

Library Assessment Trends in the U.S.A.

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Library Assessment

Library assessment is a structured process to:

- Learn about our communities & services to make them successful
- Use data for effective management & decision-making
- Emphasize communication with customers & stakeholders
- Seek opportunities for collaboration & comparisons
- Help demonstrate library value

U.S. Higher Education and Assessment

- No national library or standards for performance
- Thousands of colleges and universities – missions differ
 - Large number of private institutions
- Institutions are accredited by regional associations (non-governmental) and some programs by professional bodies
- Educational component funded locally (taxes/tuition)
- Federal government funds research/provides student loans
- Internal allocation of funds done at institutional level

Traditional Library “Assessment”: Inputs

Focus on how big/how much

- Budget (staff, collections, operations)
- Staff size
- Collection size
- Facilities
- Related infrastructure (hours, seats, computers)
- Size of user communities and programs

ARL “Investment Index” measures inputs related to expenditures and staff numbers

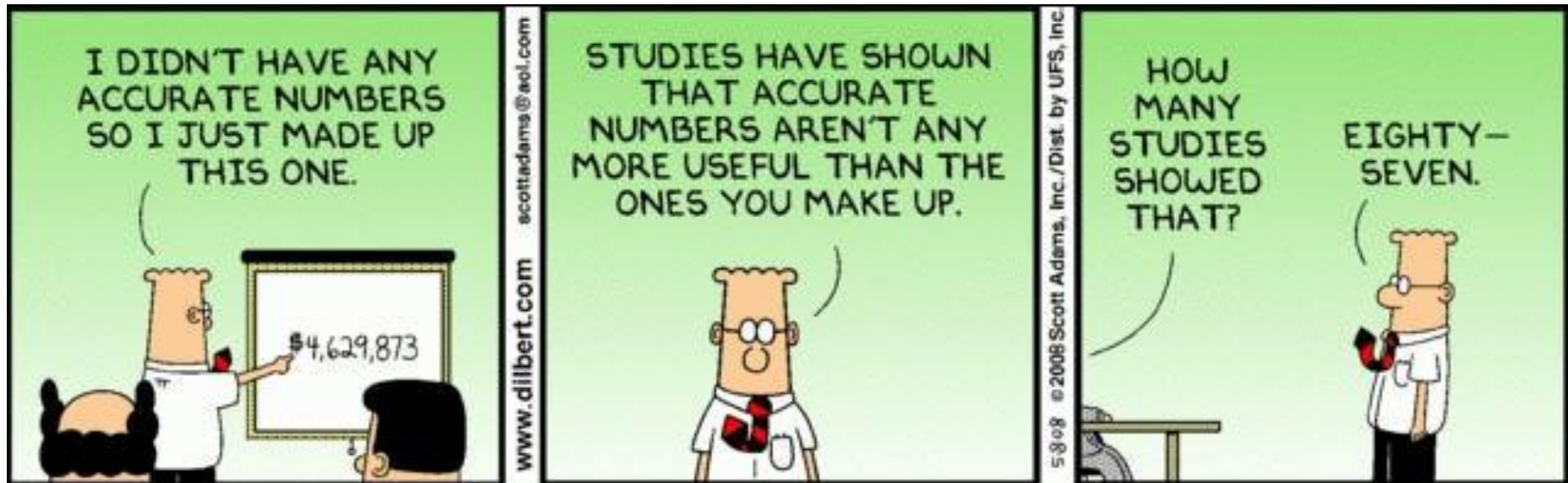
Traditional Library Assessment: Outputs

Focus on usage

- Collections (print, electronic, ILL)
- Reference services
- Facilities (gate counts)
- Instruction sessions
- Discovery and retrieval
- Other Web sessions

May indicate if “inputs” are used, but doesn’t tell us what users were able to accomplish as a result.

These Are Self-Reported Statistics Too!



