RESEARCH METHODS FOR UNDERSTANDING THE LIBRARY SUPPORT NEEDS OF ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS AND PROGRAMS

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BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Providence College – Founded in 1917, primarily undergraduate Catholic & Dominican institution with historical liberal arts & humanities focus

Providence College School of Business (PCSB) – Accredited in 2012 with new building completed in 2017

Fall 2020 – 42% of undergraduates were business majors & 44% of graduate degrees were in business

What does this mean for a traditionally liberal arts college?

How does the library support the business school?

2018 Ithaka S+R study on Support of Changing Practices of Teaching in Business Schools

METHODOLOGY – THEORY, PRACTICE, & ETHICS

Applied research
Methodological package with adaptations from Ithaka S+R
Exploratory & qualitative
Deliberate sample with semi-structured interviews
Coding with MAXQDA
IRB approval and anonymization protocols
Flexible and adaptable, actionable information, and virtue of doing research

STUDY FINDINGS

Importance of active learning – supportive spaces and faculty freedom to make mistakes

Need for curation of media content

Diversity of library support needs across different departments

Possibility of librarians at some department meetings

More librarian training on resources such as Bloomberg terminals

Campus-wide digital access to the NY Times and WS Journal

Curriculum tensions between requirements of business majors and PC’s humanities-focused core

CURRICULUM MAPPING

Pre-project

Contributed to keeping us on track

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Continued embedding in marketing classes
MBA orientation sessions via Zoom

LESSONS LEARNED

“Allies” and “Key” Informants

Diversity of attitudes toward librarians
Targeted and specific interventions
Continual curriculum analysis and mapping
Opportunities for experimentation and failure

Virtual spaces can be as important as physical one