Evidence-Based Approaches: Volume 64 of Virginia Libraries

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ABSTRACT

The *Virginia Libraries* Editorial Board is pleased to present volume sixty-four (Vol. 64), including a brief report on Editorial Board focus areas in 2020. While *Virginia Libraries* solicits and publishes articles on all topics related to libraries and information science, a focus on evidence-based approaches runs through the articles published in volume sixty-four. Each article includes methods, recommendations, or examples to consider for approaches at your library, along with ideas for further research.

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EDITORIAL BOARD REPORT 2020

The *Virginia Libraries* Editorial Board is pleased to present volume sixty-four (Vol. 64). This year's Editorial Board was thankful to work with authors through the challenges of COVID-19 closures towards publications in this volume and our upcoming volume. This year we began what will be an ongoing examination and periodic assessment of our practices with an anti-racist, equity, and social justice lens. Our goals include increasing representation across identity groups within publication authors, editorial board members, and peer reviewers. We also seek to publish essays, best practice and research articles, case studies, and thematic columns that address anti-racist, equitable, and inclusive approaches within Virginia libraries. We welcome your submissions, ideas, and feedback on *Virginia Libraries* practices and publication at all times.

EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACHES

While *Virginia Libraries* solicits and publishes articles on all topics related to libraries and information science, a focus on evidence-based approaches runs through the articles in volume sixty-four. Each article describes how the authors sought data or conducted research to propose or develop new approaches, assess and adjust existing practices, or identify and recommend best practices broadly. The article authors focus on needs and interests within their user communities regarding undergraduate textbook costs, accessibility services and website information, and undergraduate information literacy instruction. Each article includes methods, recommendations, or examples to consider for approaches at your library, along with ideas for further research.

The volume opens with Jessica Scalph's 2020 VLA President's Letter, "*Peace, Love, and Libraries: A Letter to VLA's Membership*," highlighting the important role of libraries in promoting "peace in our communities by offering a safe place for discussion, communication, and listening," along with Virginia Library Association events and initiatives during 2019. These include a new affiliate membership model, establishment of the Librarians of Color Forum, and the name change of the Diversity & Inclusion Forum to LGBTQIA+, along with programs and advocacy.

In "*Assessing Textbook Costs at a Small College*," Stephen G. Krueger, a librarian, and Lewis Ward, an undergraduate student, investigate how textbook costs for Randolph College students compare to national estimates of college textbook costs, which can be a barrier for success in undergraduate programs. While multiple estimates exist for U.S. institutions, most average across states and types of colleges. In their study, Krueger and Ward describe their methodology to review textbook costs within majors and across Randolph College, a small, private, undergraduate liberal arts institution. Their dataset is archived via an OSF project site.[1] Their approach reviewed general education courses and required courses in each major, finding that estimated textbook costs at Randolph overall were lower than the College Board average estimate. However, this varied considerably across majors. They report that, given the options for students to choose from, there is no reliable method to use estimated costs based on required texts to know what students are actually paying. Regarding their goal in identifying expected textbook costs for Randolph students, they plan to incorporate findings in discussions with faculty about Open Educational Resource (OER) adoption. When looking at the total cost of textbooks for each major they note that, "instructors in particularly expensive subjects may be interested in lowering the barrier to their students by adopting or creating different resources." As future research, Krueger and Ward highlight possible use of surveys (such as one used by Florida Virtual Campus or by William and Mary), to better understand student behavior, the real costs they are paying, and the impact of such costs on their lives.

K. T. L. Vaughan and Stefanie E. Warlick's study, "*Accessibility and Disability Services in Virginia's Four-Year Academic Libraries: A Content Analysis of Library Webpages*," reports on the presence of accessibility or disability services webpages and/or policy statements across library websites for 40 four-year academic institutions in Virginia. Vaughan and Warlick note, "promoting accessible library services and spaces via libraries' websites is an important component of minimizing barriers to library access." The introductory literature review covers literature on web page content analysis for accessibility services, and resources available to libraries to address providing accessibility services, such as the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) SPEC Kit, Accessibility and Universal Design.[2] The authors highlight the opportunity libraries have to "… shift from a focus on complying with the narrow set of barriers identified in the ADA to creating environments that ensure the greatest number of patrons have access to the library's spaces and services." Vaughan and Warlick encourage libraries in Virginia to review their current accessibility services and web communication of these; concluding with several recommendations for developing accessibility policy, personnel, and services, and for website content on accessibility. The authors also share a sample accessibility page in Appendix A, developed based on the recommendations described in the article.

Desiring to assess the effectiveness of information literacy instruction in their study, "*A Measure of Success? Utilizing Citation Analysis to Evaluate Consultation Strategies in Oral Communication Courses*," Cori L. Biddle and Vickie Montiguaud-Green collaborated with three faculty. They looked to answer, "1) How successful were the instruction interactions with students, 2) Did students retain information literacy skills throughout the rest of the course, and 3) Is there one method of instruction that worked better for Oral Communication courses overall?" They compare three models of library instruction, each including some amount of consultation and two including some amount of research topic literature search demonstration. To assess the results, the students were asked to complete a questionnaire, and the librarians analyzed cited sources in the bibliographies of student projects. Though students could opt out, participation was high, running from 78% to 97% of each course section's students participating. In their reflections on the study, Biddle and Montigaud-Green report that overall findings regarding their research questions were positive, but inconclusive, and that future studies assessing library instruction impact on student information literacy skills may benefit from a modified method, such as source synthesis analysis. A benefit of their study was discussion and collaboration with faculty. Their findings demonstrate a consistent use of library materials throughout student projects, and an overwhelming majority of students found the sessions to be helpful.

As always, we, the *Virginia Libraries* Editorial Board members, thank you, our readers, for supporting our publication, and we also issue an invitation to you to help our journal grow stronger. We always want to hear your ideas, questions, suggestions and feedback at *virginialibrariesjournal@gmail.com*, your submissions *via our journal site*, and your follows and retweets via *@VALibJournal*!

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NOTES

1 Stephen Krueger, *Data for Assessing Textbook Costs*, (June 29, 2020), distributed by the Open Science Framework, DOI *10.17605/OSF.IO/UT6SP*.

2 Carli Spina and Margaret Cohen, *Accessibility and Universal Design*. SPEC Kit 358. Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries, May 2018. *https://doi.org/10.29242/spec.358*.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

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