Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge with respect the Onondaga Nation, firekeepers of the Haudenosaunee, the indigenous peoples on whose ancestral lands Syracuse University now stands.
Distinct Academic Learning Communities at Syracuse University Libraries

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Overview

● Distinct Academic Learning Communities
● Research Objectives and Methods
● Findings and Considerations
● Suggested Metrics
● Lessons Learned
Distinct Academic Learning Communities

● Contribute to academic success by supporting individual growth through the development of research and/or study skills

● Encourage participants to take part in at least one of the following: innovative research, creative thinking, problem solving

● Fostering and building an engaged community is an important attribute or goal

● Participants self-select

● Participation is not limited by academic discipline
Three Such Communities in Bird Library

- **Blackstone LaunchPad**
  Entrepreneurship and innovation hub; 1st floor

- **Syracuse Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Engagement (SOURCE)**
  Fosters diverse undergraduate participation in faculty-guided scholarly research and creative inquiry; 2nd floor

- **Center for Learning and Student Success (CLASS)**
  Provides academic support services for students, including one-on-one tutoring, small-group tutoring and workshops, academic coaching and academic integrity education and training; lower level
CLASS Space Before
CLASS Space After
SOURCE Space Before
SOURCE Space After
LaunchPad Space Before
LaunchPad Space After
Research Objectives

Explore impact with three guiding objectives:

- Explore how the Libraries impact the communities
- Determine how the communities impact the Libraries
- Identify methods/metrics that could demonstrate reciprocal impact and be useful to ARL
Methods: Surveyed

- ARL Assess listserv about peer perceptions of “traditionally non-library units or other campus units” in their libraries
- Student/recent alum community participants’ perceptions of and use of community and Libraries’ space
- Libraries’ employees’ perception of and interaction with the communities
Methods: Interviewed

- Each of the three community directors to learn from their perspectives and derive overarching themes
- Dean of the Libraries for his perspective on the communities and to contextualize themes identified in the director interviews
Findings

- “Communities” are not new to libraries
- Libraries are sought after and logical venues due to centrality on campus
- Libraries are interdisciplinary spaces
- Even in an online world, the value of place-based experiences was often mentioned
- Communities are often located in highly visible and sought after locations
- Community members tend to use slightly more library resources
Considerations

- Finding balance between open study, collections, and community spaces
- Perspectives regarding connections to the Libraries’ mission
- Alignment with strategic plans and overall goals
- Broader campus goals and space planning needs
- Employee space needs for instruction, meetings, and offices
Suggested Metrics

- Measuring the impact of communities on the Libraries
- Some already collected for ARL Annual at higher level
- Expenditures for spaces and related staff
- Space usage as a percentage of the library’s total footprint
- Staff interactions (reference and instruction)
- Harder to express but critical: good will from University leadership and administrative peers
Lessons Learned

- Carefully consider team expertise
- Realize that conducting even basic qualitative research involves significant time investment
- Explore just one new research method at a time, on a smaller scale
- If considering conducting qualitative research long term, a library should fully invest in the necessary staffing, expertise, and skills development