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### Making the Case for Credit Courses: Results from a Study on Student Perceptions of a Required Library Research Course

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Making the Case for Credit Courses  
Results from a Study on Student Perceptions of a  
Required Library Research Course

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## UNC's Library Instruction Program

4 full time faculty  
1 part time lecturer

- Core Library Instruction Program (CLIP)
- First Year Program (UNIV 101)
- New Student Orientation
- Credit Course

## UNC's Criminology & Criminal Justice Program

422 majors  
82 minors

6 full time faculty  
3 full time lecturer  
Adjunct instructors



## *LIB 160*

# *Criminal Justice Library Research*

**SLO 1:** Students will be able to develop a research strategy.

**SLO 2:** Students will be able to access information using library resources.

**SLO 3:** Students will be able to evaluate information.

**SLO 4:** Students will be able to participate in scholarly discourse within a discipline or field of study.



# Literature Review: Criminal Justice

*It is important for Criminal Justice students to “have the skills to recognize when they need additional information to make decisions, and must be able to find and use that information” (Nelson, Killoran, & Dunham, 1995, p. 236).*



# Literature Review: Assessing Library Credit Course Impact

- Pre/Post Tests
- Paper Analysis
- GPA/Graduation Rates
- Student Perceptions



# The Current Study

1. How do Criminal Justice students perceive the influence of the required LIB course on their academic career at UNC?
2. How do Criminal Justice students perceive the influence of the required LIB course on their success in *CRJ 380: Justice Research & Statistics I* and *CRJ 480: Justice Research & Statistics II*?
3. What do students perceive as the major benefit of *LIB 160: Criminal Justice Library Research*?
4. Do students perceive that they took *LIB 160: Criminal Justice Library Research* at the right time in their college career?



# Methods

- Survey administered online to 318 students
- n=82
- Response Rate: 25.7%

## Survey Question Examples:

1. I took LIB 160 at the right time in my college career.
  - 1a. Please discuss why you either agreed or disagreed with the previous statement.
  
2. LIB 160 benefitted me in CRJ 380.
  - 2a. Please discuss why you either agreed or disagreed with the previous statement.





# Demographics

<b>Gender</b>	Male	34 (41.5%)
	Female	46 (56.1%)
	Missing	2 (2.4%)
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	Caucasian/White	55 (67.1%)
	African-American	6 (7.3%)
	Hispanic	15 (18.3%)
	Other	4 (4.9%)
	Missing	2 (2.4%)
<b>First Generation</b>	Yes	32 (39.0%)
	No	48 (58.5%)
	Missing	2 (2.4%)



# Findings

Timing of taking the course:  $\chi^2 = 21.98$ ;  $p < .05$

*“Taking LIB 160 prior to taking methods and research was an excellent plan and worked quite well as it gave me good skills which translated nicely to the other classes.”*

*“I should have taken it freshmen year instead of waiting to take it.”*



# Findings

LIB 160 grade associated with CRJ 380 grade:  $\chi^2 = 21.48; p < .05$

*I agree it helped me with CRJ 380 because it helped me with the organization of the paper, and the in text citations and such. Also because I learned ho[w] to look for information in our library website such as the journal articles.”*

*“I don’t know if it particularly did for CRJ 480 just because ... it was more using the SPSS system and imputing information but when we were learning about the research aspect of CRJ 480, having LIB 160 was helpful.”*



# Findings

*“Online class should be canceled”*



# Findings

Skill/Knowledge	Most Beneficial
APA Citation	51 (62.2%)
Retrieving Academic Journals	37 (45.1%)
Developing a Research Question	15 (18.3%)
Learning to Use Library Resources	28 (34.1%)
Learning Online Databases	41 (50.0%)
Source Evaluation	16 (19.5%)
Presentation Skills	9 (11.0%)



# Findings

*I would not have maintained a 3.0 in college if it was not for this class. The professors at UNC expect students to write papers that are formatted correctly and that have resources that are relevant. If LIB 160 was not required I would have failed every paper and I would have not sought out my master's degree.*



# Limitations

- Incomplete email lists/online survey
- Self-report GPA
- Not all students had taken CRJ courses at the time of the survey



# Future Directions

- Experimental Design
- Criminal Justice faculty perceptions of LIB 160
- Comparison with other LIB required courses
- Continued assessment after improvements





# Teaching Faculty Perspective



# Tips for Implementing Credit Courses

- Analyze number of one-shots being taught
- Discuss program needs/outcomes with faculty
- Create learning outcomes based on program needs
- Prerequisite to 300 and 400 level courses
- Communication between library faculty teaching faculty
- Consider face to face only
- Continuous assessment in upper-division courses



# Reflection & Discussion

1. Do you see a need for information literacy credit courses at your institution? Why is there a need?
2. What are some obstacles to starting conversations about credit courses at your institution?



Q & A

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