Trends in Academic Library Assessment

- Library statistics (1907-)
- Customer-centered library concept (1995-)
 - User-centered design for library space
- Outcomes-based assessment and metrics (2000-)
 - Teaching and learning (information literacy)
- Multiple methods - including qualitative (2000-)
- Library value and impact (2005-)
- Collaboration - Integrating library & institutional assessment (2010-)
 - Libraries and faculty research productivity
 - Libraries and student learning outcomes

Example: Learning Outcomes Assessment

Figure 1:
Assessment Cycle

Outcomes

What do we want to achieve?
What do we want the student to achieve?
What does an excellent information literacy program do?

Criteria for Success:

How will we know the students we have met the outcomes? What standards of success will we use to determine program effectiveness?

Assessment:

How will the student demonstrate their learning and ability? What evidence, data, or information do we need to gather about our program? How and when will we gather it?

**Library/College
Mission/Values/Goals**

Strategic Directions

**Library Instruction Program
Mission/Goals**

Continuous Improvement

What, if any, changes are necessary as a result of the learning? What are our priorities and the plan for action?

Analysis

What can we learn from the evidence/data/information? What does it reveal? Are our current activities getting us toward our outcome?

Assessment Drivers

- Institutional accountability, justification and funding
- Accreditation – Student learning outcomes
- Service improvement & evidence-based decision making
- Marketing & promoting library resources and services

No longer “how good is this library but how much good does this library do”

Major Assessment Players: Building the Assessment Community

Rely on associations and groups – no national library

- Association of Research Libraries
- Association of College and Research Libraries
- National Information Standards Organization
- Library Assessment Conference

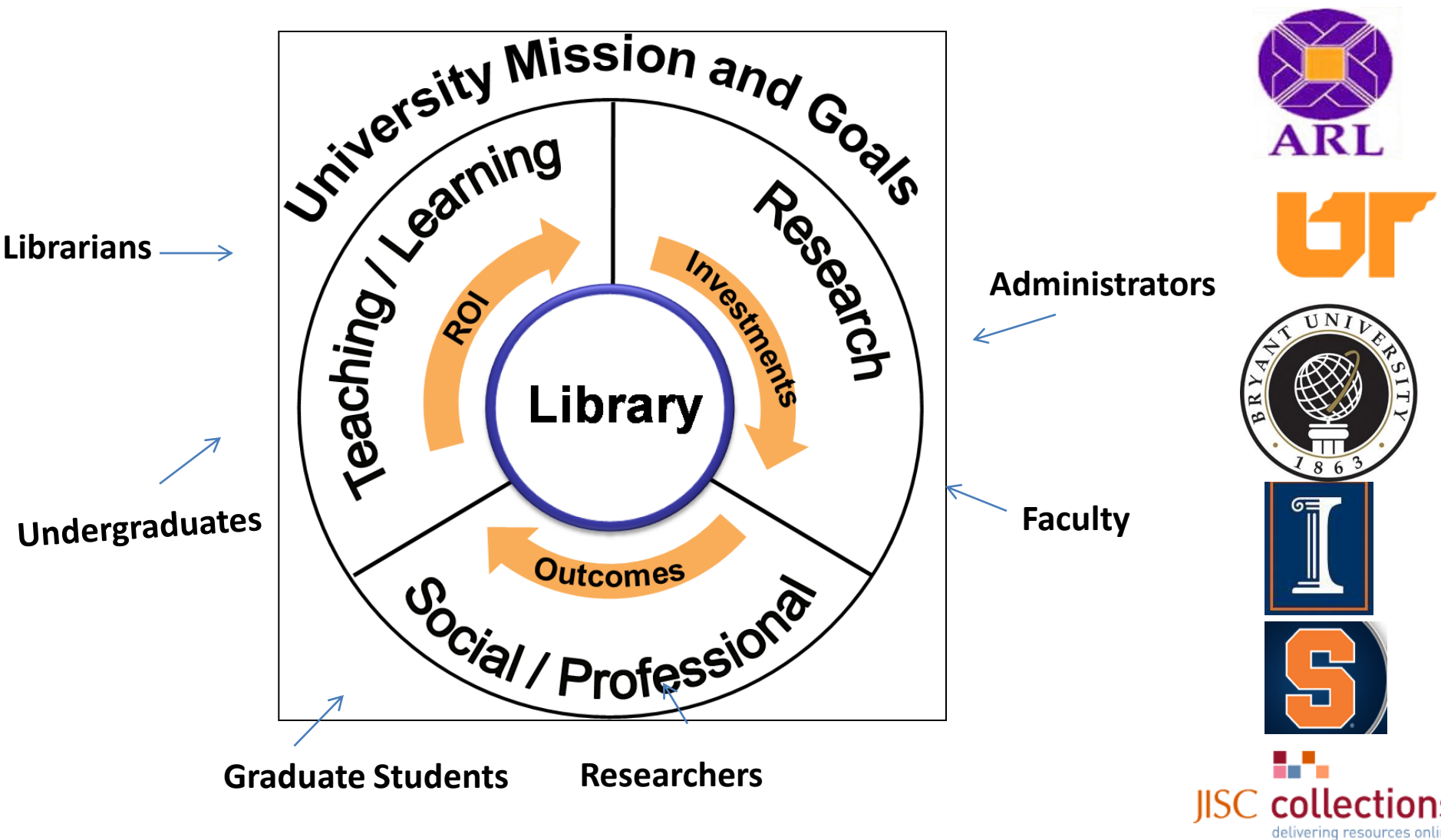
Association of Research Libraries (ARL)

