Background
This paper outlines key elements of the University Library assessment program. This program was established within the context of the University Library Strategic Plan and the Library’s commitment to evidence-based decision making.

The assessment program is also linked to the University’s Framework for Assessment, which has 3 broad purposes: quality improvement to bring performance and goals into closer alignment; quality assurance to periodically test performance against expectations; and accountability to ensure the regular communication of outcomes, desired outcomes, successes and failures.

Organizational Structure
The Dean oversees the University Library assessment program. All major assessment projects require approval from the Dean.

The Assessment Analyst assists with the development and implementation of a library-wide program of assessment.

Overview
The program of assessment is divided into the following elements: library data and statistics; library surveys; key performance indicators and benchmarking; and other assessment related activities.

Library Data and Statistics
Part of the assessment program requires annual coordination and systematic reporting of library statistics for key external bodies both nationally (e.g. Canadian Association of Research Libraries – CARL) and internationally (e.g. Association of Research Libraries - ARL). Data submitted is made available in the public domain.

The Assessment Analyst coordinates the library statistics required for each submission on an annual basis. The emphasis is to ensure that all statistics provided follow specified definitions as closely as possible with any significant changes, from year to year, explained in footnotes.

Statistics Submissions
- Association of Research Libraries (ARL)
  - Data submitted annually for the overall library: collections; expenditures; fringe benefits; expenditures from external sources; personnel; instruction; reference; circulation; use of electronic resources; interlibrary loans; annual gate count; doctoral degrees and faculty; enrollment
  - Data also submitted for University Archives & Special Collections: expenditures; personnel; instruction
  - Salary data submitted annually for professional library employees: salary; job code; gender; years of professional experience; rank; full-time/part-time status; working job title
- Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL)
  - Data submitted annually for the overall library: expenditures, establishment and collections (titles held; expenditures for library materials, salaries and wages, other; personnel; local characteristics); use, facilities and services (electronic resources; collections use; library instruction and facilities; document delivery traffic); emerging trends (archives and special collections; digital collections; e-publishing)
  - Salary data submitted annually for professional library employees: salary; professional category; years of professional experience; years of professional experience in reporting institution (library system)
• Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries (AAHSL)
  – Data submitted annually for the Leslie and Irene Dubé Health Sciences Library: collections; regular and capital budget expenditures; personnel; use of library services and resources
  – Salary data submitted annually for professional library employees in the Leslie and Irene Dubé Health Sciences Library: salary; permanent/temporary status; full-time effort; position level/type; years of professional experience; gender; FTE supervised

• ARL Facilities Inventory
  – Data submitted every 3 years for assignable square footage of library space, physical locations, funds spent on renovation projects, and images demonstrating new and effective ways of using library spaces as a way to enhance learning, teaching, and research

Library Surveys
Effective planning and coordination of library surveys is another element of the assessment program. This involves careful design and administration of surveys, appropriate analysis and interpretation of results, identification of recommendations and actions to be taken for quality improvement, and communication back to stakeholders. The Assessment Analyst is responsible for coordination, administration, and/or reporting out on the results of library surveys. Library surveys are divided into the following categories with examples provided for each type of survey.

Major Library Surveys
• Administered by the Dean’s Office, occurring on a cyclical basis, and involving a significant portion of the library user population (students, faculty, and staff)
  – Ithaka S+R Library Survey (plan to participate in next administration with CARL institutions)
  – LibQUAL+ (conducted in 2007, 2010, 2013): Participating universities receive their institutional data and access to the final reports from all other participating institutions. Data from U15 peer institutions is pulled from these reports and compared to our institutional data.

Secondary Library Surveys
• Typically one-off in nature and involving a smaller portion of the library user population (including surveys administered by the Dean’s Office or by library faculty/staff in consultation with the Assessment Analyst)
  – Library Management and Supervisory Development Program Surveys (2016/17) – to assess program effectiveness from participants over time to ensure the program is enhancing managerial and supervisory skills across the library
  – Library Spaces Survey (2016) – to collect feedback from students, faculty, and staff regarding the revitalization of physical library spaces across all libraries on campus in order to continue to meet the changing needs of the campus community and help shape the library’s future
  – AskUs Survey (2014, 2016) – information gathering to help understand the use, experience, and motivations of clients who use the AskUs chat/texting service
External Surveys

- Surveys received from external organizations that are optional or require an official response from the University Library
  - Primary Research Group Inc. Survey on Academic Library Inter-Library Loan Practices
  - ARL Source of Funds Survey
  - SPEC Surveys

Key Performance Indicators and Benchmarking

In order to gauge progress toward the University Library’s strategic goals, a significant element of the assessment program is the development of performance indicators to track progress over time and to benchmark progress against peer institutions (e.g. U15 group of Canadian research universities). Through our membership and participation in leading professional associations and consortia (e.g. ARL and CARL), the University Library has access to a wealth of data including comparator data for our U15 peer institutions. Data is also available through independent public reports such as Maclean’s annual rankings of Canadian universities.

