

Mildred F. Sawyer Library
Faculty Support Outcomes Assessment Plan
revised: 2001 September 4

Suffolk University's Mission Statement places students at the center of its efforts and value structure, and emphasizes academic excellence through teaching, based on the application of theory and research to practice and public service. The Mildred F. Sawyer Library's Mission Statement supports the teaching, learning and research needs of faculty; and, provides a place for students and faculty to read and study, to gather and deliberate, and to question, challenge and support one another.

Faculty are central in all higher education endeavors. From the library's perspective, the focus to date has been on acquiring requested information resources and upon making information more accessible, rather than addressing specifically how and why the faculty uses the library. The Sawyer Library needs to measure the ways in which the library supports the faculty.

Conducting faculty support outcomes assessments is intended and designed to improve library services. *Outcomes*, as viewed by the Association of College and Research Libraries' *Task Force on Academic Library Outcomes Assessment Report* (available: <http://www.ala.org/acrl/outcome.html>) are ***the ways in which library users are changed as a result of their contact with the library's resources and programs***. The results from our outcomes assessment efforts may not be able to stand up to scientific scrutiny, but it should be able to give the staff of the Mildred F. Sawyer Library a basis for informed judgment on which support mechanisms work and which do not work.

Specifically, we want to identify the ways in which the Sawyer Library is supporting the faculty's research and contributing to their teaching efforts. For example, what library resources do faculty need to conduct research and to teach? Is the library providing those resources? Has faculty research improved/benefitted from the growth of library resources, such as office and off-campus access to electronic resources? Have library resources aided in teaching? Do faculty members collaborate with library staff concerning classroom support and/or professional responsibilities? How may the library improve our efforts to support the faculty?

Faculty Support Performance Indicators (outcomes) are the ability and willingness of the faculty to use the library:

- as a resource supporting their course requirements, such as reserves, collections, reference staff, facility, etc.
- to instruct students on general and specific basic, intermediate and advanced information literacy skills
- to instruct students on course-specific, topic-based research processes
- as a resource to support the information needs as a result of their research, publication and other professional responsibilities and endeavors

- to update and maintain their information seeking, retrieval, and evaluation skills so that they can transfer these skills to students, as well as applying it to their professional responsibilities effectively and efficiently.

Identified support objectives:

Content

- knowledge of available library resources and services
- use of library resources to support course requirements and assignments
- use of library instructional sessions for teaching information literacy skills and course-specific research
- use of library resources for research and other professional endeavors; such as collection development, document delivery and interlibrary loan
- use of the library to update information seeking, retrieval and evaluation skills

Skills and Abilities

- effectively and efficiently access, search and retrieve information from any electronic resource
- critically evaluate Web-based sources
- incorporate article-level persistent URLs on syllabi from library-licensed databases

Attitudes and Values

- library resources are available and supportive
- students should learn how to use the library because of the information literacy skills acquired
- the library is an active partner in instructional and classroom endeavors
- the library is an active partner in professional endeavors

Staff of the Mildred F. Sawyer Library support the outcomes through application of these methods:

- promotion of library resources and services through a variety of means such as the Library's Web site, newsletters, e-mails, presentations, etc.
- faculty development in one-on-one collaboration, meetings/presentations in offices, programs/departmental meetings, or general faculty meetings
- assisting faculty by presenting instructional sessions to students concerning library services, resources and skills
- assisting faculty in developing learning modules concerning library resources, services and skills that they can employ themselves in their classroom
- maintaining the library's services infrastructure of collections, staff, technology and facilities

Staff of the Mildred F. Sawyer Library have identified the following measures to collect/compile

data and measure how well outcomes are being achieved:

Direct Measures

- use of library resources (collection, staff, facility and technology) is required of students by faculty for course assignments
 - + specific: report of number, type, and extent of library usage as required by course assignments
- course content and assignments include information literacy skills development
 - + specific: report of number, type, and extent of library usage as required by course assignments
- course includes instruction conducted by librarians
 - + specific: report of number, type and for which courses instruction sessions have been conducted
- document delivery and interlibrary loan usage by faculty
 - + specific: documents and/or interlibrary loans requested and filled
- faculty meetings
 - + specific: report on number and extent of meetings with faculty

Indirect Measures

- has the use of the library affected teaching and course assignments?
 - + specific: faculty surveys
- does the library provide adequate resources to support courses?
 - + specific: faculty surveys
- does the library provide adequate training/instruction for students and faculty?
 - + specific: faculty surveys
- has use of the library affected faculty application of research methods and techniques?
 - + specific: faculty surveys
- has use of the library affected faculty publications
 - + specific: faculty surveys

The Staff of the Mildred F. Sawyer Library use the assessment results to improve our faculty support efforts by:

- incorporating results and analysis into progress reports
- incorporating results and analysis into modifying/revising objectives and methods employed.