<http://www.arl.org/stats/>



- Represents 125 largest libraries
- ARL Statistics
- New measures and new tools
 - LibQUAL+® user survey, MINES for libraries
- Individual library consulting
 - Effective, Sustainable and Practical Assessment (ESP)
 - 42 libraries visited 2005-2010 to evaluate assessment needs and programs
- Balanced Scorecard for libraries
- Continuing education
- Lib-Value
 - Partner in IMLS grant to measure value and return on investment in academic libraries)

Multiple Institutions Using Multiple Methods to Measure Multiple Values for Multiple Stakeholders



Current Projects

**Books and
Ebooks**

**Special
Collections**

**Information
Commons**

Teaching

Learning

**Comprehensive
Library**

**Reading and
Scholarship**

Tools

**Website and
Value
Bibliography**

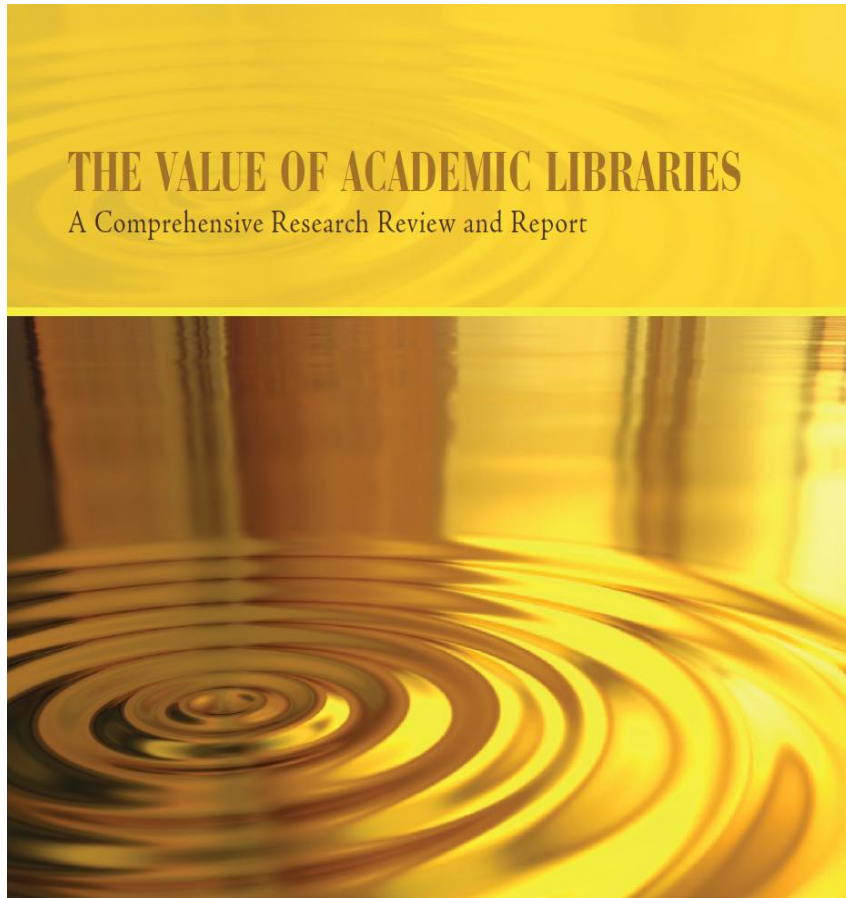
Association of College & Research Libraries

