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## USFT Services Instruction Assessment LSS Instruction Program 2017.2020

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[USF Libraries Tampa Campus Instruction Program:](#)

Assessment Report: 2017-2020

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August 2020



UNIVERSITY of  
**SOUTH FLORIDA**  
Libraries

## **Introduction**

USF Libraries has a long tradition of providing instruction to how to locate, select, evaluate and access information and learning resources necessary for academic success to students and faculty in the colleges within USF.

The USF Libraries Tampa campus Research & Instruction team is staffed by 9 librarians and one administrative professional divided among two different units. The Library Student Success (LSS) team is comprised of 7 librarians who work primarily with the bulk of undergraduate and graduate students, and deliver the libraries' traditional instruction program. The Research Platform Teams, consisting of the remaining two librarians and the administrative professional, serve graduate students in specialized areas of Geosciences and History. The instruction program is administered by the Interim Director for Research & Instruction/Assistant Director for Library Instructional Services who also serves as an instruction librarian. This team is responsible for the design, development, implementation, and assessment of information literacy curricula to both on-campus and distance populations. Instruction is delivered using a variety of mechanisms, formats and modes to meet the needs of diverse groups of students and faculty. Additionally, librarians regularly engage in instructional outreach events, and ongoing partnerships with other academic departments.

The availability of library instruction and consultation sessions are communicated to students and faculty via prominent links from the Services menu found on the USF Libraries website, faculty email communication, and advertisements positioned within the University's learning management portal. For course-related instruction, librarians work directly with faculty to design and deliver sessions. Orientations in fall semesters provide additional venues to introduce new faculty and graduate students to library instruction services.

## **Mission and goals**

The LSS instruction program strives to support the strategic initiatives of the University as well as the [USF Libraries vision, mission and values](#) to inspire research, creativity and learning by connecting the USF community to relevant and high-quality information by utilizing emerging methodologies and tools to deliver impactful support for student success. Our instruction team works in collaboration with instructors and faculty to develop and deliver a suite of skills-based learning opportunities designed to supplement curricula and prepare students to be successful explorers, patrons, and creators of information. The USF Libraries furthers the goal of student acquisition of knowledge and competencies to prepare them to be well-educated, highly skilled and adaptable engaged citizens prepared to thrive in a dynamic and global environment.

The program consists of three components: course-related instruction, online guides & tutorials, and research consultations. Using a variety of pedagogical methods and platforms, instruction curricula and resources are designed to prepare students to:

- Determine how authority is constructed and defined in context
  - Recognize information creation as a process
  - Apply criteria to evaluate information
  - Perform research as intellectual inquiry
  - Recognize research as an ongoing scholarly conversation
- Acquire skills for research as strategic exploration

Instructional activities conform to the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) "*Guidelines for Instruction Programs in Academic Libraries*" and the program curriculum is informed by the ACRL "*Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*".

### **Instructional Activities**

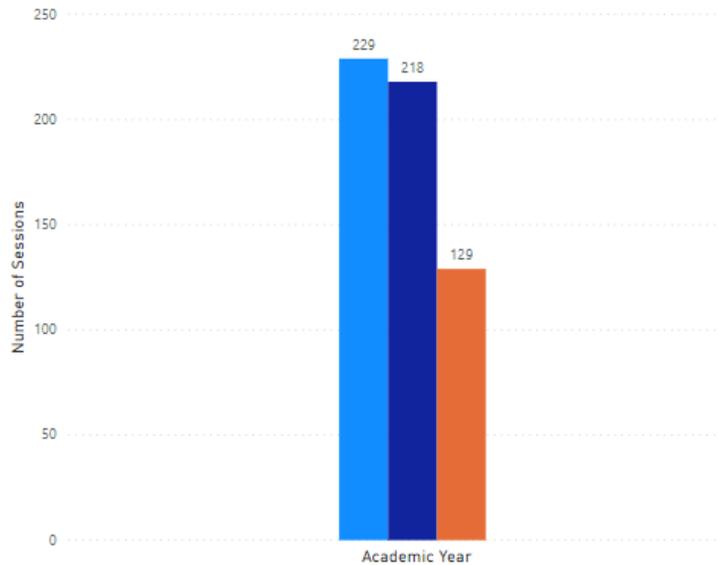
Historically, Library Student Success librarians have presented course-related instruction sessions on an on-demand basis for classes in the libraries' three teaching labs or in the students' classrooms as well as online. Online instructional sessions are presented using software available through Canvas, the university's course management software along with Blackboard Collaborate and/or Microsoft Teams. Faculty are further encouraged to include links to online research guides, tutorials, and librarian information in their course modules. By default, library course guides are included in all courses housed within the Canvas course management system. The instructional needs of distance learners are served by online, course-related instruction when requested by faculty. Instruction is also delivered to students through one-on-one consultation sessions which can take place in the librarian's office, on the phone, or online using Blackboard Collaborate, Microsoft Teams, or through online chat when students log in to [Ask A Librarian](#).

