Building Scorecards in Academic Research Libraries

Steve Hiller, University of Washington
Vivian Lewis, McMaster University
Liz Mengel, Johns Hopkins University
Donna Tolson, University of Virginia
Today’s topics

✓ The ARL initiative

✓ Experiences of participating libraries

✓ Show common objectives and measures

✓ Share challenges

✗ How to implement a Balanced Scorecard
Goals of the ARL Initiative

- Explore suitability of the model for academic research libraries
- Benefit from consultant expertise
- Encourage cross-library collaboration
- Would common objectives and metrics emerge?
How did it work?

- March 2009: Consultant - 3 meetings & monthly calls
- January 2010: Work together - Meetings & monthly calls
- October 2010: Support each other - Ongoing contact
What have we accomplished?

- Consultant
- Strategy maps
- Work together
- Metrics and targets
- Support each other
- Strategic meetings

March 2009
January 2010
October 2010
Four perspectives outline goals

**Mission**
What is our plan to achieve our mission and vision?

**Customer Perspective**
"To achieve our mission, how must we look to our customers?"

**Financial Perspective**
"If we succeed, how will we look to our donors or taxpayers?"

**Internal Perspective**
"To satisfy our customers and financial donors, which business processes must we excel at?"

**Learning and Growth Perspective**
"To achieve our mission, how must our organization learn and improve?"

Not the way we typically work...

- Most of us lack robust process for identifying or executing strategy
- Assessment often not tied to strategy
- Resources often allocated based on history or “loudest voice”
- Often operate as silos rather than unified whole
Introduction of participating libraries -

- Why were we interested in the Balanced Scorecard
## Number of Objectives by Perspective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library</th>
<th>Customer</th>
<th>Financial</th>
<th>Learning &amp; Growth</th>
<th>Internal Processes</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JHU</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMaster</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UVA*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UW</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* UVA numbers based on 2007/2009 scorecard
Commonalities in objectives

- **Financial Perspective Objective**
  - Secure funding for operational needs (4)

- **Customer Perspective Objective**
  - Provide productive and user centered spaces, both virtual and physical (4)

- **Learning and Growth Perspective Objective**
  - Develop workforces that are productive, motivated, and engaged (4)

- **Internal Processes Perspective Objective**
  - Promote library resources, services, and value (3)
## Commonalities in Metrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library</th>
<th># Objectives</th>
<th># Measures</th>
<th>Average # of Measures/Obj.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JHU</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMaster</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UVA</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UW</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Providing productive user-centered space

- **JHU**
  - LibQual
  - User assessment resulting in new strategies

- **McMaster**
  - LibQual
  - # of quiet study seats
  - Gate count

- **UVA**
  - Response to equipment service requests
  - Renovation of space
  - Reliability of servers

- **UW**
  - User survey (homegrown)
  - Gate count
Selecting Appropriate Measures

- Does the metric directly measure performance to achieve the objective?
- What data is needed for the measure?
- How often should the data be collected and used?
- How many measures are needed for each objective?
- How should the measurement be presented?
Organizational Challenges

• Making the scorecard “understandable” to staff
• Requires significant time and intellectual effort
• Needs ongoing commitment from leadership
• Getting “attention” for longer-term strategy while addressing immediate budget concerns
• Clarifying decision-making responsibility
• Convincing staff that this wasn’t “strategic planning as usual”
• Convincing some that measures do matter
Outcomes:
Original Reasons for Participation

• JHU: Move towards a culture of assessment and data driven decision making
• McMaster: Linkages between strategic plan, assessment activities and projects were tenuous at best. Tool for fledgling assessment program.
• UVA: Share our Scorecard experience and revisit our Scorecard and how we were using it.
• UW: Better integrate strong assessment program with strategy, planning, and operations.
What We Found (Common to All!)

- Strategy trumps metrics
- Organizational change & transformation facilitated
- Better linkages between assessment, planning and operations
- A work in progress that continues to evolve

We all believe in the Scorecard as an excellent organizational performance model and are committed to its success at our libraries.
What Did We Learn?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BSC is:</th>
<th>BSC is not:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• A performance management system</td>
<td>• Only an assessment tool or data container</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Built on the foundation of clear organizational strategy</td>
<td>• Effective unless tightly tied to strategic priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A way to align resources and drive change</td>
<td>• An isolated project that can be managed by a few people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Advice?

- Leadership, a “champion”, and believers are critical to success
- Tire store analogy (align, balance, rotate, adjust, and go for that 100,000 mile tread!)
- Don’t be driven (or sidetracked by metrics). Let institutional and organizational priorities drive metrics. The numbers will come . . .
- Any tool that forces you to identify priorities, measure what matters, and engage staff about the future is valuable
Questions
Where we’re at

- Strategy Maps