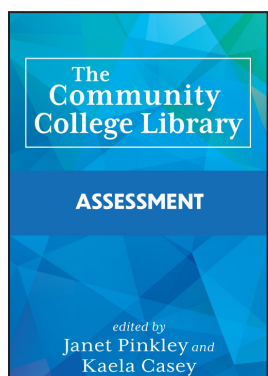


## Book Reviews



**Janet Pinkley and Kaela Casey, eds.** *The Community College Library: Assessment*. Chicago, IL: ACRL Press, 2022. 214p. Paper, \$72 (ISBN: 978-0838939017).



*The Community College Library: Assessment*, edited by Janet Pinkley and Kaela Casey, successfully weaves together a colorful tapestry of library assessment initiatives that are varied in their methodologies. While the approaches and objects of assessment are different in each chapter, they all strive towards two common goals: demonstrating the library's value and proving the connection between library use and student success. The chapters address key concerns including effective ways of assessing a library's impact, the importance of diverse areas of focus in assessment, the resources required to ensure a thorough assessment, essential research tools used for assessment, and strategies for revealing the library's direct link to student success. Pinkley and Kaela organize the volume in a manner that allows readers to identify the overarching themes of collaboration, assessment mentorship, flexibility, and reflection. Rather than centering on one area, the volume addresses both instructional assessment and services assessment. Readers will find that many authors underscore the significance of developing a clear plan, building on existing frameworks, and making assessment a structured, habitual activity for libraries.

A common thread among the authors is the necessity of building teams for effective assessment. Creating partnerships with other libraries provides an opportunity to learn from each other. Establishing a team that includes teaching faculty, college administrators, and other key players outside of the library has a bonus effect of showing, not telling, the library's effectiveness. Michael J. Krasulski, Elizabeth Gordon, and Courtney Raeford's chapter, "A Library-Friendly Assessment Framework: Administrative, Educational, Student Support Services (AES) Unit Assessment at the Community College of Philadelphia," demonstrates the power of working with an institutional research office (IR) and assessment office when developing assessment plans for the library. Their chapter highlights the library's unique ability to lead assessment in both service and education due to the dual role libraries play at community colleges. As a result, the library's contribution led to an inclusive assessment framework that benefitted all AES units. The chapter concludes with recommendations to readers about pairing with the college IR and assessment offices.

Similarly, Jamie Holmes and Amy Lagers provide an example of a successful assessment program at Tulsa Community College (TCC) Library that focuses on instruction. TCC Library's Instruction Development and Assessment initiative sets up a professional learning community involving mentorship and peer observations. The authors suggest adding faculty from outside of the library as participants. Collaboration with teaching faculty is also encouraged by Bryan Clark and Amy Glass from Illinois Central College (ICC). Clark and Glass describe the creation of a program designed to assess embedded librarianship initiatives and one-shots; teaching faculty at ICC were included in this process of creating assessment for all forms of library in-

struction. Readers searching for instruction assessment examples will appreciate Joy Oehlers, Joyce Tokuda, and Erica Davis's chapter. The authors shift from assessing database and catalog use to critical thinking skills. Sample rubrics and activity handouts such as "CRAAP test," "Show Me the Evidence," and website evaluation are utilized in the classroom to help gauge student engagement with information.

In addition to chapters that chronicle instruction assessment and student learning outcomes-based assessment, Pinkley and Casey include discussions of assessment for services, space, and the library's role in student retention. Sharell Walker and Joanna Thompson cleverly utilize focus groups as the tool to assess the Borough of Manhattan Community College's library space. Their student-centered approach supplied insight into how library space is used and produced evidence-based suggestions to improve it.

Space has value, and retaining students who will use spaces is imperative. We know that libraries impact retention, but measuring the impact of library instruction on retention rates can be challenging. At Hagerstown Community College and Arizona Western College, librarians designed an assessment plan that evaluates this connection. In Angela L. Creel, Wendy Hoag, and Kendra Perry's chapter, readers learn that students exposed to library instruction sessions were more likely to enroll in the subsequent semester. The authors acknowledge other influencing factors; however, the study offers a process others can use when attempting to assess the correlation between retention rates and the library.

Sample assessment plans can prove helpful, but assessment can still be overwhelming and intimidating for librarians, especially those unaware of how to begin the process. To assuage these fears, Pinkley and Casey include a chapter that emphasizes the role established frameworks, such as the Association of College and Research Libraries's (ACRL) Assessment in Action (AiA), can play in boosting confidence. In "Building Librarian Assessment Confidence through Communities of Research Practice," Aryana Bates, Mary Ann Lund Goodwin, Jacquelyn Ray, and Melinda McCormick Coslor incorporate ACRL's AiA into a team-based mentorship initiative supporting independent assessment projects. Readers learn how assessment mentorship can help transform perceptions of assessment from a peripheral to a normalized and collaborative activity.

The volume also offers novel ways of thinking about assessment. Joseph Eshleman convincingly makes the case that librarianship has much to learn from approaches to assessment in baseball. The chapter discusses the use of ACRL's Project Outcome, an online toolkit to aid libraries in measuring outcomes and offering support. Eshleman encourages libraries to assess their programs holistically, as done in baseball. Amanda M. Leftwich urges readers to use reflective practice as a method of assessing our own well-being. Leftwich provides steps to achieve a state of meditative awareness before, during, and after a reference interaction. Citing Symphony Bruce's care ethics research, Leftwich gifts readers with a form of assessment that is inclusive, simple, introspective, and necessary.

The volume's introduction and "Goal of the Series" section set clear intentions to "inspire community college librarians to reflect on their own practices" (p. viii). Pinkley and Casey have expertly curated a volume that is analytically helpful to community college librarians embarking on new assessment initiatives or improving existing ones. It succeeds in bringing more community college voices into the larger assessment in higher education conversation. This foundational volume should be standard in every community college library collection.—*Emma Antobam-Ntekudzi, Bronx Community College*