(ACRL) <http://www.ala.org/acrl/>

- **Standards and Guidelines**
 - Information Literacy, Higher Education Outcomes
- **Continuing Education**
 - Information Literacy Immersion, Assessment Track, Webinars
- **Programs, Committees, Discussion Groups**
 - Value of Academic Libraries, Assessment
- **Value of Academic Libraries Initiative**

Association of College and Research Libraries

Value of Academic Libraries



Purpose:

- Current state of literature on the value of libraries
- Suggestions for immediate next steps in demonstrating academic library value
- Research agenda for articulating library value
- Focus on defining outcomes

Prepared by Megan Oakleaf, Sept. 2010

<http://www.acrl.ala.org/value/>

Value of Academic Libraries Research Agenda

- **How does the library contribute to:**
 - Student enrollment
 - Student retention and graduation rates
 - Student success
 - Student achievement
 - Student learning
 - The student experience
 - Faculty research productivity
 - Faculty grant proposals and funding
 - Faculty teaching
 - Overall institutional reputation and prestige

National Information Standards Organization (NISO) <http://www.niso.org/home/>

- Information Standards
 - Data Dictionary (Z39.7)
- Performance measures
- Continuing education
 - Webinars



Library Assessment Conference

Building Effective, Sustainable, Practical Assessment

- Biennial conference started in 2006 by ARL, University of Virginia and University of Washington
- Influenced by success of the Northumbria Performance Measurement Conference held in Pittsburgh, 2001
- All areas of library assessment with focus on practical
 - Keynotes, papers, posters and workshops
- Opportunity for those interested in assessment to connect
- Largest library-assessment related meeting in the world

Library Assessment Conference Basics

	2006 Charlottesville, VA	2008 Seattle, WA	2010 Baltimore, MD
Registrants “Assessment” in job title	217 15	377 32	460 61
Presentations (papers) Poster sessions Workshops	44 20 3 (half day, offered 2x)	60 40 6 (half-day)	68 80 2 (full-day) 4 (half-day)
Conference Proceedings	452 pages	552 pages	788 pages

2012 Library Assessment Conference



- 67 papers
 - Teaching and Learning (10)
 - Methods (12)
 - Value (7)
 - Data (6)
 - Collections (6)
 - Discovery (5)
 - Value (5)
 - Space (4)
 - Organizational performance(4)
 - Special Collections (3)
- 4 Keynotes
 - Libraries and the Academy
- 5 Workshops
 - Library Value (1/2 day)
 - Learning Outcomes
 - Library Space
 - LibQual+®
 - Balanced Scorecard (1/2 day)
- 85 posters

Assessment is Local

Assessing Library Value to the Institution

- Library contributions to learning, teaching and research
 - Student learning outcomes (accreditation, tuition)
 - Return on investment (externally funded research)
- Library value to the academic community
 - Information resources/collections
 - Library as place
 - Intellectual crossroads of the university
- Organizational performance and effectiveness
- Collaborations

UW Libraries 2010 Triennial Survey

Libraries Contribution to:

