Incoming Transfer Students - Who are They, Where are They, How Can We Bridge the Gap?

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University of North Carolina at Greensboro Libraries
- Transfer students miss opportunities to interact with dedicated first year literacy instruction librarian
- Transfer students often difficult to identify
- Diverse educational backgrounds with different levels of exposure to scholarly research and information literacy training
- What do they need, and how do we provide it?
• Eggleston and Laanan (2001): concluded 4 year institutions fall short of providing adequate services to transfer students.
• Townsend (1995): “transfer shock”; i.e., drop in GPA during first year for new transfer students.
• Phillips and Atwood (2010): OhioLINK librarian survey: less than 25 of 200 or more reported classes were taught to transfer students.
• Tag- Western Washington (2004): survey of incoming transfer students- some familiarity with library resources, but over half requested library instruction.
• Gross and Latham (2011, 2012): Students who score below average in Information Literacy believe they are more skilled than they are.

Research on transfer students
1. Describe the dilemma
Some professors expect students “already know the library”
“Hidden” transfer population might not get library instruction
Baseline information literacy competencies in this group?

2. Gather existing knowledge
Local information – Institutional data, student services
Other institutions – Literature review of needs, services

3. Enough info to target a library intervention? No

4. Design a research study

How to approach a study?
How to reach out to incoming transfer students
• Online survey
• Email address list from registrar

How to get responses
• Chance to win a $25 gift certificate (two total)

Institutional Review Board needs?
• Needed to submit project to IRB
• All three investigators needed to complete IRB training

How would we use the survey results?
• Share with liaison librarians
Discussed content

- Reviewed other surveys, ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards
- Added demographic questions
- Kept survey as brief as possible

Initial questions pilot tested in paper and online (Google form)

Revised survey submitted to IRB
Data collected:

- Incoming grade level
- Type of institution from which student transferred
- Major/s
- Previous exposure to scholarly research and research instruction
- Knowledge of basic information literacy concepts
- Perceived needs
The first three questions are to find out what strategies and skills you use when searching for background and research information on topics.

I want to find information through the library. What are the best words for me to type? This is my research question: What are the long term effects of smoking on health?

I'm doing a persuasive speech about quitting smoking. Can you tell which of these web pages would be the best source for me to use?

- [ ] http://cigarettezoom.blogspot.com
- [ ] http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco

Why did you select this website?

Which of these statements would I need to cite? (Tell my audience where I found the information). Please check each statement that needs a citation.

- [ ] Smoking causes lung cancer [this information can be found in many places - the Internet, seen on t.v., heard in class, and seen on packs of cigarettes]
- [ ] “Approximately 69% of smokers want to quit completely” [this quote was found for free on the Internet]
- [ ] Even being around second hand smoke can cause health problems like lung cancer, heart disease, and respiratory infections [this information was found for free on the Internet and I restated the information in my own words]
Information Searching and Reporting Skills

Have you ever done a research paper with a bibliography (works cited page)?
- Yes
- No

Have you ever had a workshop or class about searching for information?
- Yes, in high school
- Yes, in community college
- Yes, somewhere else
- No

What kind of research skills training would you like?
Please check all that apply.
- Finding books
- Finding articles
- Finding other sources (please let us know what kind of sources in the "other" box below)
- Figuring out which sources fit your information need
- Figuring out how to cite a source
- No thanks, I'm not interested in research skills training
- Other: 

« Back  Continue »
Information Searching and Reporting Skills

What kind of institution are you transferring from?
If other, please let us know.
- Another school in the UNC system
- A university or college outside of that system
- A community college
- Other: 

What is your age?
- 18-21 years old
- 22-29 years old
- 30-59 years old
- 60 years or older

What year will you be starting at UNCG?
- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior

« Back  Continue »

66% completed
What do you plan to major in?
Please select all that apply. If you select "other," please let us know what you plan to major in.

- [ ] Accounting
- [ ] Finance
- [ ] African-American Studies
- [ ] Art
- [ ] Biology
- [ ] Chemistry
- [ ] Classical Studies
- [ ] Communication
- [ ] Community and Therapeutic Recreation
- [ ] Consumer, Apparel & Retail Studies
- [ ] Dance
- [ ] Economics
- [ ] English
- [ ] French
- [ ] Geography
- [ ] German
- [ ] History
- [ ] Human Development and Family Studies
- [ ] Information Systems & Supply Chain Management
- [ ] Interior Architecture
- [ ] International Business
Information Searching and Reporting Skills

Optional prize drawing

If you would like to be entered into a drawing for a $25 gift certificate to Barnes and Noble, please provide your name and an email address below. Personal information will only be used to create a pool of candidates for the drawing. It will not be shared or sold, it will not be used when analyzing answers collected through this survey, and it will be erased as soon as the drawing has been completed.

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.
Selected results...
### Age of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percent (n=154)</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-21</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-29</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-59</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>99.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community College</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>55.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another UNC system</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University or College</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outside the UNC-System</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Courses</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Number (n=156)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply Chain Management, Consumer Apparel, Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Pathology/Deaf Studies</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Studies and Family and Human Development</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology, Social Work, or Humanities</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Health Sciences and School of Business represented heavily.

Most common majors...
How knowledgeable is respondent of search terms to use?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledgeable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>46.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

About 73% either fair or poor in terms of knowing appropriate use of search terms!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Knowledgeable</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathology/Audiology</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply Chain Management</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Studies/Development</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>63.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>54.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, 15.6% were knowledgeable, 46.1% poor

Knowledgeable by major- all majors where n>10
In the “knowledgeable” group, the smallest percentage was in the 30-59 age range.
Knowledgeable scale for each transfer institution type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledgeable</th>
<th>Transferred from Community College</th>
<th>Transferred from another institution in the UNC system</th>
<th>Transferred from another University outside the UNC system</th>
<th>Transferred from online class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>7.1 %</td>
<td>36.4 %</td>
<td>24.4 %</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>34.1 %</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>50.6%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.1</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Percent of Respondents who Have had a Workshop by Their Transferred Institution

- High School Workshop
- Community College Workshop
- Workshop Somewhere Else
- No Workshop

Legend:
- Community College
- Another School in the NC system
- A University outside the UNC system
• 98.7% of respondents have written a research paper with a bibliography.
• 98.1% chose .gov web site over blog site for research on effects of tobacco smoking.
• 21.6% have never had library instruction.
Lessons learned...

• Survey Design
  • Questions are easiest to analyze if only one answer per question.
  • More demographic variables provide more significant connections.
  • Make sure the questions you ask will provide the results that you want.
• Need a lab notebook of sorts that records why we made some of the decisions we made
• Make sure to build ample time for dealing with IRB issues.
• Permissions must be documented.
• Pilot testing is essential.
• Often must find creative way to problem solve unexpected results.
• You will always think of that question you SHOULD have asked after the fact.
• Be thinking of follow-up studies throughout the process.
• Statisticians are great, but speak a different language. Clarify, clarify, clarify!

General tips...
• Using data, develop services and instruction that transfer students want and need.
• Find creative ways to market our services and reach out to a population often difficult to target.
• Design follow-up studies, examples:
  • Comparing incoming transfer students to cohorts who have been here.
  • Follow up studies on transfer students after receiving information literacy instruction here.
• Thank you to Jeffrey Blake for many diligent hours analyzing our data and creating cross tabs and tables for us!!!!
• Thank you to Jenny Dale for being an integral part of our research team!!
References


Any questions?

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Thank you!