### *Course-related Instruction*

The core of the instruction program has historically been instructor-scheduled face-to-face sessions held in the Libraries' teaching labs or the students' classrooms. Instructors fill out the Libraries' online instruction request form to schedule either a face-to-face or online session. Course-related instruction, whether delivered inside the library or online, represents just one approach to faculty-librarian collaboration and the development of learning outcomes which dovetail with the course objectives.

From 2017 through 2020, the Library Student Success team has delivered 576 instruction sessions reaching 16,613 students. As the number of LSS departmental faculty has declined over the years, there has been a corresponding reduction in the number of synchronous instructional sessions delivered as it becomes increasingly difficult to accommodate the instructional requests of a large and expanding university community. From the 2017-2018 academic year to the 2019-2020 academic year, the number of in-person library instruction sessions has decreased by 43.7% .

Sessions Scheduled, 2017-2020



In order to address the issue of scarcity of human capital while still offering high-quality library instruction, the team has been transitioning to a more online-focused curriculum.

In Summer 2020, the USF Libraries launched a coordinated program that complements the efforts of the University to support student success and implement high impact practices. This program augments the existing curriculum through a series of online, self-paced workshops that add value to the faculties' student learning outcomes and further the effectiveness of High Impact Practices (HIPs). The USF Libraries' instruction program is informed by USF's Enhanced General Education curriculum and is focused on delivering online learning modules that can supplement *any* lower or upper level undergraduate course with a research component. Students who participate earn badges to demonstrate completion and competency. These concept-specific workshops support USF's learning outcomes for Information and Data Literacy that were developed to incorporate core ideas from the ACRL Framework to support student understanding of the ever-shifting dynamic contours of the world of information.

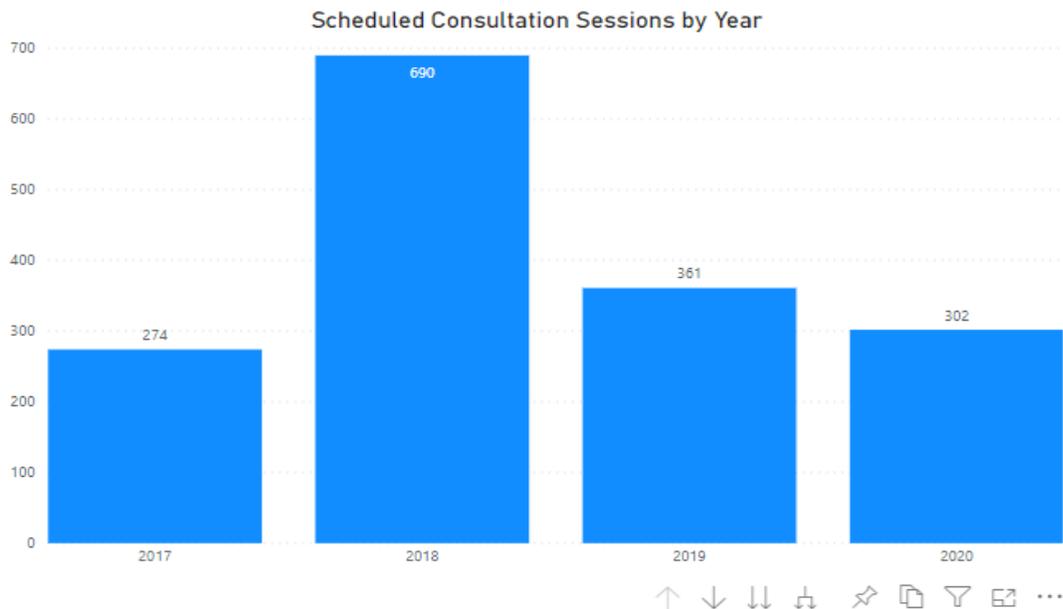
### *Self-paced Learning Tools: Online Guides and Tutorials*

The USF Libraries' online tutorials are self-paced so students can control the pace of their learning of research techniques and concepts. Novice learners, both on and off-campus (i.e. distance users) are able to understand the basics of library research through the LibSkills online self-paced tutorial which focuses on the basics of navigating the USF Libraries and the basics of conducting research. To address the need for increased access to information literacy

instructional materials without a corresponding increase in staffing levels, the library has created an extensive collection of videos designed to provide users with timely access to asynchronous instruction regardless of time or location. These videos can be accessed through Youtube and embedded within selected guides and online learning workshops in Canvas. Over the 2019 calendar year, the video tutorials were viewed 9,758 times with 210.4 collective watch hours. Since January of 2020, the total number of tutorial views is 6,477.