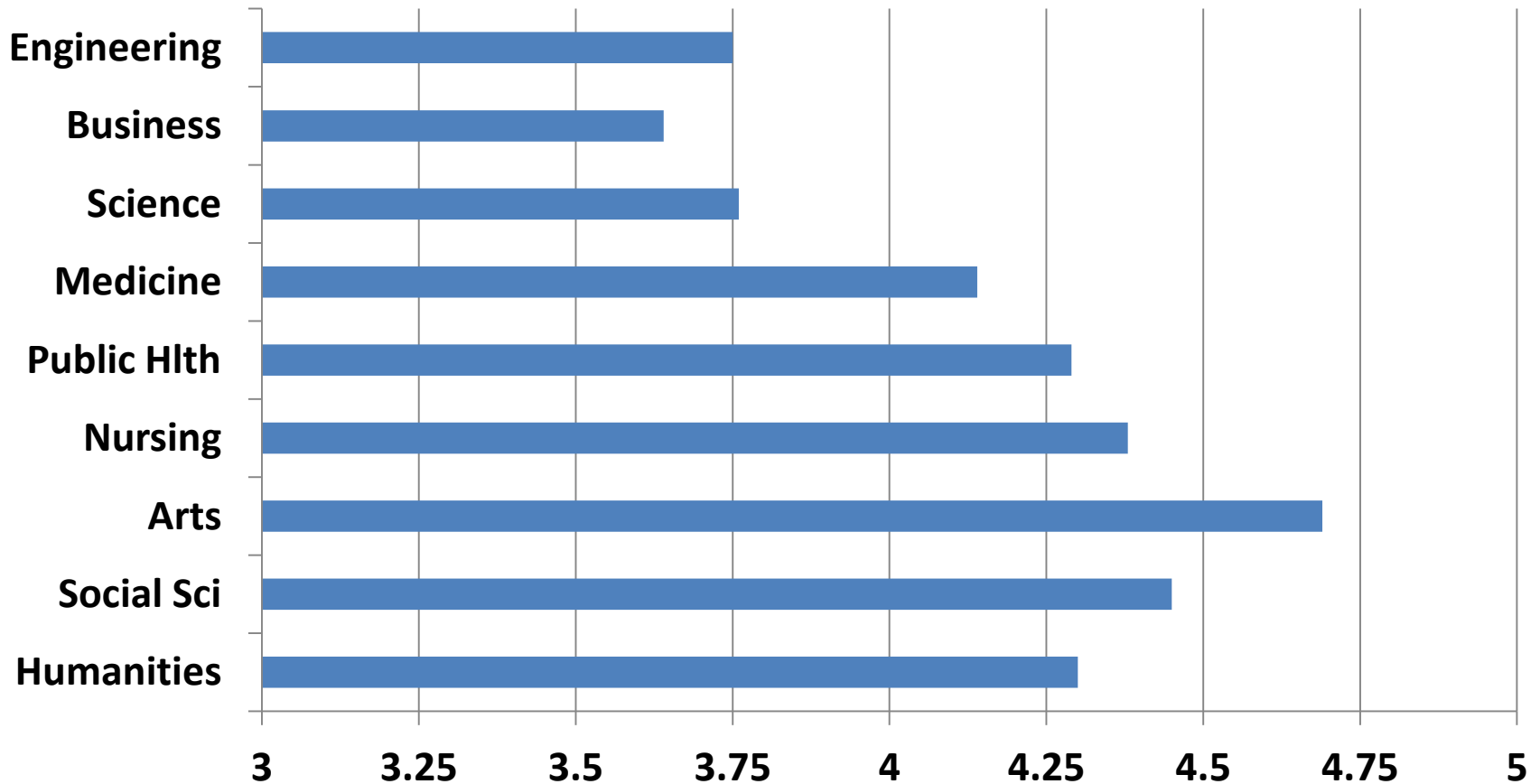
(Scale of 1 “Minor” to 5 “Major”)

Mean scores; %= those marking 4 or 5	Faculty 1634 surveys (39% response)	Graduate Students 680 surveys (32% response)
Keeping current in your field	92% 4.67	90% 4.53
Finding information in related fields or new areas	90% 4.56	91% 4.57
Being a more productive researcher	92% 4.63	93% 4.64
Enriching student learning experiences	77% 4.18	92% 4.60
Overall academic success		
Making more efficient use of your time	87% 4.46	80% 4.21

UW Libraries Contribution to **Enriching** Student Learning Experiences

(Faculty Response by College/School)

