

Embracing the Peaks and Valleys

Using Assessment Data to Redesign a First-Year Experience Library Session

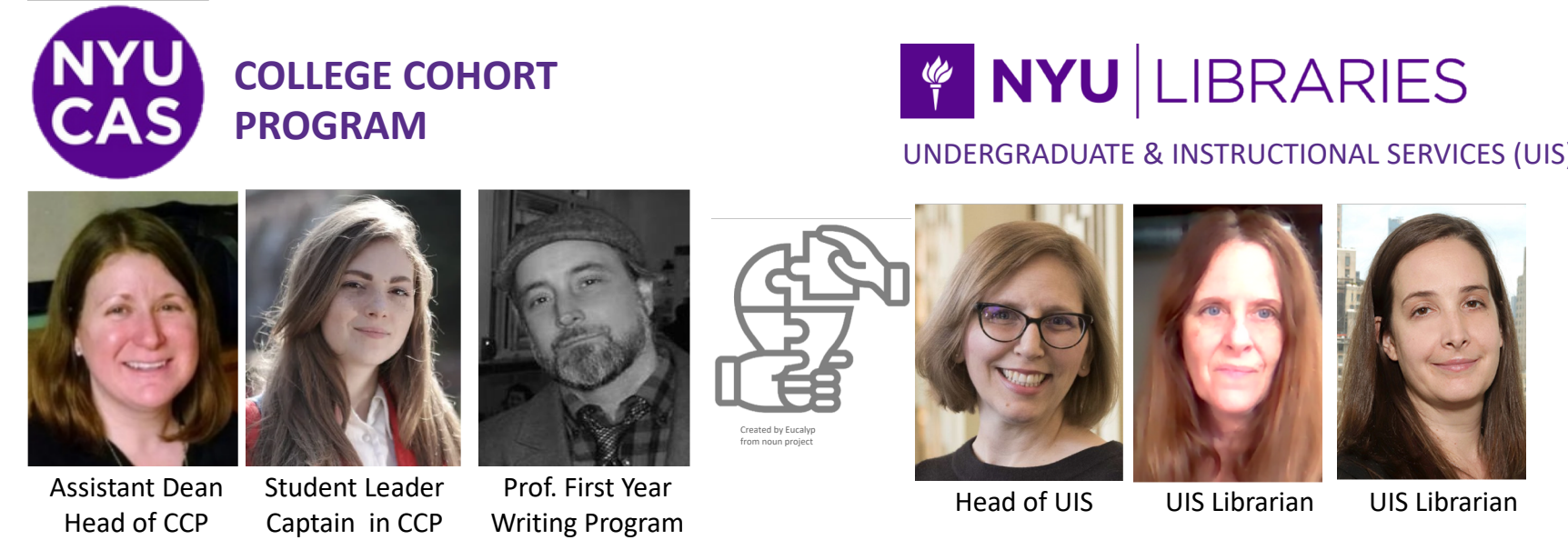
Abstract

This poster describes how the library component of a first-year experience program was revised and optimized through data-informed design and considerations of accessibility and scalability. It illustrates:

- How multiple streams of assessment inform the iterative process of developing a first-year experience library session
- Strategies for collaborating with internal library and external stakeholders to optimize a first-year experience library session
- Prioritization of accessibility and inclusion in session planning