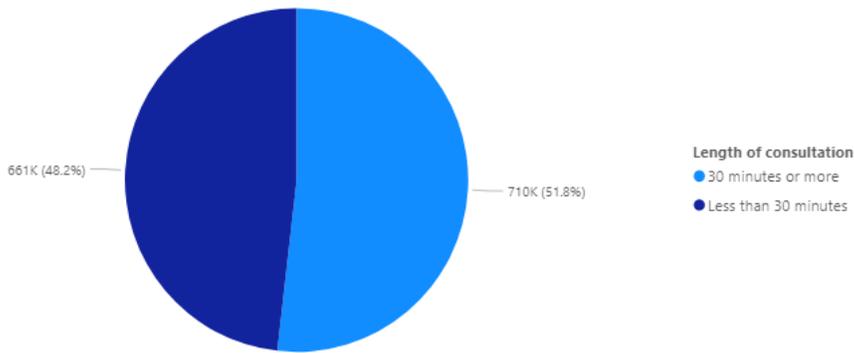
### Consultations

Another pillar of the Libraries instruction program are the one-on-one consultations that students, faculty and community researchers can schedule to obtain focused, individualized instruction on their research topics. Since January of 2020, USF librarians have scheduled 318 consultations with faculty, graduate and undergraduate students and community members. Scheduled consultation sessions saw a decrease in both 2019 and 2020 after seeing a substantial increase in 2018. 2018 appears to be somewhat of an anomaly in that there were over 700 scheduled consultations, compared with 2019 and 2020 which each have between 300 and 400 consultations.



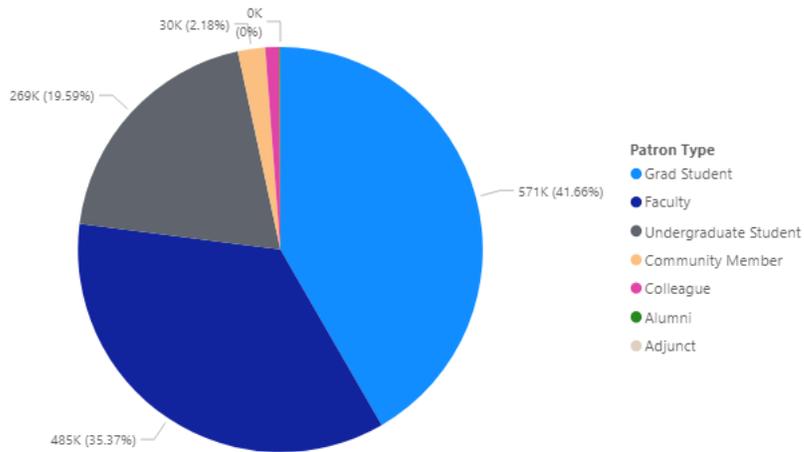
Slightly more than half of the consultation sessions (50.73%) lasted more than 30 minutes, while the other half lasted less than a half hour.

Consultation by Length of consultation



The majority of consultation requests were made by graduate students (41.66%) and faculty (35.37%) while undergraduate students represented roughly 20% of the population requesting research consultations.

Consultations by Patron Type



## Library Instruction Assessment Activities

USF Libraries Tampa campus Research & Instruction team engages in both formative and summative assessment activities. Over the past three years, each librarian has determined the type of outcomes-based assessment to conduct for their individual instruction sessions. Types of formative assessments include pretests to determine pedagogical strategies for a session, student experience and satisfaction surveys used to gauge teaching effectiveness, and reflection exercises that seek to delve deeper into the students' experiences with library instruction.

### Formative Assessment

The use of results from formative assessments have been used by individual librarians to evaluate their instruction and adapt the design or delivery of the instruction to better meet the needs of students. This type of assessment is on-going and recursive in nature. As students' experiences are assessed, pedagogy is adjusted, and students are once again asked to provide feedback, continuing the cycle. Examples of formative assessments that have been conducted include the following:

- [Course-based instruction follow-up \(ACRL Project Outcomes\)](#)
- [Post-Instruction Student Feedback Survey](#)
- [Pre-Instruction survey to determine student perceptions of research skills](#)

### Impact of formative assessments:

The value of information gathered from formative assessments over the past several years has been somewhat uncertain. For the most part, the student responses to formative assessments are consistently positive, making decisions surrounding program improvement more challenging. Looking toward the future, the formative assessment process should shift to a more faculty-focused approach where the focus of the evaluation is centered upon the collaborative relationship with faculty and faculty perceptions of the impact of library and research instruction on student achievement.

An initial foray into faculty engagement in formative assessment activities was attempted in the [Spring of 2017](#), with the results of the overwhelming majority of faculty reporting that the library instruction session addressed the needs of the course's research assignment, and that the instructional session improved student performance. Given the same pattern seems to emerge (i.e. feedback that is positive to the extent of being ineffectual for program improvement), other avenues need to be explored, such as collaborative design of research assignments with rubrics and more involvement of librarians in research-intensive courses.

