

Part I. General Information

Program(s) Discussed:	Learning Commons
Current Semester:	Spring 2016
Date of Assessment Meeting(s):	November 10, 2015; May 16, 2016
Participants in Assessment Meeting(s):	Amy Wainwright, Michelle Millet

All Annual Assessment Reports are available to the appropriate Associate Dean, Dean, and the Provost, as well as to other administrators for institutional effectiveness and accreditation purposes. Please indicate the degree to which your program would like this information more widely shared.

On-Campus Users

- Freely available
- Available upon request
- Unavailable

Off-Campus Users

- Freely available
- Available upon request
- Unavailable

Part II. Assessment Process

We try to count attendance at the various learning commons events, but also ask students to sign in for tutoring. Because the signing in is manual (not a card swipe system) and voluntary, it remains problematic. This year we focused on the goal of “seek out academic support services as necessary” and are using usage and limited analyses of final grades to try and measure the impact of the Learning Commons. Our graduate assistant and the Student Engagement and Outreach Librarian administer the surveys and work with the tutors on obtaining sign-ins. We did also work with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to score the final grades of students who received tutoring, as opposed to those who did not to see if there were any major differences.

Part III. Findings

This was the first complete school year of having students sign in to use study tables. We saw a drastic increase in sign-ins compared to the data we have from last year. This school year, we had a total of 239 students sign in to study tables; some were repeat users, compared to only a total of 53 sign-ins from school year 2014/2015. Our most used study tables were Accounting, Biology, and German, with 126, 16, and 18 students signing in for each subject respectively.

There were a few factors that probably influenced the number of sign-ins by student users. We brought in a new Graduate Assistant (Katherine Baker) who has put an increased emphasis on the Peer Learning Facilitators (PLFs/tutors) being held accountable for having students sign in. Midway through this Spring semester, Katherine has done a soft roll out of shift reports that the PLFs need to submit to her after their time leading study tables. This shift report was created to give Katherine another layer of both feedback and accountability and it was created based on a similar report that the Writing Center uses with their Consultants. This has allowed Katherine to get more feedback on how many students are using the study tables if they have not signed in, as well as to have more context

about why those same students are not signing in. The last factor that may have influenced the increase in sign-ins was that we encourage the PLFs to have students sign in from mobile devices and their own laptops. Previously, we only had 1 station that students could use to sign in and they let us know through their feedback that this was inconvenient.

In addition to our study table usage, we also track co-curricular events and services offered in the Learning Commons. One of our main services is the Relaxation Room, in partnership with the Counseling Center. The Relaxation Room has a sign in sheet that students are encouraged, but not required to use, this school year it appears that we have had both a higher use and more sign-ins for the room. This school year so far, we have had 426 people use the Relaxation Room compared to last year's 162. We have also updated signage to the room since students were saying that they were having difficulty finding where the room was located.

When looking at the Fall 2015 grades, the majority of students (2/3) who received tutoring did get better than a C in the course. The most success appears to be in the Biology 155 tables, which is good to see since that course was the original impetus to launch the study tables project. There are clearly a lot of students still struggling with Accounting.

Our student survey was implemented mid-way through Fall of 2015 and has gathered responses to student users of study tables on an opt-in basis. The survey asks users basic questions about the help they have received at study tables. Questions include: "Do you sign in every time you come to a study table?", "What do you think about the current study table schedule?", and "Please rate your peer learning experience today," among others. We have received 15 responses to this survey so far and are still trying to find the best time to send students this survey. Student responses to this survey have indicated that they are mostly (6 out of 9 responses were "Agree" or "Strongly Agree") finding their study tables to be collaborative and improved their understanding of the subject (7 out of 9 responses were "Agree" or "Strongly Agree").

Name(s) of file(s) containing data charts: learning-commons-usage-data.pdf, student-survey-responses.pdf, Learning Commons Fal2015 tutoring.pdf

Part IV. Planned Changes to the Assessment System

This year we did manage to collect a lot more data, which has shown us an increase in usage. We would like to continue using current methods but also possibly encourage teaching faculty to provide us with feedback, if they see any, on changes/differences in their students after attending tutoring.

Our biggest hurdle in collecting data for the Learning Commons is the systems that we have at our disposal. Without a larger, campus wide, easy to use system (that most likely using a swipe card method), we are stuck with asking students to sign-in manually and then having to rely on matching those sign-ins with data from Banner. I believe we could implement a better system that everyone on campus could take advantage of and, if we valued this data, would be a worthwhile investment. Learning Analytics and library/space usage is an important conversation that I think we don't quite have a hold of yet but the technology does exist.

We will continue to survey students who use the study tables, but may tweak the questions slightly.

Part V. Planned Changes to the Program in Response to Data

One change we would like to make is to try and schedule the tutoring at different times/days for the lower attended subjects and see if that makes a difference in overall usage of the services. Additionally, more intentionally partnerships between the Writing Center and the Learning Commons tutors would be a benefit to our students.

In terms of the tutoring, we will first analyze the spring grades and then meet with both Accounting and Biology to discuss our findings.