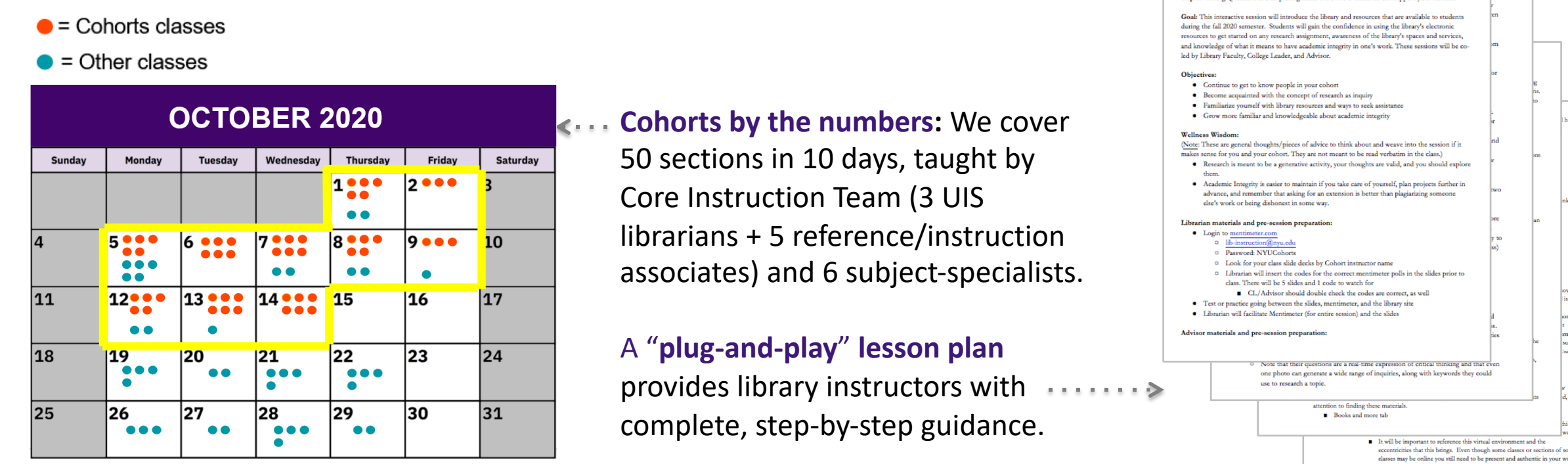
Planning & Logistics

COLLABORATION



The Library has been working with the Cohorts program since 2012. Each year the librarians in UIS collaborate with a team in CAS to review and revise the library component, informed by the previous year's assessment data.

SCALABILITY



Covering so many Cohorts sessions at a busy time of the semester is challenging. Most sessions fall to the library's Core Instruction Team, but a handful of subject librarians pitch in to teach some sections. UIS and CAS work together to design a complete "plug-and-play" lesson plan, which greatly minimizes library instructors' prep time and keeps content consistent across all sections.

What is "Cohorts"



1. Academic Success
2. Personal & Career Development
3. Community Engagement
4. Leadership Experience

Cohort = 1 adviser, 1 student leader, 30 students

The College Cohort Program is a first year experience program in NYU's College of Arts & Sciences that acclimates students to college life and supports their retention and success. The CAS freshman class is large – 1500 students – so a major goal of the program is to enable peer-to-peer connection and belonging by putting students into cohort groups.

Assessment Data

QUANTITATIVE DATA

CAS-Issued Survey

Questions	Respondents	% "Strongly Agree" or "Agree"		
		2018	2019	2020
Did you (your students) become more familiar with library resources?	Students	81	84	82
	College Leaders	82	80	79
Did you (your students) gain a better understanding of plagiarism?	Students	84	86	92
	College Leaders	86	94	91
This session was helpful overall.	Students	77	79	No data
	College Leaders	82	82	76
The Cohort was actively engaged	Students	80	79	82
	College Leaders	59	60	36
Felt more familiar with library resources/research after the session	Students	70	93	94
	College Leaders	70	93	94
Felt more familiar with academic integrity	Students	77	79	No data
	College Leaders	82	82	76
Felt engaged	Students	80	79	82
	College Leaders	59	60	36
Felt more familiar with academic integrity	Students	70	93	94
	College Leaders	70	93	94
Felt engaged	Students	N/A	N/A	81
	College Leaders	59	60	36
Felt engaged	Students	77	79	No data
	College Leaders	82	82	76
The Cohort was actively engaged	Students	80	79	82
	College Leaders	59	60	36
Felt more familiar with library resources/research after the session	Students	70	93	94
	College Leaders	70	93	94
Felt more familiar with academic integrity	Students	N/A	N/A	81
	College Leaders	59	60	36
Felt engaged	Students	77	79	No data
	College Leaders	82	82	76
The Cohort was actively engaged	Students	80	79	82
	College Leaders	59	60	36

Part of a survey assessing the Cohorts program at-large that included these questions about the library component.

Library-Issued Survey

Questions (to students only)	% "Strongly Agree" or "Agree"	
	2019	2020
Increased understanding of how to find books	92	87
Clearer understanding of what research is	83	90
Felt more knowledgeable about library resources/research after the session	96	97
Felt more familiar with academic integrity	N/A	93
Felt engaged	N/A	81

The CAS survey is issued at the end of the fall, which means months have passed before respondents give feedback. The Library's survey seeks immediate reactions at the end of each individual session.

