“Old stuff, old stuff, really old stuff:”

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC ARCHIVES AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO STUDENT EXPERIENCE

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Literature review

• The literature suggests that student awareness is an antecedent to student engagement (Wagner & Smith, 2012) and that outreach does not always assume engagement (Bidney, 2014).

• Research has shown that university student awareness of academic archives is low, and that they don't perceive their materials to be useful to others (Daniels & Yakel, 2013; Duff & Cherry, 2008; Swain, 2005).

• Traditional outreach methods are often one-directional and treat students as passive recipients rather than active collaborators/donors/researchers (Buchanan & Richardson, 2012; Malone, 2020).
Methodology

• Constructivist theoretical framework and a student-centered approach

• Primary research question: How do students want to be centered in archival outreach efforts?
  • How aware are Towson University students of the university archives?
  • How does their level of awareness correspond to their likelihood to engage with the archives?

• Data collection
  • Administered a pilot survey and developed survey instrument from fall 2020 to spring 2021.
  • In-person data collection took place in Cook Library and the Student Union over six weeks in spring 2022.
  • 206 respondents completed a Google Form consisting of 17 questions.
Student awareness and perception
Class Standing & Likelihood of Donating

- Graduate Student
- Junior
- Unanswered
- Freshman
- Senior
- Sophomore

Likelihood of Donating
College & Likelihood of Donating

- Fisher College of Science & Mathematics
- College of Liberal Arts
- College of Business & Economics
- College of Fine Arts & Communication
- College of Health Professions
- College of Education
- Undecided
- Unanswered

The diagram shows the likelihood of donating across different colleges. The y-axis represents the colleges, and the x-axis represents the likelihood on a scale from 0 to 5.
How can we empower students?
We need you!

Next steps:

• Continue collecting data and broadening our scope to better address different types of institutions and student populations.

• Apply for a grant to continue research alongside partner institutions.
  • IMLS National Leadership Grant for Libraries (Deadline: September 21, 2022)
  • Build the capacity of libraries and archives to lead and contribute to efforts that improve community well-being and strengthen civic engagement.

Future goal:

• Develop a model for student-centered outreach in academic archives with direct involvement from undergraduate and graduate students and other institutional partners
Thank you!
Any questions?

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