ARL Data

- All library data submitted to ARL is compiled into comprehensive annual statistics reports available to all member institutions. These reports include statistics for several indicators, percentages and ratios providing years of statistics to determine trends overtime and benchmark to other ARL institutions.
- ARL also publishes the Library Investment Index Rankings (a summary measure of relative size among the university members in ARL). The index is based on calculations using 4 variables in the annual statistics report. Each institution has a unique result and place in the rank order.
- Using the annual statistics available from ARL, the University Library (since 2013-14) undertakes a comprehensive analysis summarizing the U of S results versus our U15 peers for all ARL indicators, percentages, ratios, and the library investment index. This summary includes comparisons to the U15 average as well as our ranking among individual U15 institutions.

CARL Data

- All library data submitted to CARL is made available to all member institutions allowing for statistics to be summarized to determine trends overtime and to benchmark to other CARL institutions.
- The Council of Prairie and Pacific University Libraries (COPPUL) also publishes a report using CARL statistics providing data for all COPPUL institutions.

University Employee Opinion Survey

- Employee engagement results from the University Employee Opinion Survey (UEOS) are tracked annually for the University Library and compared to the overall U of S results.
- Results from UEOS are also tracked to determine how well we are living our values within the library compared to the U of S overall.
Maclean’s Rankings

- Maclean’s magazine releases its annual rankings of Canadian universities where the U of S is ranked in a group of 15 medical doctoral institutions defined as offering a broad range of PhD programs and research with all having medical schools (similar to the U15 group). Maclean’s data is drawn from publicly available information and collated by the magazine.
- The rankings include 2 library indicators: library expenses measuring the percentage of the university’s budget dedicated to library funding overall and library acquisitions measuring the proportion of the library’s budget allocated to the acquisition of new material. The results for these library indicators are tracked annually for the U of S and our medical doctoral peers.

Other Assessment Related Activities

The University Library also undertakes other assessment related activities including peer and student evaluation of teaching, periodic reviews, graduate program review (library reports), and provision of data to colleges who have accreditation requirements with external accrediting agencies.

Evaluation of Teaching

- At the University Library, there is a systematic program of peer and student evaluation of librarian teaching which forms an essential component of tenure and promotion considerations for librarians for whom teaching is assigned.

Periodic Reviews

- Periodically, the University Library undertakes reviews of branches, units, and functional areas as commissioned by the Dean. These reviews help to gauge quality and ensure alignment with University Library strategic goals.

Graduate Program Review

- All graduate programs at the U of S undergo an academic review on a seven-year cycle. As part of this process, the library provides annual reports (supporting documentation) outlining the library’s facilities, services, and collections strengths in the areas of each graduate program under review.

Accreditation Processes

- Several of the professional colleges are accredited by external professional bodies and/or accrediting agencies and as required the University Library supports accreditation processes by providing data and statistics on library usage and collections to colleges for inclusion in their accreditation documentation.

Summary

The University Library assessment program is necessary to assess the quality and effectiveness of library operations and programs tied to quality improvement, quality assurance, and accountability. The assessment program is under ongoing development and it will continue to develop and evolve over time. A chart illustrating the University Library Assessment Program follows.
University of Saskatchewan Framework for Assessment
(comprehensive assessment strategy)

University Library Assessment Program
(continuous improvement; evidence-based decision making)

Accountability
(communicating outcomes, successes and failures)

Quality Assurance
(testing performance against expectations)

Quality Improvement
(alining goals and performance)

Activities
Library Surveys
- Major Library Surveys (e.g. Library Employee Opinion Survey, LibQUAL+)
- Secondary Library Surveys (e.g. Library Management and Supervisory Development Program Surveys, Library Spaces Survey, AskUs Surveys)
- External Surveys (e.g. Primary Research Group Inc. Survey on Academic Library Inter-Library Loan Practices, ARL Source of Funds Survey, SPEC Survey)

Performance Indicators
- Analysis of ARL Statistics (U of S vs. U15)
- ARL Library Investment Index Rankings
- University Employee Opinion Survey engagement results (library vs. U of S)
- Maclean's Annual University Rankings (2 library indicators)

Evaluation of Teaching
- Student and Peer Evaluation of Teaching

Activities
Library Statistics Submissions
- ARL, CARL, and AAHSL Annual Statistics and Salary Statistics
- ARL Facilities Inventory

External Publications
- ARL statistics publications including Library Investment Index Rankings
- CARL and COPPUL (using CARL stats) Publications
- University Employee Opinion Survey
- Maclean's Annual University Rankings

Internal Publications
- Analysis of ARL Statistics (U of S vs. U15)
- Survey results (Library Spaces Survey, LibQUAL+, Library Employee Opinion Survey, etc.)

Activities
Periodic Reviews (branch, unit, and functional area reviews)
- External Review of Technical Services Activities in Services to Libraries
- Law Library Review
- Liaison Librarian Program Review
- Organizational Review of University Archives and Special Collections
- External Review of Saskatchewan Health Information Resources Program (SHIRP)

Graduate Program Review (2017 reports)
- Anatomy and Cell Biology, Biochemistry, Community and Population Health Science, Microbiology and Immunology, Pharmacology, Physiology, Health Sciences, Nutrition, Pharmacy, Nursing

Accreditation Processes
- Federation of Law Societies of Canada - Law School Report Form (library section)