Engagement is an area of notable divergence between the CAS and Library surveys, making this a subject for future inquiry. The CAS survey seeks College Leaders' and Advisors' perceptions of student engagement during the library session, but doesn't ask *students* whether they felt engaged. In 2020, the library asked this question of students and found that 81% of them felt engaged, whereas College Leaders and Advisors' felt students appeared to lack engagement.

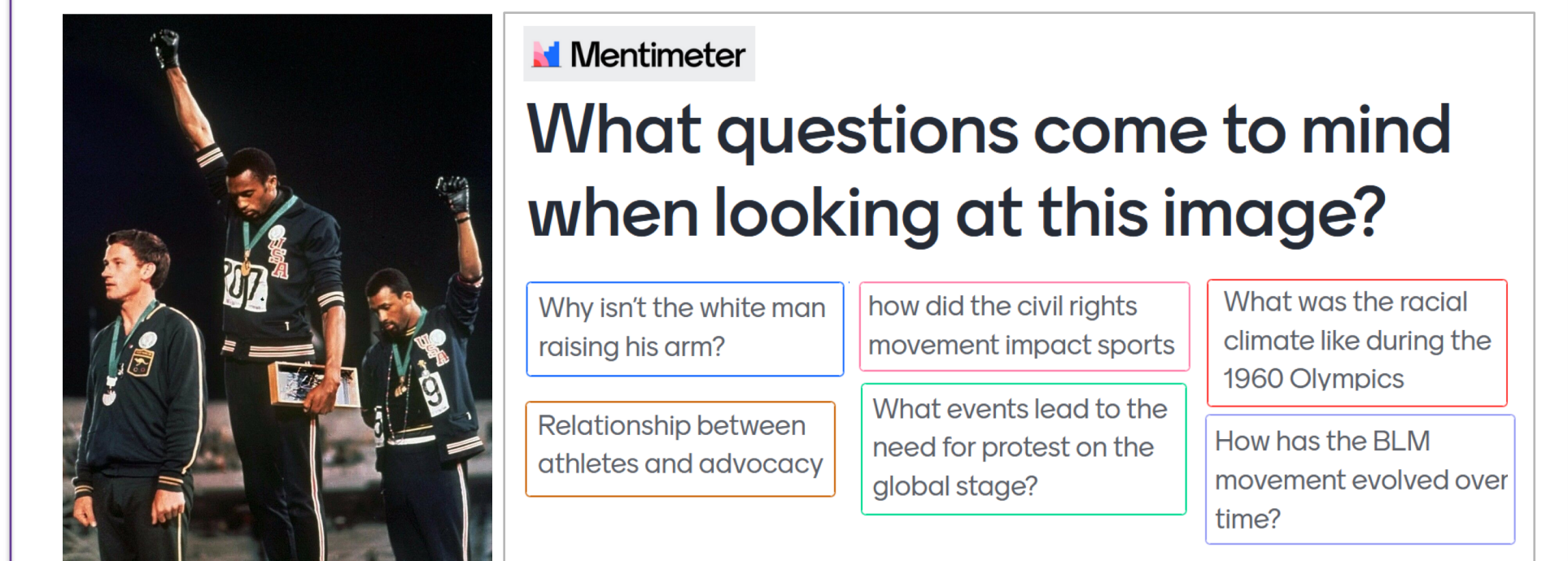
QUALITATIVE DATA SUMMARY

Green (+)	Red (-)
Got a lot out of the tour	Some students skip the tour and leave early
Useful and relevant to students' needs	Session quality varies, depending on individual library instructor
Informative, helps students feel at ease	Too rushed, too much information
Of all Cohorts visits, the library is students' favorite	Lack of student engagement
Librarians enjoyed involvement in lesson plan design	Librarians wanted more training, practice run

Current Iteration Highlights

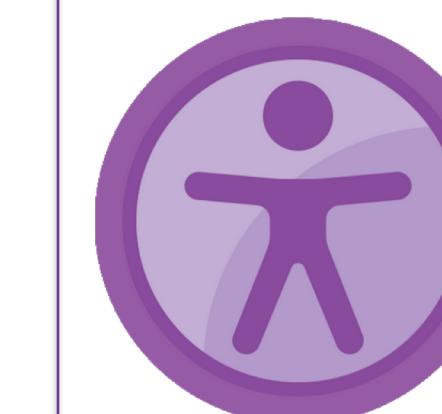
IDBEA ELEMENTS

INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, BELONGING, EQUITY, ACCESSIBILITY



