to what librarians teach during instruction sessions for my classes. "Mark only one oval."

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
very strongly agree |
very strongly disagree |

23. The instruction librarians are well qualified to teach my students how to find, evaluate, and use research in my specific academic field. "Mark only one oval."

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
very strongly agree |
very strongly disagree |
24. I feel comfortable asking a librarian for help with my own research projects.
Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6
very strongly agree □ □ □ □ □ □ very strongly disagree

25. Do you have any other comments or thoughts you would like to share about the INSTRUCTION responsibilities of the Marx Library?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

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Google Forms
15. Have you encouraged students to receive research assistance from one of the librarians at the Marx Library?  
Mark only one oval.
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No

16. Have you ever made it mandatory for students to receive research assistance from one of the librarians at the Marx Library?  
Mark only one oval.
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No

17. Have you offered incentives (such as bonus points) for students to receive research assistance from one of the librarians at the Marx Library?  
Mark only one oval.
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No

18. Please rank the following INSTRUCTION responsibilities of the Marx Library from (1) MOST important to (7) LEAST important. *  
Mark only one oval per row:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Helping students evaluate the quality of source materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Collaborating on faculty research projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Educating students about plagiarism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Teaching citation styles such as APA or MLA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Developing and refining student research topics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Instructing students how to locate relevant books and journal articles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Providing individualized assistance in student research consultations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

https://docs.google.com/a/southalabama.edu/forms/d/1Ys6gbIcL9YIFGk_Ds6Ai1H6tPhF6idjK2X3oA4VY7ofI1/viewform

Approved: 4/14/2017

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