## Summative Assessment

Summative assessments include outcomes-based quizzes, assessments of bibliographies, and student-reported performance feedback. Examples of summative assessments that have been conducted include the following:

- [2017 Outcomes-based assessment for introductory research class](#)
- [2018 assessment of citations after session on APA style](#)
- [2020 analysis of student literature reviews for course project](#)
- [2020 Survey of Student Learning \(Project Outcomes\)](#)

## Impact of summative assessment

Summative assessments are crucial tools to understand the extent of student learning and skill acquisition in library instruction. Results of summative assessment efforts has been mixed with introductory classes showing extensive mastery of basic, entry-level skills such as keyword identification and library resource navigation while efforts to promote student mastery of ethical resource use and citation styles has demonstrated continued challenges. This would indicate a discrepancy in the understanding of student baseline knowledge and would suggest that the instruction program needs to shift away from in-person instruction of introductory knowledge, which students already seem to understand (or acquire quickly), and concentrate more on advanced skills and knowledge frameworks.

More online asynchronous instruction using video tutorials and other learning objects, using flipped classroom approaches and interactive, online workshops are likely to become a more substantial and significant component of the libraries' instructional efforts.

## Other Activities

2018 marked the development of a more unified effort to implement a programmatic approach to metrics-based assessment of the library's instruction program. Working with the Libraries' data analytics coordinator, a set of benchmarks were established to begin a longitudinal project to track overall performance of students who engaged with library instructional events. Three primary USF performance-based metrics that could correlate with library instruction were selected. These include number of credit hours attempted/earned, average GPA, and persistence in enrollment. Preliminary results indicate:

- 94.45% of students who participated in library instruction completed all attempted credit hours for the fall 2019 semester ([link to charts](#))
- The average GPA of students who participated in library instruction was 3.26 in the fall 2019 semester. ([link to charts](#))
- The average GPA of students who participated in library instruction was 3.33 in the Spring 2020 semester (versus average GPA of 3.17 for USF students) ([data file](#))

- 91% of students who participated in library instruction during the fall 2019 semester continued enrollment into Spring 2020 (compared with 90% university-wide [student retention rate](#)) ([data file](#))

## Implications of data

This data will continue to be tracked for all students who participate in library instructional events in subsequent semesters. In addition, the progress of students who belong to the first group and those thereafter will each be tracked by cohort to establish any on-going participation in library instructional events and to correlate participation or non-participation with academic performance. While we cannot assert that there is a direct causal relationship between interaction with the libraries and higher student achievement, we hope over time to establish and correlate a profile of student behavior that includes experiential connections with academic support centers (such as the library) and higher levels of student success. In this way, we will be able to demonstrate the libraries' contribution to the university's efforts.

## Conclusion

While the USF Libraries Tampa Campus library instruction team has worked consistently toward designing, delivering and assessing a comprehensive program, a more coordinated and concerted effort toward reaching learners in the online environment is becoming increasingly important as the university contends with limited resources. Additionally, the summative assessments indicate that the students already possess basic introductory knowledge and would benefit from deeper instruction focused on advanced research skills and the ACRL framework. By re-aligning the instruction program to utilize the online workshop for lower level undergraduate classes, or using the flipped classroom pedagogical approach, the LSS librarians should ideally be better able to focus on delivering a deeper level of library instruction to high impact capstone, seminar, or research methods classes. As this program matures, tracking whether this structural change is actually realized is something to consider.

What's more, attempts to fully assess learners in the online environment have suffered from a lack of coordinated process and procedure. In any mode of delivery, standardization of formative and summative assessment practices must be realized. The team needs to shift effort away from student-focused formative assessment toward a faculty-centric model while also prioritizing uniformity of process. The new online workshops, tied to the USF General Education goals, is an idea place to focus future assessments in order to 1) ensure a quality library online curriculum, and 2) marry the library's asynchronous instruction effort's to faculty across the curriculum needs.

The USF Libraries Tampa Campus library's initiative to correlate instructional activities with university metrics is a promising new area of focus that brings the potential for associating library instruction with important University standards for student success. As the three USF

campuses consolidate to ONE USF in the 2020/21 year, it is necessary to extend this initiative to the St. Petersburg and Sarasota-Manatee campuses.

In sum, the USF Tampa Library Instruction program has steadily moved to a culture of assessment, incorporating both formative and summative assessments. As the program advances, with the implementation of the new online library workshop program, a shift to standardized faculty-focused assessments is needed. Thus, the LSS team will continue to build upon past years' efforts and promote quality library instruction services that support the university's general education and overall strategic goals.