A priority across NYU is IDBEA: inclusion, diversity, belonging, equity, and accessibility. In the aftermath of George Floyd's murder and similar incidents which led to widespread protest, we were intent on including a practical application of IDBEA into the library session. In parallel, our Cohort colleagues wanted to include a visual literacy aspect. We settled on using an iconic 1968 Olympics image to help students practice the process of generating research questions, using Mentimeter as our engagement tool. This allowed for a more in-depth and robust discussion of library resources while showing students how to take an historical topic and relate it to contemporary issues.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS



Incorporating more accessibility practices into Cohorts has been a priority since 2019. When planning the physical library tours for Cohorts, the Accessibility & Accommodations Librarian added tour details that highlighted services and resources for individuals with disabilities – including identifying accessible restrooms, how to request that an item be pulled from the shelf, stopping at the adaptive technology labs, and distributing paper copies of the tour script. With the transition to the virtual environment, accessibility remained important. The Google Slides presentation was formatted for optimal accessibility, all cohort leaders were encouraged to share the slides with the students so they could follow along on their own screens, and image descriptions were provided for the visual elements of the presentation. Since the lesson centered around a visual exercise, accessible alternatives were available if students needed to access another format.

Library's Role



- Be introduced to NYU academic resources, including the University Learning Center and the Writing Center
- Develop a knowledge base about key NYU library spaces and services.
- Develop an understanding of the CAS academic integrity policy
- Enroll in a First-Year Seminar, a small course that allows them to establish a relationship with a professor and their peers.

The library is built into the Cohort program's Academic Success category. We provide a library session for each of the 50 cohort groups in the fall. Academic integrity is also an objective, and for the past few years we have inserted a discussion of plagiarism and student ethics into the library session.

Curricular Changes

DATA-INFORMED, ITERATIVE LESSON DESIGN OVER 3 YEARS

2018 Lesson Design	2019 Lesson Design	2020 Lesson Design
LEARNING OBJECTIVES 1. Become acquainted with the concept of the "scholarly conversation" 2. Get familiar with library databases 3. Get comfortable navigating the building 4. Grow more knowledgeable about academic integrity	LEARNING OBJECTIVES 1. Continue to get to know people in your cohort 2. Become acquainted with the concept of research as inquiry 3. Familiarize yourself with library resources and ways to seek assistance 4. Grow more knowledgeable about academic integrity	LEARNING OBJECTIVES 1. Continue to get to know people in your cohort 2. Become acquainted with the concept of research as inquiry 3. Familiarize yourself with library resources and ways to seek assistance 4. Grow more knowledgeable about academic integrity
ACRL Frame: Scholarship as a Conversation View "Joining the Scholarly Conversation" video from Kishwaukee College Library Exercise: Search ProQuest Central, noticing citation analysis feature Physical tour of the library Discussion of various plagiarism scenarios	ACRL Frame: Research as Inquiry In library classroom, students sit at tables of 4 and work in teams Common read as framing device for keyword brainstorming exercise Physical tour of the library Discussion of various plagiarism scenarios	ACRL Frames: Research as Inquiry & Authority is Constructed and Contextual Zoom breakout room discussion: In what area are you an "unofficial expert"? IDBEA*-related image as framing device for question-generating exercise Demo of key areas of the Library's website Discuss strategies for avoiding situations (such as procrastination) that might tempt students to plagiarize

In 2018 our lesson was based around the ACRL Frame "Scholarship as a Conversation." A review of the 2018 assessment data led us to reconsider whether this frame was the best fit for freshmen visiting the library for the first time. We decided to overhaul the 2019 lesson, basing it on the "Research as Inquiry," Frame, a more grounding concept for new students.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Michelle Demeter
Head of Undergraduate & Instructional Services
michelle.demeter@nyu.edu

Marybeth McCartin
Instructional Services Librarian
mm10@nyu.edu

Lauren Kehoe
Accessibility & Accommodations Librarian
Lauren.kehoe@nyu.edu