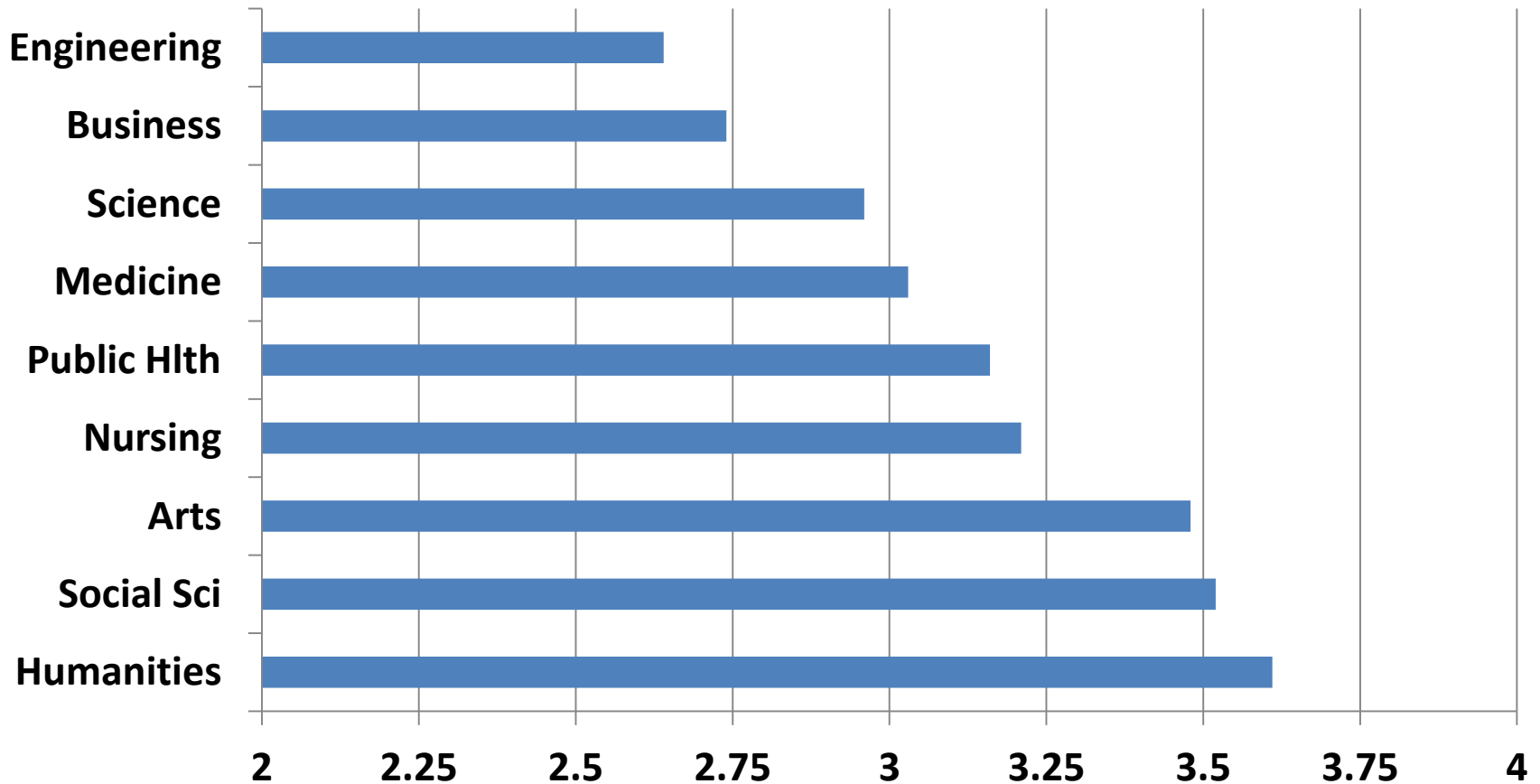
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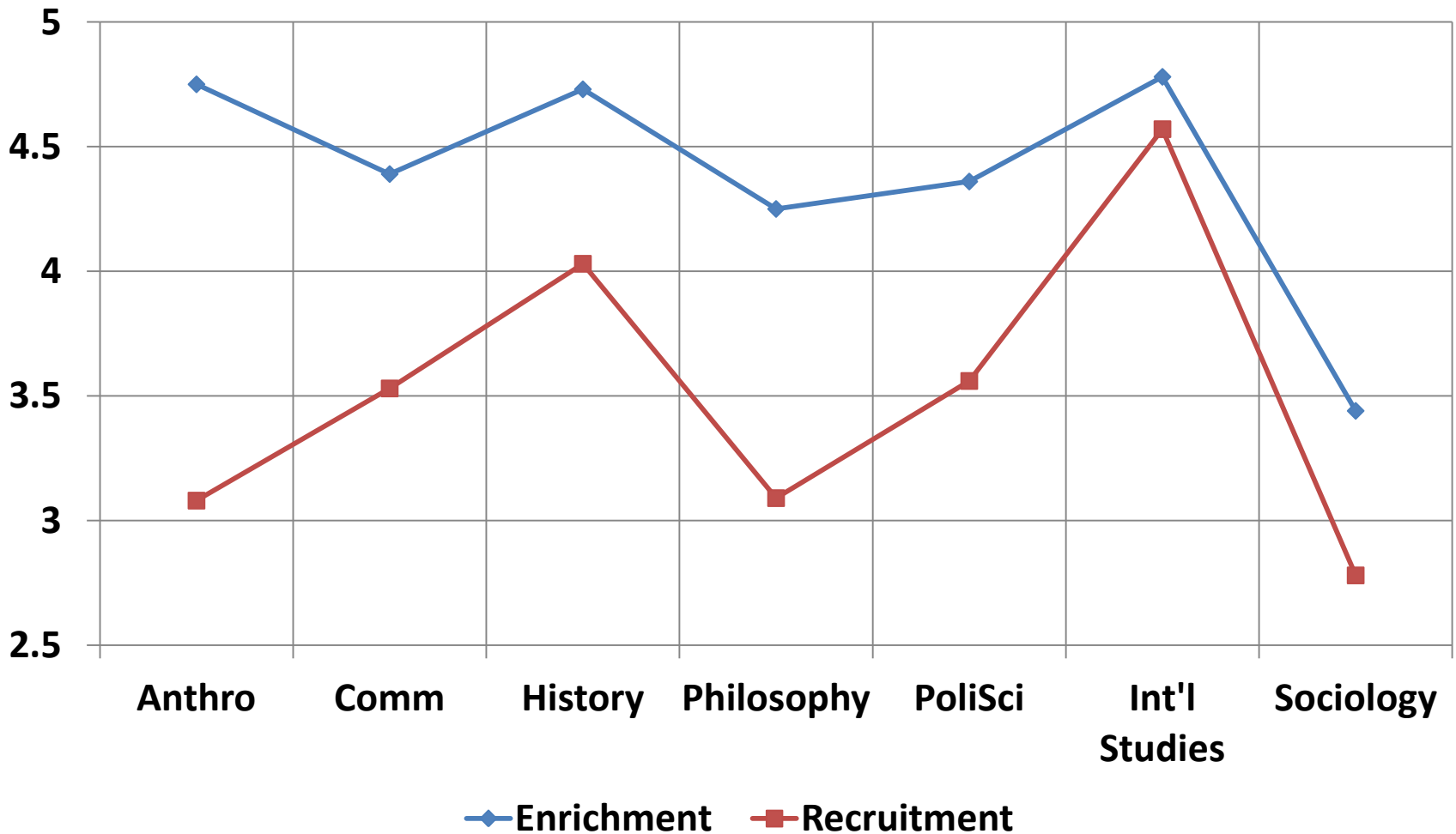
UW Libraries Contribution to **Recruiting** Colleagues & Students to UW

(Faculty Response by College/School)

Scale of 1 (Minor) to 5 (Major)



Library Role in Recruitment & Student Enrichment in the Social Sciences by Program



Have Libraries Met these Challenges?

- What do we know about our communities to provide services and resources to make them successful?
- How do we demonstrate our effectiveness to user success?
- What do our stakeholders need to know in order to provide the resources needed for a successful library?